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After answering 90 questions about the biblical books of I Samuel and Mark, 11 teams placed first, two of which were from the Columbia Union: Potomac Conference’s Beltsville Broncos blue team from Beltsville, Md., and Allegheny East Conference’s Liberty Light Bearers from Baltimore.

“It’s exciting,” exclaimed Monica Melbourne, a director of the Liberty Light Bearers. “We are proud to represent for the Allegheny East Conference. This is the first time that the kids have participated in a Bible bowl. They worked so hard to be here.” The Beltsville Broncos are pictured accepting their first-place certificate.—Story by Pamela Scheib and Tanisha Greenidge
GC, NAD, Unions, Conferences Collaborate to Reach New York City

Every level of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is teaming up to participate in NY13, an evangelistic project to reach the people of New York City, and beyond, with the gospel of Jesus Christ. New York City has been chosen as the first of about 650 cities where the Adventist Church plans to hold evangelistic meetings over the next several years.

Shawn Boonstra, associate Ministerial director for evangelism in the North American Division, recently sat down with presidents and other representatives from the General Conference, North American Division, unions and conferences who have formed a strategy to reach New York City, the largest metro area bordering their territories of responsibility.

The conversation was recorded as a one-hour NY13 special program in the Hope Channel studios in Silver Spring, Md. It will be shown on the Hope Channel and 3ABN and as a DVD throughout the division so that members can learn how they can have a part in the massive initiative. The program will be broadcast on the Hope Channel this weekend.

WAU Graduates one of its Largest Classes

Slightly under 300 students passed through Washington Adventist University’s (WAU) “Gateway to Service,” Sunday, April 29 in Takoma Park, Md. Relatives and friends packed Potomac Conference’s nearby Sligo church to witness one of the largest graduating classes in the university’s history. University officials say the numbers are symbolic of a growth spurt that they have been experiencing in
On Sabbath, April 28, Rear Admiral Barry Black, the 62nd Chaplain of the United States Senate, served as keynote speaker for the baccalaureate service. Nirupama Rao, WAU’s distinguished Gateway Service honoree and ambassador of India to the United States, was recognized for her contribution to liberal arts education during the commencement ceremony.— Story by Grace Virtue; photo by Eduardo Grant

READ MORE

Union ASI Convention Emphasizes “Chosen Vessels,” Raises $10,000

A few weeks ago, the Adventist-laymen’s Services & Industries (ASI) Columbia Union chapter (CUASI) held their annual convention at Potomac Conference’s Vienna (Va.) church and attracted more than 700 attendees, including church members. They donated some $10,000 to fund upcoming CUASI projects that aim to fulfill ASI’s motto of “Sharing Christ in the Marketplace.” Their theme was “Chosen Vessels: Called & Faithful.” In this gathering more than 60 ministries joined more than 35 business owners (including pictured CUASI officers).

In related news, the international ASI convention is coming to the Columbia Union later on this year. The August 8-10 meeting will be held at the Duke Energy Convention Center in Cincinatti, Ohio. Themed “It’s Time … To be About Our Father’s Business.” Visit asiministries.org for more information.—Story by Natasha Iheme/Visitor Staff

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Willow Brook Women’s Tea Draws 140

An afternoon tea, themed “Women of Grace,” drew
women from seven area churches recently to **Chesapeake Conference’s Willow Brook church** in Boonsboro, Md. Dee Scalzo, the church’s Women’s Ministries leader, and a team of women from the Willow Brook and Hagerstown churches coordinated the event.

Hostesses assigned to each table used their creativity and their own china service to set the tables. Many attendees brought teapots for display.

Pastor Charlotte McClure spoke to the group, encouraging women to “let God be God in the most intimate areas of our lives.”

