Columbia Union Pastors Gather for Strength, Renewal, Replenishing

Over the course of three days, some 700 people gathered in Baltimore for the union’s first pastors convention in nine years. Themed “Abide” with the tagline “Strengthen, Renew, Replenish,” convention organizers set out to do just that.

“We’ve been working on this convention for five years,” said Dave Weigley, Columbia Union president. “It’s so important for us to come together as workers and pastors and be inspired, connect and worship with each other.”

Spearheaded by Weigley’s office and organized by Frank Bondurant, the union’s vice president for Ministries Development, the program featured many opportunities for learning and spiritual refreshment. Weigley said the team was careful to schedule plenty of free time, and encouraged pastors to turn off their phones.

The program started Sunday evening with a sermon from Henry Wright, pastor of Potomac Conference’s Community Praise Center in Alexandria, Va. He preached from Judges 21:25 and reminded his colleagues, “What God does to save us does not add up. You have been called to the ministry to save your carcass. It wasn’t your voice, pedigree or degrees. … God is willing to abide in odd places, like in me and in you, and at your worst He doesn't leave you.”—Story and photo by Taashi Rowe

READ MORE
iAbide Seminar Brings to Light Child Sex Abuse

While at the iAbide convention, pastors attended a three-hour, afternoon general session sharing how they can protect children against sexual predators. Cory Jewell-Jensen, (pictured) MS, with the Center for Behavioral Intervention in Oregon, schooled the gathering on how to spot and prevent sex abuse in churches and schools. She explained that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is at a higher risk for these abuses because of the additional services offered by the church through its schools, Pathfinder/Adventurer programs and camps. Jewell-Jensen shared some chilling statistics: predators often have dozens of victims before they are caught and 20 percent of all church members have been or will be abused.

She also showed a video in which a young pastor, who had 95 victims, said, “The church is not an accidental place for people like me to hide. Church people generally are generous in their opinions of others.”

Jewell added, “These people can be incredibly good liars and church people don’t expect it because we don’t expect these people to be in our world. Studies suggest that one out of every 20 males is a sex offender but we only catch a small percentage.”

At the end of the session, Frank Bondurant, a vice president of Ministries Development for the Columbia Union prayed, “Lord, although this was hard to hear, please empower us to prevent harm and protect the children.”—Story by Taashi Rowe

At iAbide, Women Clergy Share Joys and Challenges Over Dinner

It is Tuesday evening, April 23. And,
minutes away from the main convention hall where hundreds of pastors are attending iAbide, the Columbia Union pastors convention in Baltimore, some 20 women sit down for a simple dinner at a restaurant. A green salad graces their plates, followed by vegetable kabobs set on a bed of quinoa and finished off with a dessert of ice cream, berries or a combination of the two. The women chat and laugh, tease each other and share sage advice. These women are not just pastoral spouses (although some are). They are pastors, pastoral interns, chaplains, conference administrators and Bible workers who minister throughout the Columbia Union.

Esther Knott, an associate in the North American Division’s Ministerial Department and an associate pastor at the Pioneer Memorial church in Michigan, organized the special dinner because “we are hungry for fellowship.”— Story and photos by Taashi Rowe

---

New President Named for Kettering College

Alex Bryan, DMin, was recently named the sixth president of Kettering College in Dayton, Ohio, effective June 1. He replaces Charles Scriven, PhD, who retires this spring after a 12-year tenure at the college.

Bryan has been senior pastor at Walla Walla University Church in College Place, Wash., for the last four years. In addition to teaching on the faculty in both the School of Business and the School of Theology at Walla Walla, he is a member of the president’s cabinet, where he acts as advisor for vision and strategy for the university.

“We are delighted to have the Bryan family join our community,” said Roy Chew, chair of the Kettering College board of directors and president of the Kettering Medical Center, which owns and operates the
Columbia Union Pastors Gather for Strength, Renewal, Replenishing

Bryan said, “It is an honor to join such a wonderful team of educators and healthcare professionals. I am passionate about learning institutions like Kettering College, which trains its students in both professional excellence and meaningful Christian service. I look forward to contributing to a rich spirit of innovation as Kettering College pursues its unique and important mission in the days ahead.”—Story by Mindy Claggett

READ MORE

Search and Rescue for Potomac Member Has a Happy Ending

After being lost on the Appalachian Trail for 20 hours last Sabbath, George Carr (pictured right), a member of Potomac Conference’s Manassas (Va.) church, is now back at home. Carr got separated from a group of some 20 members of his church who traveled some 150 miles south to Camp Blue Ridge in Montebello, Va., for a weekend retreat. The group decided to take a Sabbath afternoon hike on the Appalachian Trail.

At approximately 4 p.m. they reached their destination, took photos and celebrated their arrival at Spy Rock. After 10–15 minutes, small groups of members starting heading back to the cars. However, some members decided to stay longer to enjoy the view.

