Pathfinder, Adventurer Coordinators Learn About “Servant Leadership”

More than 100 Adventurer and Pathfinder coordinators from across the Columbia Union Conference gathered February 22-24 at the Mount Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md., for their first combined retreat in over a decade. The theme of the weekend was “Servant Leadership,” with a specific focus on how volunteer area coordinators could support the ministry of local clubs by mentoring staff and praying for their ministries.

Breakout and informational sessions included looking at new policy issues in the two ministries, the Shield the Vulnerable background check and training service and guidelines for developing new awards and honors.

“It was an awesome networking experience,” said Pam Scheib, Pennsylvania Conference’s Pathfinder coordinator. “To meet our fellow coordinators in the Columbia Union and hear what they do in their conferences was enlightening. To know they have similar struggles and joys was comforting—we know we're not alone!” — Story by Glen Milam; Photos by Charlie Koerting

Chesapeake Young Adults Convene for Friendship, Spiritual Growth

The first-ever Arise retreat, sponsored by the Chesapeake Conference, drew
nearly 100 attendees. Held recently at the Mount Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md., retreat organizers aimed to provide an opportunity for young adults to meet other Christian young adults in the area. On Friday night, the attendees interacted with new friends. On Sabbath and Sunday, participants attended breakout sessions, which shared how to love difficult people, Bible study methods and ways to increase evangelism efforts.

Milena Mendes, who attends the Frederick (Md.) church, said, “This retreat reminded me of the ones I used to go to back home in Brazil. ... I felt God present in the camp!”

Arise is a conference-sponsored ministry for young adults ages 17 to 30-plus. To learn more and subscribe to news, email ariseyoungadults@gmail.com, or visit facebook.com/ariseyoungadults.—Jen Blondo

Third Hispanic Church Planted in Cleveland

For many years, there were only two Ohio Conference churches in Cleveland: the First Hispanic church and the Hispanic Ebenezer church. However, this changed after a group of missionary-minded brothers decided they would help share the gospel in the eastern part of the city. They planted a new congregation and had their first church service in January. The service had 24 members and visitors.

Peter Simpson, the district pastor, led out in the worship service for the newly planted East Side group. “It was a day full of joy and happiness because we knew that we were fulfilling the mission that God had given us,” said Daniel Mason, the church’s elder, said. “We were also happy to have visitors because it showed us that there were people on this side of the city looking for a place of hope.” The church is located at 1443 Addison Road.
Tercera iglesia hispana plantada en Cleveland

Por muchos años, en la ciudad de Cleveland, Ohio, se había contado con dos iglesias adventistas: la Primera Iglesia Adventista Hispana y la Iglesia Hispana Ebenezer. Sin embargo esto ya no será más así pues un grupo de hermanos llenos de fervor misionero y convencidos de que es tiempo de llenar con el evangelio toda nuestra ciudad, han aceptado el cometido de nuestro Señor Jesucristo de plantar un nuevo centro de luz desde donde se lleve el mensaje de amor y esperanza a las almas que aún no lo conocen. Por tal razón, la hermandad adventista en la ciudad de Cleveland se encuentra celebrando el nacimiento de esta nueva congregación la cual tiene como desafío llenar con la llama del evangelio a la parte este de la ciudad. El pasado sábado 12 de Enero, tuvieron su primer culto oficial de sábado, con la presencia de 24 hermanos entre miembros y visitantes.

El Pastor del Distrito, el pastor Peter Simpson, dirigió el culto de inauguración, apoyado por todos y cada uno de los hermanos que ya forman parte de esta iglesia. Para el hno. Daniel Mason, quien será el anciano de esta congregación, como para todos los hermanos presentes, fue un día lleno de gozo y felicidad al sentir que estaban en ese lugar cumpliendo con la misión que Dios les había encomendado. La presencia de varios visitantes fue el mayor aliciente, pues estamos seguros que muchas personas que viven en este lado de la ciudad encontrarán un lugar de esperanza para sus vidas en esta nueva congregación. Que Dios sea glorificado por otra victoria más dada a su pueblo y que el Espíritu de Dios colme las vidas de los hermanos que ahora testifican del amor de Dios desde la recién plantada Iglesia Adventista del East Side.

Potomac Member Listens to Still, Small Voice

Stopped at a traffic light during her daily commute, Precious Elliott felt the Holy Spirit saying, “You belong here.”