According to Scalzo, the event was a form of friendship evangelism. Many of the participants were friends, neighbors and Bible study students of members—and several were women who had been taking a break from church. Catherine Smith of the **Hagerstown (Md.) church** is pictured sporting a 120-year-old hat that belonged to her grandmother.—*Story and photo by Jennifer Stefan*

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**Parkway South Concert to Aid Families**

Each year on the first Saturday night in May, vocalist Karla Rivera Bucklew (a Chesapeake Conference member) joins pianist Ingrid Forss in performing at **New Jersey Conference’s Parkway South church** in Marmora for The Family Aid Fund Benefit Concert.

The Parkway South church established the Family Aid Fund to help others and both women, who are professional musicians, have been performing this concert for seven years. “There are times when people need a hand up, and we want to be that hand,” says Forss (pictured right). “In Matthew 25 Jesus asks us, as members of the family of God, to feed those who are hungry, give something to drink to those who are thirsty, to take in those who need shelter, to care for those who are sick, and visit those who are in prison. We want to fulfill that mission, one person at a time, as Jesus did.”

Visit their **Facebook page** to watch videos from their previous concerts. The concert will take place Saturday, May 5 at 7 p.m.
G.E. Peters Students Excel at Science Fair, Spelling Bee

The George E. Peters Adventist School in Hyattsville, Md., recently came away from the Allegheny East Conference’s annual Elementary School Science Fair and Spelling Bee in Richmond, Va., with the most first-place awards. They competed against five other schools. G.E. Peters students Ja’Mani Walker (Kindergarten) and Jennea Whitted (5th-grade) both finished in first place for their age categories and Teneé Stevenson collected a third-place finish in her category as well. Liana Allen finished first place in the Spelling Bee challenge.

“This was my sixth time participating,” Whitted said. “I got a chance to explain my project on Microscopic Water Organisms in a nice way to my classmates, teachers and the judges.”

This was seventh-grader, Allen’s first time participating in the Spelling Bee. “I prayed before every word. Doing that calmed me down, and God helped me all the way to first place!” she said. Walker said hard work pays off, and he looks forward to doing it again next year.—Story by Jocelyn B. Daniels; photo by Gladys Kelly

Shenandoah Valley Students Share Christ in Europe

Ten Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) students and four sponsors from New Market, Va., traveled to Germany and Austria during spring break for a unique outreach journey. The group’s mission: to witness to residents and meet other Seventh-day Adventist young people.

“The trip to Europe was an eye-opening experience, much like any mission trip. It allowed me to see how a group of people can be so different in their way of living but can still be accepting and ultimately have the same goal to reach people for Christ,” shared senior Graydon Jedamski.

“I met many fearless warriors for Christ, and I aspire to be more like them,” said junior Angel Lawhorn,
who is pictured with other students praying at the Immanuel School near Munich.—Story by Buz Menhardt

READ MORE ABOUT HOW THEY MINISTERED

May Visitor Highlight

It’s that time of the year again! It’s camp meeting season, where we make more time to commune with fellow members and God. This month’s issue will highlight some of the wonderful things your conferences have planned for this year’s camp meetings. Click here to learn who will be speaking and for a list of fun activities for kids.

ACS Highlighted in New Visitor Video

Click here to see our monthly video. This month we feature the Adventist Community Services of Greater Washington in a feature we call “More Than Beans and Rice.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

Click here for a complete listing of upcoming events around the Columbia Union Conference.

MARYLAND
May 4-6: Highland View Academy Alumni Weekend: Plans include the annual golf tournament, a vespers play, Sabbath school, church with roll call, luncheon, a music benefit concert, varsity basketball games, as well as soccer and volleyball games. For more information, visit the school’s website at www.hva-edu.com.

NEW JERSEY
May 5: The Parkway South church’s Family Aid Fund Benefit Concert takes place at 7 p.m. Each year, soprano Karla Rivera Bucklew joins pianist Ingrid Forss for this fundraising concert. The funds raised go to the church’s Family Aid Fund, which helps needy families in the community. For more information, visit facebook.com/FamilyAidConcert. The church is located at 9 North Shore Road in Marmora, N.J.