Unluckily, Carr somehow got separated from the group. Upon learning that Carr had not come back, Pastor Randy Davis assembled three other people and drove back up the trail to see if they could locate him.—Story by Dan Jensen

READ MORE
National Security Lab Director Named WAU Alumnus of the Year

Charles McMillan, PhD, director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory and president of Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS), was named alumnus of the year by his alma mater, Washington Adventist University (WAU) during alumni homecoming weekend, April 12-14. The Los Alamos Lab, based in New Mexico operates the lab for the National Nuclear Security Administration. McMillan was the guest of honor at the annual alumni awards banquet held in Bethesda, Md., April 13.

In a brief address to the gathering, McMillan paid tribute to WAU’s emphasis on service as a valuable part of the learning experience.

“Service of the highest level requires education of the best quality,” McMillan said. “Education is not just about the acquisition of knowledge; it is about asking the right questions and [knowing] if the answers make sense.” Pictured from left to right is Ellie Barker, WAU’s director of Alumni Relations; Charles McMillan; Weymouth Spence, WAU president; and Mark Young, WAU’s Alumni Association president.—Story by Grace Virtue; photo by Al Peasley

READ MORE

Five Allegheny East Youth Accept Jesus at Retreat

Some 170 young people, aged 12-19, descended upon the Allegheny East Conference grounds in Pine Forge, Pa., on April 12-14 for a fun, spirit-filled youth retreat weekend. Teenagers came from Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C., to enjoy a weekend of friendship making, spiritual growth and lively discussions.

All workshops fell under the umbrella of
the youth department’s 2013 theme, “3D: Devotion, Deliverance, Discipleship” and were designed to help teens explore their Adventist beliefs and address hot-topic subjects often unaddressed in the church setting. During the course of the weekend, five individuals accepted the call to baptism.

“I’m so grateful that I had the opportunity to attend the youth retreat. I received knowledge there that I would never get anywhere else. I met new friends and had fun fellowshipping with everyone. Pastor [Patrick] Graham, [Youth Ministries director], was right when he said, ‘You will walk out as a different person.’ I know I did,” shared Amber Patton from the Sharon church in Baltimore.—Story by LaTasha Hewitt

CLICK HERE FOR MORE PHOTOS

Spencerville Pathfinders Rock to Help Homeless Persons

It was around 7 p.m., when something strange started happening at Chesapeake Conference’s Spencerville church. People started carrying rocking chairs of all shapes and sizes into the Silver Spring, Md.-church’s fellowship hall. At 7:30 p.m., Sherri Ingram-Hudgins presented worship along with her friend Jerry, a formerly homeless man who is now a recovering addict and a Christian. Ingrahm-Hudgins is the founder of A Hat for Harold, a charity that provides micro-grants to the homeless.

Around 8 p.m., 18 of the Spencerville Polar Bear Pathfinders, wearing neon-green T-shirts inscribed with the words “I Rocked,” got into those rocking chairs. Their goal? To rock for part or all of the next 12 hours and raise $300 for A Hat for Harold. Each Pathfinder had collected pledges from family, friends and neighbors. The pledges were based on a certain amount per hour rocked or a flat amount for participating. Each Pathfinder had to gather $25 in pledges from family, friends and neighbors and make their own personal pledge toward their goal. Most far exceed the $25 minimum.—Story by Lisa Saveikis Burrow

READ MORE
End Quote: A Person of Vision

“In some churches there are big mouths, small hearts and invisible hands. As Adventists we are well educated above our level of obedience. We say we want to grow until new people start coming. A person of vision acts regardless of fear. You can’t walk on water until you get out of the boat! Don’t go through life wondering what could be!

The secret to success I don't know, but I know the secret to failure is trying to please everybody. God did not call you to be on the cutting edge of mediocrity. The reason why you feel a lack of purpose right now is because you took the vision God gave you and put it in the backseat!”—Roger Hernandez, Ministerial and Evangelism director for the Southern Union, spoke after lunch during the iAbide pastors convention

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

MARYLAND

April 27: The internationally known Breath of Life Quartet will be in concert at the Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and admission is free. The church is located at 7700 Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park, Md. For more information, visit sligochurch.org.

April 27: Restoration Praise Center is hosting their third annual bike blessing. Bring your cruisers, choppers, scooters, sport bikes and all other bikes out to the church, which is located at 10411 Greenbelt Road in Lanham, Md. The Bike Blessing will begin at 3
p.m. Refreshments will also be served to the riders. For more information, contact Sue at (202) 297-3242 or John at (301) 452-4939.

