Weekly News From Around the Columbia Union Conference

August 14, 2013

120 Attend Ohio’s First Hispanic Youth Festival

Some 120 youth attended Ohio Conference’s first Hispanic Youth Festival, where they spent several days growing in spirituality and a greater understanding about the importance of studying the Bible. The youth, who represented the conference’s four Hispanic districts—Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton-Hamilton and Findlay—met at the Camp Mohaven Camp and Retreat Center in Danville. Not only did they participate in recreational activities, like horseback riding, sports and a mud-run, they also enjoyed drama, music, devotional memorizations, a preaching competition and a Bible bowl.

The Findlay District wins third place in the Bible bowl.
“The talent and potential of the young people was evident, and is a true testament of how God can manifest Himself through them,” commented Oswaldo Magaña, conference Hispanic Ministries director. “It’s exciting to see the potential in the Hispanic youth of the Ohio Conference.”—Story by Edgar Ríos

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Potomac Church Participates in National Night Out, Offers Services to Community

For the second year in a row, members of Potomac Conference’s Seabrook church in Lanham, Md., joined their community for National Night Out. The annual event serves as the nation’s premiere crime prevention activity to promote involvement in crime prevention activities, police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie in the fight for a safer nation.

During the evening, members, including Pastor Jimmy Muñoz (pictured, left), distributed 500 leaflets advertising the church’s free, professional counseling services. Seabrook has 15 licensed therapists and coaches who volunteer their time to help couples in marital or parenting crises and those suffering from depression or other conditions. This ministry has been available to Seabrook church members and friends since 2011 but was advertised to the community for the first time during National Night Out.

Participants also distributed hundreds of pieces of literature, including The Great Controversy and Steps to Christ. Click here to learn more about their counseling services.—Story by Jimmy Muñoz
Allegheny East Members Grow Love at Public School

It’s a hot Thursday afternoon and Brenda Billingy and Marquis Johns, pastors at Allegheny East Conference’s Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Md., are kneeling in front of a garden box with second-graders at a local public elementary school. All are listening closely as Baldwin Williams, a Metropolitan member, shows them how to plant peppers, collard greens and strawberries. Seeing one little boy’s excitement after transplanting tomatoes into the planter box is an answer to prayer for Denise Dunn, who, for the past year, has served as the school’s principal. “Some 90 percent of our students get free or reduced lunch,” she says. “I wanted to have a school garden so we can teach parents and students how to eat healthy and give them access to food over the summer months when school is not in session.”

The garden came as a result of providence. Last year one Metropolitan member reached out to the school just when they were looking for speakers to attend career day. She told them the church was looking for ways to embrace the community. “Embrace us,” Dunn recalls saying.—Story by Taashi Rowe

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Washington Adventist Hospital Files New Letter of Intent

Last week the Adventist HealthCare Board of Directors filed a new letter of intent with the Maryland Health Care Commission detailing plans to build a second location for the Washington Adventist Hospital in White Oak, Md., a few miles away from its current facility in Takoma Park, Md. Hospital leaders have been attempting to build a new hospital in White Oak since 2009 when it originally filed an application to build a 249-bed facility. However, Maryland Health regulators turned down the plan.

The new plan includes moving several of the hospital’s more acute services, such as labor and delivery and post partum care, to its White Oak property, while keeping physician offices, behavioral health services and other outpatient care at the Takoma Park location.

“I am pleased with how our project has taken shape and, while we need approvals from state agencies to move forward, I feel we have a strong plan that demonstrates our commitment to providing the high-quality healthcare services our community has come to know,” shared Joyce Newmyer, the hospital’s president in a letter to staff members.
Kettering Adventist HealthCare Partners With Dayton Churches

Each year Kettering Adventist HealthCare's (KAHC) Spiritual Services team, headquartered in Dayton, Ohio, strives to reach employees with the booklet, *Joining God in the Everyday*, and daily videos. These materials are created for the organization's Week of Prayer, which covers a different spiritual theme each year. Last year a tear-out page was added that allows individuals to write prayer requests, order free books and request Bible studies that are turned over to volunteers at Ohio Conference's Dayton area churches.

Through these materials, KAHC can reach up to 10,000 employees and their families. KAHC leaders have also distributed the booklets to every discharged Emergency Department patient. Throughout the year, they received more than 260 requests for Bible studies. With such a positive response, KAHC leaders have added the tear-out page to this year's booklet as well. Click [here](http://e2.ma/message/2uwnd/6diogi) to view the website and watch the videos.—Story by Christina Keresoma

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Book Release: Let’s Talk

Seventh-day Adventists under the age of 35 often feel like their concerns aren’t being heard, says Jan Paulsen, DTh, a member of Chesapeake Conference’s Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md. Paulsen, who retired from his role as president of the worldwide Adventist Church in 2010, recently published *Let’s Talk*, which covers issues raised by young adults on the Hope Channel's broadcast of the same name and throughout his time as president.