PENNSYLVANIA
May 4-6: Pennsylvania Conference’s “Be Still Women’s Retreat” is designed to draw you into a deeper conversation with God—allowing Him to speak to your heart and bring you healing, joy, hope and peace. The retreat will take place at Leaman’s Country Home at 155 Glenbrook Road in Bird-in-Hand, Pa. For more information, click here.

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Stay Connected:
Two Columbia Union Teams Shine at NAD Pathfinder Bible Experience

Story by Pamela Scheib and Tanisha Greenidge
Published 4/30/12

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“Samuel and Mark, 11 teams placed first, two of which were from the Columbia Union: Potomac Conference’s Beltsville Broncos blue team and Allegheny East Conference’s Liberty Light Bearers.

“It’s exciting,” exclaimed Monica Melbourne, a director of the Liberty Light Bearers. “We are proud to represent for the Allegheny East Conference. This is the first time that the kids have participated in a bible bowl. They worked so hard to be here.”

Other Columbia Union Pathfinder groups included Ohio Conference’s Hungarian Heroes; Chesapeake Conference’s Hagerstown Explorers team 1, Frederick Firefoxes team 1 and Triadelphia Sparks. “Our club started with three groups and came here with one group,” said ViAnn Johnson, a staff member with the Hagerstown Explorers. “The competition is great and more than anything else, these young people have something that they will take with them for the rest of their lives; and their lives will be changed because of their studies.”
Although her club didn’t make it to the division level, Kiana Hogu, a 10-year-old Allegheney East Conference’s Hillside Thunderbirds Pathfinder, came to show support. As a runner, she helped to pick up answer sheets and deliver them to the judges’ table. Hogu hopes to participate in the competition next year.

The Pathfinders will study Acts and I and II Thessalonians for next year’s challenge.
Every level of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is teaming up to participate in NY13, an evangelistic project to reach the people of New York City, and beyond, with the gospel of Jesus Christ. New York City has been chosen as the first of about 650 cities where the Adventist Church plans to hold evangelistic meetings over the next several years.

Shawn Boonstra, associate Ministerial director for evangelism in the North American Division, recently sat down with presidents and other representatives from the General Conference, North American Division, unions and conferences who have formed a strategy to reach New York City, the largest metro area bordering their territories of responsibility.

The conversation, a one-hour NY13 special program produced by the NY13 communication team was recorded for television in the Hope Channel studios in Silver Spring, Md. It will be shown on Hope Channel and 3ABN and as a promotional DVD throughout the division so that members will have a clear understanding of what NY13 is and what they can do to have a part in the massive initiative to offer the gift of grace and hope to the huge metropolis of NYC. The program will be broadcast on the Hope Channel this weekend. Click here to view the complete schedule below.

Stepping up to the challenge as presented by Ted N. C. Wilson, General Conference president; and Dan Jackson, North American Division president; were Donald King, president of the Atlantic Union; and Frank Bondurant, vice president for Ministry Development for the Columbia Union. Additionally presidents of the following conferences: Southern New England, Frank Tochterman; New Jersey, José H. Cortés; Northeastern, Trevor Baker; Allegheny East, Charles Cheatham; and Greater New York, G. Earl Knight. They discussed the whys, the hows and the historical significance of targeting New York City with the message of a personal Savior.

**Why New York City?**

Pastor Wilson answered Boonstra’s leading question, “Why target large urban centers and why New York City?” Wilson put it simply, “That’s where the most people are. Approximately 50 percent of people live in cities rather than the countryside. While on this Earth, Jesus went to where the people were. He wept for them. He did practical and good things for them.”

Jackson added, “God loves the cities. He loves the people who live there. It is our work to find people who are yearning for something better, so it is our goal to reach every major population center in the North American Division. New York is the first. Much will be learned from the NYC experience and that knowledge will help us focus efficiently on future initiatives.”