April 27: The Hagerstown church is hosting an organ concert by Angela Kraft Cross, MD, a virtuoso composer and performer from California, on Sabbath, April 27, at 7 p.m. Tell your music-loving friends! The church is located at 11507 Robinwood Drive. For more information, contact G. Sayles at (301) 733-4411

NEW JERSEY
April 26-28: Trinity Temple Academy’s alumni, family and friends are invited to celebrate the academy’s 80th anniversary during this year’s alumni weekend. Organizers will be celebrating and honoring classmates and graduates, presenting alumni awards and rededicating themselves to the future of the school. The weekend begins at the school with a meet and greet with guest speaker and alumnus Pastor Marvin McLean. On Sabbath Pastor Ronald Reeves, an alumnus, will speak for the divine service at Trinity Temple, which is located in Hillside, N.J. Saturday night’s event, called “The Celebration of Trinity Temple Academy,” will take place at the Pantagis Renaissance featuring guest speaker Pastor S. Peter Campbell and performances by a live band. On Sunday there will be a special alumni brunch at Trinity Temple, 11 to 2 p.m. For more information, visit trinitytempleacademy.com.

WEST VIRGINIA
May 17-19: The Voice of Prophecy and Mountain View conference are hosting a Discover Bible School training weekend. During this three-day session, attendees will learn about prayer and soul-winning, how to give a Bible study and how to obtain decisions in a Bible study. For more information, or to sign up, contact the conference office at (304-422-4581) and ask for Valerie Morikone. Registration ends April 30.

Having trouble viewing this email? Click here to read it online. For more news and up-to-date information from the Columbia Union Conference, visit columbiaunion.org.

Subscribe or Send Us Stories


To send us a news story or announcement, email us at visitor@columbiaunion.net. The deadline for all submissions is 12 p.m. each Tuesday.

Stay Connected:
Columbia Union Pastors Gather for Strength, Renewal, Replenishing

Story by Taashi Rowe; Photos by Taashi Rowe and Keith Goodman Published 4/24/13

Gary Banks, an Allegheny East Conference pastor, takes some time to praise God during the iAbide pastors convention.

Over the course of three days, some 700 Columbia Union pastors and their spouses gathered in Baltimore for the union’s first pastors convention in nine years. Themed “iAbide” with the tagline “Strengthen, Renew, Replenish,” convention organizers set out to do just that. “We’ve been working on this convention for five years,” said Dave Weigley, Columbia Union president. “It’s so important for us to come together as workers and pastors and be inspired, connect and worship with each other.” Spearheaded by Weigley’s office and organized by Frank Bondurant, the union’s vice president for Ministries Development, the program featured many opportunities for learning and spiritual refreshment. Weigley said the team was careful to schedule plenty of free time, and encouraged pastors to turn off their phones. The program started Sunday evening with a sermon from Henry Wright, pastor of Potomac Conference’s Community Praise Center in Alexandria, Va. He preached from Judges 21:25 and reminded his colleagues, “What God does to save us does not add up. You have been called to the ministry to save your carcass. It wasn’t your voice, pedigree or degrees. ... God is willing to abide in odd places, like in me...
and in you, and at your worst He doesn’t leave you.” He also cautioned pastors not to neglect their families for the sake of the ministry. “Do not sit here today with broken children, broken spouses and broken families. One of the dangers in the [Seventh-day Adventist ministry is the Adventist ministry.” Wright then made an appeal, and that evening, hundreds of pastors did something they don’t often do, they responded to an altar call. Other speakers included Elizabeth Talbot, founder of the Jesus 101 Biblical Institute, who in discussing Joseph in her morning session, said, “God’s timing doesn’t match my timing.” At Monday’s lunch meeting, speaker Roger Hernandez, Ministerial and Evangelism director for the Southern Union, challenged pastors not to be afraid to live up to the vision that God has given them. “As Adventists, we are well educated above our level of obedience,” he said. “A person of vision acts regardless of fear. God did not call you to be on the cutting edge of mediocrity. The reason why you feel a lack of purpose right now is because you took the vision God gave you and put it in the backseat.” Pastors also had plenty of breakout sessions to choose from, in Spanish and English. They not only had a taste of seminary life with classes called “Islam and Christianity in Prophecy,” “Art of the Appeal” and “Current Trends in Theology,” but also had practical classes on how to brand their churches, improve their small churches and use technology. In his breakout session “A Small Church to be Proud of,” Loren Seibold, an Ohio Conference district pastor, said, “Small churches at their best are places where people are more important than programs.” When asked later about the importance of his session, Seibold, who has 35 years of pastoral experience, noted, “There are some people who have no interest in small churches but a vast majority of Adventist churches are small. Most people are focused on growth but they should be paying attention to health.” In his seminar “La Vida Espiritual del Pastor,” Oswaldo Magaña, Ohio Conference’s Hispanic Ministries director, shared with Hispanic pastors four important aspects of maintaining a daily, intimate relationship with Christ.