“What? Where do I belong?” Elliott thought. As she peered out her vehicle’s window, she spotted Potomac Conference’s Beltsville (Md.) church for the first time. “Yes, that is where you
belong." The feeling was so strong, Elliot found the church online and attended two weeks later.

“It felt natural when I stepped into the church,” recalled Elliott, “but I was still unsure. I soon fell in love with the diversity and the members’ transparency. The more I learned about the church, the more impressed I became with the world church and its organization.”

Elliot had a deep relationship with God through a constant prayer life and was eager to learn more about the Bible. She soon began lessons with Beltsville’s pastor, Donna Holland.

“I was pregnant with twins,” said Elliot. “I had a lot of difficulties with the pregnancy that eventually led to bed rest.” Though tired and stressed, Elliot refused to quit her Bible studies. Through painstaking complications, Elliot lost both babies. Holland conducted the funeral and Elliot held to her faith and continued Bible studies and attending church.

On February 16, Elliot got baptized at the Beltsville church. “That still, small voice does speak to you,” said Elliott, “make sure you’re listening.”—Story by Tiffany Doss; Photo by Akiiki Kiiza

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**Spotted: Pennsylvania Conference Pre-Kindergarteners Visiting the Elderly**

Genesis Pereyra, a pre-kindergarten student at York Adventist Christian School in York, Pa., greets Fairy Warner, a resident at the Normandie Ridge Retirement Community. Students from the school make monthly visits to the residence throughout the school year. Each classroom prepares a special presentation for the residents, which often includes songs, poems, special musical performances, memory verses, skits and crafts. Jennifer McCary, school principal, says this community program is part of the school’s character development curriculum.—Story by Jennifer A. McCary
Book Release: *Life is Good … the Best is Yet to Come*

William G. Johnsson, best known for his many years as editor of the *Adventist Review*, is making his voice heard—again. This long-time member of Potomac Conference’s Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., says he wrote his new book, *Life is Good … the Best is Yet to Come* “for everyone who is struggling with the issues of belief and doubt in these times, both Adventists and non-Adventists,” he explains.

Below he shares more about what to expect in this book about the afterlife:

**Q:** What would you say is the strongest evidence you share that there is an afterlife (heaven)?

**A:** Because I hope to engage nonbelievers, I did not build the case for belief on a traditional biblical basis. However, for me the strongest argument stems from Jesus, not just from what the Bible says, but from the five facts of history that I lay out.

**Q:** Is there anything surprising in the book?

**A:** The book was a personal journey of exploration. I wrestled with the issues for months. A close friend, also a writer, wrote that it’s the most personal and moving of all my writing. (I have written about 25 books and 1,000-plus articles!)

Order copies at adventistbookcenter.com.—*Story by Beth Michaels*

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**Tweet of the Week**

Janeth Blanco (pictured far right) a junior early childhood and special education major at *Washington Adventist*
University (WAU) in Takoma Park, Md., was among several WAU students who interviewed with conference superintendents from across the Columbia Union last week.

Have a fun tweet, Facebook post or Instagram picture to share? Send it to us at Visitor@columbiaunion.net and you just may see it here in the Visitor News Bulletin.

Help Oakwood University Win a $195K Grant

Oakwood University (Ala.) is in a race for a large grant from Home Depot for Historically Black Colleges or Universities. The competition ends on April 15. For Oakwood to win, people like you must vote. People can vote once a day per device. Also let others know about this great opportunity for Oakwood. Click here http://www.retoolyourschool.com/vote-now.aspx to vote.

End Quote: Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus

“When a preacher opens the Bible to a particular passage, he may envision a real place where the story happened. On a recent trip, members of the New Jersey Conference pastoral team gained valuable and exciting insight into the land of the Bible. We flew from Istanbul...
— the ancient city of Constantinople in Turkey—to Tel-Aviv, Israel. Later that evening, we reached Jerusalem, “the city of the Great King.” We entered singing “The Holy City.” What a place full of history!

We followed Jesus’ steps from Bethlehem to Nazareth, to the Jordan River (pictured), then to the gate where He did His triumphal entrance. We carried on to the Gethsemane Garden, to the high priest’s house, to Herod’s palace, to the court of Pontius Pilate, thru the Via Dolorosa, all the way to Calvary and, finally, to the tomb from where He resurrected and proclaimed victory over sin and death.