Ellen G. White, a Seventh-day Adventist church co-founder, wrote about NYC. She said, “Those who bear the burden of the work in Greater New York should have the help of the best workers that can be secured. Here let a center for God’s work be made, and let all that is done be a symbol of the work the Lord desires to see done in the world.”
A training school, community services, youth ministries and more relational activities and services will be widely implemented throughout the city prior to the evangelistic meetings slated for 2013. Guest evangelists from around the world have volunteered to simultaneously preach the gospel in neighborhoods of New York City. This strategy to reach the city is the first time that the General Conference, division, unions and conferences have worked closely together to accomplish a major initiative of this kind.

King continued, “New York City is the financial capital of the world with 20 million people. God wants His work to explode in NYC.”

Get Involved
Everyone can be involved in this initiative. You can:

• Become one of more than 5,000 prayer intercessors
• Give Bible studies
• Distribute literature
• Witness to others
• Make a financial contribution

If you are impressed to give of your time, talent or other means, contact your local pastor. Those wishing to make donations can visit the ny13.org Web site and click on the “Donate” link. You can also visit www.facebook.com/ny13.org for more information.

You are invited to join us on September 21-22, 2012, at the North Bronx Seventh-day Adventist Church in 3743 Bronxwood, Ave., Bronx, NY 10469 for a satellite evangelism/prayer rally that is geared toward preparing members for the meetings in 2013. Guest speakers include: Ted Wilson; Mark Finley, international speaker; and Carlton Byrd, Breath of Life speaker/director.

Watch the NY13 Program

For the Hope Channel
• Friday, May 4 at 7 p.m. ET
• Friday, May 4 at 10 p.m. ET
• Saturday, May 5 at 4 p.m. ET
• Saturday, May 5 at 11 p.m. ET
• Sunday, May 6 at 12 p.m. ET
• Sunday, May 6 at 9 p.m. ET

For the Hope Church Channel:
• Friday, May 4 at 5 p.m. ET
• Friday, May 4 at 8 p.m. ET
• Saturday, May 5 at 10 a.m. ET
• Saturday, May 5 at 2 p.m. ET
Just under 300 students graduated from Washington Adventist University on Sunday.

Slightly under 300 students passed through Washington Adventist University's (WAU) Gateway to service, Sunday, April 29 in Takoma Park, Md. Relatives and friends packed Potomac Conference's nearby Sligo church to witness one of the largest graduating classes in the university's history. University officials say the numbers are symbolic of a growth spurt that they have been experiencing in recent years.

The Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Science degrees were conferred on 237 students while graduates degrees in business administration, counseling psychology, professional counseling psychology, healthcare administration, public administration, nursing education and nursing and business leader leadership were conferred on 45 students. Nineteen students received associate of applied science and associate of science degrees.

Keynote speaker, Washington attorney Scott McClure, urged graduates to remain true to the university's commitment to a life of service and to social justice. A WAU education, he said, is about engaging mind and transforming lives which means grasping the information necessary to be competent in one's field or the pursuit of further studies, as well as an action plan that incorporates the values of kindness, respect, honesty, candor, ethics and following the Lord.

Nirupama Rao, WAU's distinguished Gateway Service honoree and ambassador of India to the United States, was recognized for her contribution to liberal arts education, according to WAU's president, Weymouth Spence, EdD. Rao holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in English Literature and is a published poet. She joined the diplomatic service in 1973 and, in addition to her Washington posting, has served her country in Sri Lanka, Moscow and Beijing.

In a presentation liberally sprinkled with the wisdom of compatriot, Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian civil Rights leader, Rao commended WAU's emphasis on character education, which she said, was critical for preparing young minds to face the challenges of the contemporary world. Graduates would do well, she said, to be mindful of the even blunders of life as articulated by Gandhi: wealth without work; pleasure without conscience; knowledge without morality; commerce without character; science without humanity; worship without sacrifice and politics without principles.