Seminar Brings to Light Child Sex Abuse

Pastors also attended a three-hour, afternoon general session sharing how they can protect children against sexual predators. Cory Jewell-Jensen, MS, with the Center for Behavioral Intervention in Oregon, schooled the gathering on how to spot and prevent sex abuse in churches and schools. She explained that the Adventist church is at a higher risk for these abuses because of the additional services offered by the church through its schools, Pathfinder/Adventurer programs and camps. Jewel-Jensen shared some chilling statistics: predators often have dozens of victims before they are caught and 20 percent of all church members have been or will be abused. She also showed a video in which a young pastor, who had 95 victims, said, “The church is
not an accidental place for people like me to hide. Church people generally are generous in their opinions of others.”

Jewell added, “These people can be incredibly good liars and church people don’t expect it because we don’t expect these people to be in our world. Studies suggest that one out of every 20 males is a sex offender but we only catch a small percentage.”

At the end of the session, Bondurant prayed, “Lord, although this was hard to hear, please empower us to prevent harm and protect the children.”

Elvis Mogoi, a pastor at Chesapeake Conference’s West Wilmington church in Delaware, said he was glad he attended the session. “I can’t really say I was surprised at the information I learned today,” he said. “Still it was eye-opening in a way. The sad part is you can never tell if someone is engaged in something like this. I’m glad to see that our church is acknowledging that these things do happen in our churches. Our church board has already voted a new policy to do background checks on those who work with children and our conference has also been proactive in emphasizing ways that we can protect our kids.”

An Opportunity to Connect

While pastors were treated to master classes and seminars, the convention also served as an opportunity for attendees to connect with their spouses and fellow pastors. Laughter was heard in the hallways as groups of two, three and four pastors chatted between classes. Pastor Mario Thorp, a New Jersey Conference pastor, happily shared jokes with his friend Ramon Escalante, an Allegheny East Conference pastor. Other pastors took the opportunity to pray for each other.

Kasper Houghton, a 28-year-old pastor at Ohio Conference’s Kettering church, talked with Stephen Lee, a New Jersey Conference pastor, an old seminary school friend.

During these informal gatherings, pastors not only discussed church politics and theology, they also shared family updates and discussed the value of some of the classes they attended.

Houghton said that while he skipped the classes on subjects he already felt well versed in, such as technology, others were a blessing. “I really enjoyed the class on small churches. I
work for a big church now but it probably won’t always be that way,” he said.

Marcellus de Oliveira, an Ohio Conference pastor of a four-church district, said this was his first pastors convention. “It was exciting to get new information from great speakers,” he said. “Many times as a pastor, you can be drained from serving. But at a place like this, I have been refilled and refreshed and found people who can speak to my heart and the needs of my soul.”

The convention concluded this afternoon with pastors meeting with their conference leaders. Several expressed their thoughts on the convention.

Seibold said the convention was important because, “There is value in fellowship. Lots of pastors are very lonely, and I suspect they generally have to leave the ministry to become an expert on the pastorate.”

Houghton said, “This was such a huge investment in human resources. It feels good to know that we were invested in. This was a great opportunity to build each other up.”

Although he has 42 years of ministry under his belt, D. Robert Kennedy, an Allegheny East pastor, said he was leaving with more information on how to make the church more welcoming to visitors, and will be sharing some of what he learned with his elders.

Mariya Marton, who attended several seminars with her husband, Edward, who pastors in the Ohio Conference, said the convention was also helpful to her, as she is studying to become a chaplain. “The speakers have been amazing and inspiring,” she said. “This has been a real blessing, especially hearing Pastor Wright say that even if things are not going right in my life, God is still busy.”

COMMENTS POLICY: The Columbia Union Conference Visitor encourages quality conversation and welcomes your thoughtful comments. All comments are subject to approval but will not be edited.