Even though we do not worship stones, rivers or the Sea of Galilee, following the footsteps of Jesus was definitely an unforgettable experience. We cannot be the same preachers again.”—José H. Cortés, New Jersey Conference president

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

MARYLAND

March 3-9: The Emmanuel-Brinklow Church presents, "Bondages & Breakthroughs", a Life Transformation Week (except Tuesday and Thursday). You will not want to miss the dynamic speakers who will present during the week, including Dexter Manley, former Super Bowl NFL defensive player for the Washington Redskins. FMI, visit their website. In the month of March we will confront the issues that cause bondage, addiction, resentment, depression, pain, and personal suffering. In preparation for our bold endeavors to confront the kingdom of darkness with God’s Word of light, we are calling our church family to prayer.

March 8: The Frederick Adventist School (FAS) in Frederick, Md., is hosting a Pre-K and Kindergarten Experience Day. Interested parents and their students will get to observe firsthand what FAS has to offer from 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. To reserve a spot, call the school at (301) 663-0363 or send an email to FrederickAdventistSchool@gmail.com.

March 10: Nancy Link, a member of the Dupont Park church in Washington, D.C., will be at the Potomac Adventist Book Store from 2-4 p.m. to sign copies of her new book Aunt
Nancy’s Road Called Faith: A Poetic Biography. The store is located at 12004 Cherry Hill Rd in Silver Spring, Md.

March 15-16: Mysteries “The Mark Of The Beast Revealed” is the name of a two-night evangelism series featuring Steve Wohlberg, a member of the Newport (Va.) church and an author, evangelist, producer and radio show host. Wohlberg will explain end-time prophecies and events at the Restoration Praise Center located at 10411 Greenbelt Road in Greenbelt, Md., March 15 at 7 p.m. and March 16 at 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.

March 20: Sligo Adventist School will have an open House from 6 to 7 p.m. For more information, call (301) 434-1417 or visit sligoadventistschool.org. The school is located at 8300 Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park, Md.

OHIO
March 15: Committed, an Adventist a cappella singing group, will perform a free concert at the Kettering church. The group of six young men were the season 2 champions on NBC’s hit singing competition The Sing Off. The concert starts at 7:30 p.m. The church is located at 3939 Stonebridge Road in Kettering. Admission is free, and everyone is welcome. A freewill offering will be collected.

March 23-24: At Ohio Ministry University, attendees will answer the question, “What kind of REPUTATION does your church have in your community?” During the two-day training, attendees will learn how to construct a reputation that rightly conveys the values Jesus wants His church to express. The program begins at 4 p.m. on Sabbath and ends at noon on Sunday. It will be held at the Embassy Suites Columbus Airport Hotel in Columbus. The registration deadline for commuters is March 11 so register with your pastor now. For more information, contact Heidi Shoemaker at 740.397.4665, ext 165.

PENNSYLVANIA
March 8-9: The Columbia Union ASI Spring/Convention-New Beginnings/Abundant Living Evangelism Training will be held at the Allentown (Pa.) church, which is located at 2140 West Tilghman Street. For more information and to register, visit www.Plusline.org, click on Event Registration, then click on Columbia Union ASI Chapter Convention.

WEST VIRGINIA
March 29-31: The Mountain View Conference is hosting its second annual Young Adult Prayer Conference at the Adventist at the Valley Vista Adventist Center in Huttonsville, W.Va. Attendees will have plenty of time for prayer, relaxation and growing closer to God. For more information and to register, contact Geoff Starr, conference Youth Ministries director at (304) 834-2131 or mitchellstarr@gmail.com.

NEW YORK
March 13-17: The North American Division’s 2013 Health Summit especially for the Atlantic, Columbia and Lake unions will be held in Flushing, N.Y. There will be more than 20 seminars on topics from fitness and lifestyle to mental and emotional health. There will also be a special track for pastors and clergy, a track for nurses and seminars for healthcare professionals.
leaders, all with practical help for outreach. Get some hands-on experience in health evangelism. Enjoy the great keynote speakers. Attend evening health sessions for the community. Click here to register now.

NATIONAL

September 1: Enter the 2014 "Forever Faithful" International Camporee theme songwriting contest by September 1. Click here to enter the contest. If your submission is chosen, you could win two free tickets to the camporee and the honor of having your music become the 2014 Forever Faithful International Camporee official theme song. For more information, contact Justin Yang or Stacy-Ann Thomas.

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