Graduation weekend activities began on April 27th with a Consecration Service at Sligo Church. Chair of the Psychology Department, Grant Leitma, PhD, gave the consecration address. On Sabbath, April 28, Rear Admiral Barry Black, the 62nd Chaplain of the United States Senate, served as keynote speaker.
Nirupama Rao, WAU's distinguished Gateway Service honoree and ambassador of India to the United States, was recognized for her contribution to liberal arts education.
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Their theme was “Chosen Vessels: Called & Faithful.” In this gathering more than 60 ministries joined more than 35 business owners. In his opening seminar, Pastor Ivor Myers, speaker/director of Power of the Lamb Ministries, spoke of what it means to be a chosen vessel called as a Seventh-day Adventist ministry/business owner. He explained that ministry leaders and business owners should be faithful to the required work and have a full understanding of the Advent gospel message that they are to share in the marketplace.

Myers also conducted three seminars informing area students from several academy groups on the subtle dangers of the entertainment industry. His personal testimony held the rapt attention of every youth. Some schools traveled more than three hours to attend.

The Guild of Adventist Musicians, founded by Jeanette Nelson, provided musical performances for the sundown worship. The testimonies and music from students of the Miracle Meadows School in Salem, W.Va., opened the service.

During the Ministries in Action portion of Sabbath School, CUASI members shared what they are doing as chosen vessels to impact the spread of the gospel around the world. The day continued with Myers preaching for the divine service while Allegheny East Conference’s Ebenezer church choir of Philadelphia provided anthems and hymns throughout the service.
Henry Wright, senior pastor of Potomac’s Community Praise Center in Alexandria, Va., provided the Sabbath vespers message. In short his message was, “We are called not for what we can do for others, but for what God wants to do through us.”

After vespers, there was a Circle of Ministry session where Columbia Union members mingled with business and ministry leaders to network and share in-depth ministry testimonies. “Every year it is refreshing to share this fellowshipping time which allows all attending to intimately know what ministries are in Columbia Union, what they are doing to share Christ in their marketplace, where their skills and expertise can be utilized and unique ways others can also share Christ in the marketplace,” said D. Francine Hayden, CUASI president.

On Sunday morning, Pastor Myers closed the convention weekend by reminding attendees of their purpose on this Earth. The last session was a business session where CUASI members voted in new officers Eric Garloff as vice president of Evangelism and Natasha Iheme as vice president of Communication.

CUASI’s next convention will take place at the Ebenezer church, March 8-10, 2013. Pastor Henry Wright will be the keynote speaker Pastor Henry Monroe Wright and the theme for the weekend is “Closed on Sabbaths.”

This year, the international ASI convention is coming to the Columbia Union. The August 8-10 meeting will beheld at the Duke Energy Convention Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. Themed “It’s Time … To be About Our Father’s Business.”
Shenandoah Valley Students Share Christ in Europe

Story by Buz Menhardt
Published 5/2/12

Ten Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) students and four sponsors from New Market, Va., traveled to Germany and Austria during spring break for a unique outreach journey. The group's mission: to witness to residents and meet other Seventh-day Adventist young people.

For their first outreach appointment, they visited with the students of PLANT Academy, an outreach-training program based at the Seminar Schloss Bogenhofen, an Adventist academy and seminary in Austria. The students had fun attending the German and English classes with the Austrian students. The SVA and PLANT young people then visited several neighborhoods in Brauna to conduct surveys and distribute literature.

Later the SVA students got involved in 10 prayer meetings for Adventist youth in Bavaria, Germany, including two youth Sabbaths in Nürnberg and Munich. They focused on the life of John the Baptist and on becoming God's messengers who proclaim the Second Advent. SVA students also conducted two morning worships at the Immanuel School near Munich, one of the few Adventist elementary schools in Germany. The SVA group also made sure to tour historical sites in Salzburg, Mondsee, Nürnberg, Munich, Neuschwanstein and Dachau, and ski in the Austrian Alps!

Here are a couple of comments from the group about the journey: “The trip to Europe was an eye-opening experience, much like any mission trip. It allowed me to see how a group of people can be so different in their way of living but can still be accepting and ultimately have the same goal to reach people for Christ,” shared senior Graydon Jedamski.

“I met many fearless warriors for Christ, and I aspire to be more like them,” said junior Angel Lawhorn.
Angel Lawhorn and other SVA students pray with children at the Immanuel School near Munich, Germany.