Please limit your comments to 500 words or less. Only one comment per person will be published.
Minutes away from the main convention hall where hundreds of pastors are attending iAbide, the Columbia Union pastors convention in Baltimore, some 20 women sit down for a simple dinner at a restaurant. A green salad graces their plates, followed by vegetable kabobs set on a bed of quinoa and finished off with a dessert of ice cream, berries or a combination of the two. The women chat and laugh, tease each other and share sage advice. These women are not just pastoral spouses (although some are). They are pastors, pastoral interns, chaplains, conference administrators and Bible workers who minister throughout the Columbia Union. Esther Knott, an associate in the North American Division’s Ministerial Department and an associate pastor at the Pioneer Memorial church in Michigan, organized the special dinner because “we are hungry for fellowship.” The women immediately dive into getting to know each other and chatting with those they already know. At one end of the table, Lillian Torres, the Columbia Union and Pennsylvania Conference Bible worker, is deep in conversation with Jennifer Deans, pastor of Potomac Conference’s Community Praise Center–Dulles church plant in Northern Virginia. Deans, who has been pastoring in the Potomac Conference for seven years, shares a bit about the
project. “Although we are plant of the CPC Alexandria church we are not trying to be a carbon copy of it,” she says. “We still want to maintain the core, family-friendly identity of the Alexandria church. Most of the Alexandria church’s members are black and 90 percent commute in—some even drive over an hour to get to church. However, only six percent of the Dulles community is black. There are more Caucasian, Hispanics and Asians in this community and we are purposeful about making our leadership team look like the community.” Torres nods in approval. “I’ve worked in churches were the people attending don’t look like the community,” she said. “How we are going to reach the community when we don’t know what’s in the community? If you don’t live in the community and aren’t invested in it, how can you really speak for them?” Deans concurs, “Most of the people we hope will be attending live within 10 miles. Because traffic is a challenge we will have to be creative. We are still doing our research.” Torres: “Have you done a door-to-door survey?” Deans: “Not yet. Right now we rent a space. One of our challenges is that we are not residential. We are located in the Dulles Town Center where everything around us is commercial so we’ll have to approach people in the parking lot.” Lillian: “Have you thought about capitalizing on your newness?” Deans: “How?” Torres: “Go introduce yourself to your neighbors and let them know you are a new church. That’s also a good excuse for doing a survey—ask them what their needs are. Also before you do this, plan an event in the future that you can invite them to.”

At the next table, Pranitha Fielder, the youth and young adult pastor at Potomac’s Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., shares her story with some new colleagues. “I’m an Indian woman and come from a culture where women have their place. I had been working in Youth Ministries at Sligo for five years when my mom asked me, “Who is going to marry you as a pastor?” Five months later when she attended the seminary, she met the man who would become her husband. As the women get to know each other, some of the women shared their accomplishments. Chesapeake’s Carolyn Scheller said after working with her husband, Ken, on the Eastern Shore for 20 years, first as a teacher, then as a Bible worker, she finally got the title of associate pastor in March. The women applaud wildly. They also do the same when a colleague announced that Paula Olivier, who pastors Allegheny East’s First church in Montclair, N.J., completed her Doctor of Ministry. Somer Knight is a chaplain at Chesapeake’s Spencerville Adventist Academy in Spencerville, Md., and Marilynn Scott, Spencerville church’s pastor for Children’s and Women’s ministries and community services, work only about a mile apart but are so busy that they don’t see each other often. They say that this dinner was a nice opportunity for them to catch up. “Women in ministry are highly relational but I had no idea there were this many of us,” Knight says. And while this may be true, Scott says, “You can feel isolated sometimes in ministry. Having time together to know each other better and network is so good. It helps us realize we are not
alone.” They each share a bit of their stories. Scott worked with her husband in ministry for 19 years but when he passed away she retreated into a human resources post at the world church headquarters in Silver Spring, Md. “When this opportunity at Spencerville came, I didn’t think it was the right timing,” she says. “I prayed about it and then told them, ‘No.’ But I felt God calling me and worried about rejecting something God was calling me to do.” Knight, who has been a Bible teacher and a chaplain for about 10 years now, is sure of her calling and sees her chaplaincy work as complementary to that of a church pastor. “One of benefits of working in the school is we get five days a week with the kids as opposed to hoping for one day a week,” she says. “We get to know them and nurture their walk as they daily experience God. The most important thing for our pastors to know is that I’m their partner in ministry at the school.” When Therezinha Barbalho introduces herself as the senior pastor of Potomac’s Brazilian church in Richmond, Va., and the only woman pastor in the entire world to serve in a Brazilian congregation, an audible “wow” went around the room. She says, “Please pray for me.” When I cornered Barbalho later and asked her if the 15 recent baptisms at the church is proof that God is working through her, she humbly said, “These only happened because of God.” Lisa Reid Smith, pastor of Allegheny East’s New Life church in Hampton, Va., is also a trailblazer. She was the first female pastor in any of the regional conferences and has been in ministry for 20 years, seven of which have been at New Life. “When I first got there, there was a group that wouldn’t attend period because I am a woman. And to this day they haven’t come back,” she says. “One of my challenges is to get leadership to see we are not just female pastors we are just pastors. When leadership is looking to fill a post at a church I’d love to see them look into what the church’s needs are instead of asking the senior pastors if they are willing to take a woman pastor.” Knott tells the women, “Some of the work we do paves the way for others. And although there will always be challenges, they don’t have to be the same ones.” The women also find support from division leadership. Ivan Williams, NAD Ministerial secretary, says he and his associates, “pray for you all, serve you and are advocates for you. We support you 100 percent.” He also gives some advice: “Be certain that you have solidified in your mind your calling. You should be able to tell without hesitation why God called you and how He met you.” Knott then shares some good news. “One of our goals is to double the numbers of women in ministry around the North American Division in five years,” she said. “We now have 107 women, but it is difficult finding churches that will take women. We are now working on giving incentives to churches, including offering to pay half a woman pastor’s salary. Money talks.” Women’s ordination was naturally also on the menu that evening. Tara VinCross, pastor for Pennsylvania Conference’s Chestnut Hill church in Philadelphia, who serves on both the General Conference and North American Division’s Women’s Ordination committees, those committees have “given me great hope and great joy. I’m
excited by how God is working and He has been a source of praise in my life.” She also shares a comment from Artur Stele, a General Conference vice president who said during one of the ordination meetings, “While we are deciding who should be distributing bread, people are starving.” Knott who is also on those committees says, “How can we lay aside what God has done in our lives? I know I cannot do that because that would be a denial of what He has done in my life for the past 20 years.” She also tells the gathering that the next women’s ordination meeting will be on July 2. “The church will not split over this,” she says. “Pray for us. Your being in the field is important because you are breaking down barriers.” Ann Roda, a pastor at Chesapeake’s New Hope church in Fulton, Md., asks about support for women’s ordination at the seminary. Williams responds, “The seminary overall is very supportive of women in ministry with a few exceptions. The faculty should be making a statement about this soon.” Roda also shared the story of a young woman she met in the Philippines: “This young lady dropped out of the premed program because she felt God’s calling so strongly. I told her this was quite a risk because her chances of getting a church is zero but she said she can’t deny the call.” Despite the challenges that women pastors face here and abroad, Williams encourages the pastors to mentor young women who show interest in the ministry. “Don’t be afraid to tell them to consider pastoral ministry,” he says. “We need to be intentional about grooming future leaders if the Lord tarries.”

COMMENTS POLICY: The Columbia Union Conference Visitor encourages quality conversation and welcomes your thoughtful comments. All comments are subject to approval but will not be edited. Please limit your comments to 500 words or less. Only one comment per person will be published.

---
Alex Bryan, DMin, was recently named the sixth president of Kettering College in Dayton, Ohio, effective June 1. He replaces Charles Scriven, PhD, who retires this spring after a 12-year tenure at the college.

Bryan has been senior pastor at Walla Walla University Church in College Place, Wash., for the last four years. In addition to teaching on the faculty in both the School of Business and the School of Theology at Walla Walla, he is a member of the president’s cabinet, where he acts as advisor for vision and strategy for the university.

Bryan has traveled widely as a public speaker and is the author of a recent book, The Green Cord Dream, which explores a fresh vision for Seventh-day Adventist Christianity. He also is co-founder and co-chair of “the ONE project,” a grassroots organization exploring Christ-centered service in the 21st century. He served as lead pastor at New Community Church in Atlanta for 11 years before becoming pastoral director for mission and ministry at the Collegedale church (Tenn.) from 2007–2009.

“We are delighted to have the Bryan family join our community,” said Roy Chew, chair of the Kettering College board of directors and president of the Kettering Medical Center, which owns and operates the school. “Alex has a passion for education, learning and leadership. He will work with the Kettering College faculty and staff to continue to grow and improve the already excellent educational opportunities, making for an exciting future.”

Bryan said, “It is an honor to join such a wonderful team of educators and healthcare professionals. I am passionate about learning institutions like Kettering College, which...
trains its students in both professional excellence and meaningful Christian service. I look forward to contributing to a rich spirit of innovation as Kettering College pursues its unique and important mission in the days ahead. Adventist higher education has a long history of preparing men and women to make a rich, Christ-centered difference in the world. I am thrilled to be a part of this work."

A graduate of Southern Adventist University (Tenn.), Bryan received his bachelor’s degree in 1993 with a dual major in history and religion. He went on to obtain a Master of Divinity, with an emphasis in young adult ministry, from Andrews University (Mich.) in 1996. Bryan earned a Doctor of Ministry from George Fox University (Ore.) in 2009. His dissertation was titled “The Role of Human Emotion in Christian Discipleship.”

The son of a pediatrician and a nurse, Bryan was raised in the mountains of western North Carolina. He is married to Nicole Ward Bryan, a high school counselor, and the couple has two children, Audrey (7) and William (2).

**Kettering College Presidential History**

- William C. Sandborn, PhD 1966–69
- Winton H. Beaven, PhD 1970–83
- Robert A. Williams, PhD 1983–90
- Peter D. H. Bath, DMin 1990–00
- Charles Scriven, PhD 2000–13
- Alexander Bryan, DMin 2013–

**COMMENTS POLICY:** The Columbia Union Conference Visitor encourages quality conversation and welcomes your thoughtful comments. All comments are subject to approval but will not be edited.

Please limit your comments to 500 words or less. Only one comment per person will be published.
Search and Rescue for Manassas Member Has a Happy Ending

Story by Dan Jensen Published 4/24/13

David Feenor and Ryka of K-9 Alert located in Richmond, Va., share a happy moment outside of the Montebello Fire Department following George Carr’s rescue.

After a being lost on the Appalachian Trail for 20 hours, George Carr, a member of Potomac Conference’s Manassas (Va.) church, is now back at home. Carr got separated from a group of some 20 members of his church who traveled some 150 miles south to Camp Blue Ridge (CBR) in Montebello, Va., for a weekend retreat. The group decided to take a Sabbath afternoon hike on the Appalachian Trail.

At approximately 4 p.m. they reached their destination, took photos and celebrated their arrival at Spy Rock. After 10–15 minutes, small groups of members starting heading back to the cars. However, some members decided to stay longer to enjoy the view.

Unfortunately, Carr somehow got separated from the group. The driver who took Carr up to
the trail noticed that he wasn't in the car going back to camp. When he inquired as the where Carr might be, he was told they thought he had gone back to camp with a different group.

Upon learning that Carr had not come back, Pastor Randy Davis assembled three other people and drove back up the trail to see if they could locate him.

The staff of Camp Blue Ridge was alerted and determined to initiate a search and rescue within 30 minutes if Carr had not been located.

After 45 minutes searching in multiple directions, John Newman, one of the three members of the initial search group, called 911 from Spy Rock to alert the authorities as to the situation. Simultaneously, the staff at CBR was already mobilizing a search and rescue effort.

Prayer groups were immediately assembled, and members of the group started making contact with the immediate family.

The sheriff’s department called in the helicopter well before midnight and teams of search dogs were brought in early Sunday morning.

“I heard the helicopters last night, but I just missed them–I knew they were looking for me so it was only a matter of time,” Carr said. “It got cold, so I kept moving in order to stay warm.”

One of the most amazing stories to come out of this experience took place several miles away. It just so happens the Virginia Search and Rescue (SAR) Counsel was holding its annual meeting in Appomattox, Va. Sharon Johnson, a member of DOGS East, said, “On Saturday evening, we got word that a man was missing and volunteers were being called to join the search. Without hesitation, we voted to end our meeting, packed up and came to Montebello to join in the search. It was actually a wonderful way to segue from our meetings to an actual rescue. This is why we do what we do, and it’s wonderful when it all comes together in the end.”

Nearly 60 members and 10 dogs from the SAR Counsel joined approximately 60 other volunteers from the local community and surrounding counties.
Around noon on Sunday, David Fleenor and his search dog Kyla, both of K-9 Alert of Richmond, found Carr approximately 7 miles from the trail. “I was woken up by the sound of men shouting my name, and it was at that moment that a dog came up and started licking me” Carr shared. “The rescuers were right behind the German Shepherd and it was so good to see them. I knew they were coming for me.”

The Manassas church group came together on Sunday morning to feed the volunteers, many who had been out all night on the search. Pastor Davis stood on a chair in the makeshift search and rescue headquarters at the local fire station and shared his appreciation with all those who had gathered to debrief and eat a wonderful dinner put together by volunteers from a local bed and breakfast. “I can’t say enough about the CBR staff and the volunteers who came out to help,” Davis said. “They responded immediately to the situation. It’s evident they’ve had search and rescue training. Words can’t express how grateful we are for all the selfless work that went into this rescue. … The way this community came together for someone they don’t even know says so much about the good that still exists within humanity.”

He then gave a prayer of thanks to God, and asked for a blessing on all those who took part in the search and rescue.

As he reflected on the past 20-hour ordeal, Carr, a tired but grateful man, concluded, “God is awesome. He’s just awesome. As I kept pacing back and forth last night, I just kept repeating the 23rd Psalms. I want to thank all the volunteers who took of their time to search for someone they don’t even know. They were wonderful.”

Some 60 volunteers joined the search and rescue effort.
Attendees at a nearby search and rescue meeting immediately pitched in to help find Manassas member George Carr.

COMMENTS POLICY: The Columbia Union Conference Visitor encourages quality conversation and welcomes your thoughtful comments. All comments are subject to approval but will not be edited. Please limit your comments to 500 words or less. Only one comment per person will be published.
Charles McMillan, PhD, WAU’s Alumnus of the Year, addresses fellow alumni at a reception in Bethesda, Md.

Charles McMillan, PhD, director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory and president of Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS), was named alumnus of the year by his alma mater, Washington Adventist University (WAU) during alumni homecoming weekend, April 12–14. The Los Alamos Lab, based in New Mexico operates the lab for the National Nuclear Security Administration. McMillan was the guest of honor at the annual alumni awards banquet held in Bethesda, Md., April 13.

In a brief address to the gathering, McMillan paid tribute to WAU’s emphasis on service as a valuable part of the learning experience. He said he was pleased to note that the Gateway, the university’s iconic emblem of service, remains on the campus. His graduating class, the class of 1977, replaced it after it was destroyed by fire in 1970.

“Service of the highest level requires education of the best quality,” McMillan said. “Education is not just about the acquisition of knowledge; it is about asking the right questions and [knowing] if the answers make sense.”
Integrity, quality and a strong STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education are increasingly critical to students’ success in the world today, he said.

McMillan graduated from WAU with a bachelor’s degree in mathematics and physics. Upon graduation, he taught for a year at Rusangu Secondary School in Zambia after which, he earned his doctoral degree in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

He began his career in 1983, as an experimental physicist at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) in California. He later moved into computational science and management at LLNL before joining Los Alamos in 2006 as principal associate director for its weapons programs. In that capacity, he oversaw the safety, reliability and performance of the U.S. nuclear deterrent, which is the lab's main mission.

McMillan has earned two Department of Energy Awards of Excellence; one of them for developing an innovative holographic tool that enhances the ability of scientists to predict nuclear performance.

Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory are the only two in the United States where classified work toward the design of nuclear weapons is undertaken. According to its website, the mission of the lab is to “develop and apply science and technology to ensure the safety, security and reliability of the U.S. nuclear deterrent; reduce global threats; and solve emerging national and security challenges.”

Ellie Barker, WAU's director of Alumni Relations; Charles McMillan; Weymouth Spence, WAU president; and Mark Young, WAU's Alumni Association president
conversation and welcomes your thoughtful comments. All comments are subject to approval but will not be edited.

Please limit your comments to 500 words or less. Only one comment per person will be published.
Spencerville Pathfinders’ 12-Hour Rock-a-thon Helps Homeless Persons

Story by Lisa Saveikis Burrow Published 4/18/13

Spencerville’s Pathfinders listen intently during a worship held before their 12-hour rock-a-thon to help the homeless.

It was around 7 p.m., when something strange started happening at Chesapeake Conference’s Spencerville church. People started carrying rocking chairs of all shapes and sizes into the Silver Spring, Md.–church’s fellowship hall. At 7:30 p.m., Sherri Ingram–Hudgins presented worship along with her friend Jerry, a formerly homeless man who is now a recovering addict and a Christian. Ingram–Hudgins is the founder of A Hat for Harold, a charity that provides micro–grants to the homeless. Around 8 p.m., 18 of the Spencerville Polar Bear Pathfinders, wearing neon–green T–shirts inscribed with the words “I Rocked,” got into those rocking chairs. Their goal? To rock for part or all of the next 12 hours and raise $300 for A Hat for Harold. Each Pathfinder had collected pledges from family, friends and neighbors. The pledges were based on a certain amount per hour rocked or a flat amount for participating. Each Pathfinder had to gather $25 in pledges from family, friends and neighbors and make their own personal pledge toward their goal. Most far exceed the $25 minimum.

Throughout the night, the Pathfinders played some games, read books, crocheted and had
some snacks. Around 1 a.m., they phoned Ingram–Hudgins and woke her up to tell her about the pledge total: $2,150! She was stunned. Throughout the night, some of the rockers retired at their pre-designated curfew time into the sleeping areas. A few ignored their curfew and kept going. Others rocked on through the night to make their goal. When the rocking slowed and stopped, the chaperones sat nearby and continued to rock the chairs to keep the Pathfinders going and going and going! At 8 a.m. the bright spring sunshine was already streaming in the windows and the Pathfinders counted down the seconds to conclude the rock-a-thon. Relieved sighs, smiles, stretches and sleepy eyes were greeted with hot chocolate and donuts and then breakfast. The idea for the rock-a-thon came from 12-year-old Aaron Burrow who is a seventh-grader at Spencerville Adventist Academy. The church’s Pathfinder leaders, who include Rochelle Swanson and Scott Kuczma, thought it was a great, creative idea that would get all the Pathfinders involved in really relevant community service. Looking back, organizers say the event showed them how incredibly giving their Pathfinders are and they hope to have a similar event next year.

**COMMENTS POLICY:** The Columbia Union Conference Visitor encourages quality conversation and welcomes your thoughtful comments. All comments are subject to approval but will not be edited.

Please limit your comments to 500 words or less. Only one comment per person will be published.
Upcoming Events Around the Columbia Union

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.

NEW JERSEY
April 26-28: Trinity Temple Academy’s alumni, family and friends are invited to celebrate the academy’s 80th anniversary during this year’s alumni weekend. Organizers will be celebrating and honoring classmates and graduates, presenting alumni awards and rededicating themselves to the future of the school. The weekend begins at the school with a meet and greet with guest speaker and alumnus Pastor Marvin McLean. On Sabbath Pastor Ronald Reeves, an alumnus, will speak for the divine service at Trinity Temple, which is located in Hillside, N.J. Saturday night's event, called “The Celebration of Trinity Temple Academy,” will take place at the Pantagis Renaissance featuring guest speaker Pastor S. Peter Campbell and performances by a live band. On Sunday there will be a special alumni brunch at Trinity Temple, 11 to 2 p.m. For more information, visit trinitytempleacademy.com.