**Q: What would you like church leaders to take away from this book?**

**A:** I would like my fellow leaders to go away with a conviction and vision of the incredible value that the youth and young professionals bring to the church. If we want them to stay, we have to trust them with an affirmation or a recognition of the spiritual gifts they have and allow them to practice them in our church.
End Quote: On Changing Attitudes Toward Marriage

"When it comes to marriage and sexual relationships, popular culture often paints religious institutions either as quaint and wildly out of touch, or as harsh, strident champions of a bygone morality. How do we sound to our young people when we talk to them about God’s ideal for human relationships? What principles should guide our message and tone of voice? I believe our starting point is simply this: The church, as God’s chosen instrument to communicate the gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus, will reach out to embrace all people. There is no one who shall not be wanted and loved by the church. Yet, at the same time, the church can’t be a body of maximum accommodation for all points of view, constantly shifting and adjusting her values and personality to fit the broadest possible spectrum of human opinion."—An excerpt from a response Jan Paulsen shared with young people in his new book, Let’s Talk: Conversations With Young Adventists About Their Church

UPCOMING EVENTS

DELAWARE

August 17: The Millsboro church is hosting a free health fair from 1 to 5 p.m. in their fellowship hall. The nine health screening stations will include: health-age screening by computer, body fat analysis by scale, hydotherapy,
blood pressure, peak flow meter-lung capacity, chair massage, health counseling, glucose and cholesterol screening and EKGs bone density test. There will also be a CPR class at 2 p.m. on August 18. The church is located at 30007 Cordrey Road in Millsboro, Del. For more information or to register, call (302) 945-2260.

MARYLAND
July 27-August 24: Pastor Earl Esdaile comes from Andrews University (Mich.) to present the Amazing Love Bible Series at the Northeast church, located at 1201 Taylor Avenue in Parkville, Md. The program starts at 7 p.m. each evening (except Mondays and Thursdays), and will include inspiring preaching, beautiful music and a Vacation Bible School program.

August 18: Ben Carson will be signing copies of his books, including his latest, America the Beautiful, at the Potomac Adventist Book Store from 2 to 5 p.m. The store is located at 12004 Cherry Hill Road in Silver Spring, Md. They can also be reached at (301) 572-0700.

August 24: The United Men's Ministry Movement (UM3) will be hosting a one-day workshop at Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Md. All men of the Columbia Union who are 18 and older are invited to attend. This Sabbath workshop, which lasts from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., will include lunch and specific leadership workshops. Visit nehemiahsda.com to learn more and register.

PENNSYLVANIA
July 28-August 17: The Willow Grove (Pa.) church will host the “Victory!” evangelistic revival series from 7:15 p.m. nightly, on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Evangelist Sherry L. Hall will share the message each night. The church is located at 1576 Fairview Avenue. For more information visit willowgroveadventist.org.

VIRGINIA
August 24: Potomac Conference’s EQUIP is an event designed to empower people to lead in their local church more effectively. The event offers more than 20 seminars that cover various topics, such as how to give effective Bible studies, build healthy relationships and be an effective church administrator. The seminar will be held at the New Market (Va.) church from 3-7:45 p.m. Click here to register. Deadline: Aug. 23

September 15-16: Potomac Conference’s Women’s Retreat, will focus on God’s grace to us, how we show grace to others and how to move gracefully as women of God. Come for a weekend of spiritual, mental and physical refreshment in a wooded setting, amid tranquil paths with accommodations at the Westfield Marriott in Chantilly, Va. Click here to register. Deadline: September 4

WASHINGTON, D.C.
August 25: The Takoma Park Church is hosting their fifth annual Community Fun Day from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. This outreach project is absolutely
FREE and open to the public. Live Christian music will fill the air as children, family, friends and community members participate in wholesome activities for the entire family; such as, moon bounce, games, face-painting, and a free neck and back massage. They will also serve grilled veggie dogs and popcorn. The church is located at 6810 Eastern Avenue Northwest in Washington, D.C.

ONLINE

August 19: Join the free webinar for Adventists InStep for Life (AISFL) and Let's Move Day to be conducted at 8 p.m. ET. Learn how you can prepare and hold a successful event. An update will be shared about AISFL and ideas on what you can do for Let's Move Day, with time for questions. Click here to register.

September 11-14: The North American Division’s Adult Ministries is hosting a virtual Festival of the Laity to equip church members for ministries for Sabbath School, Personal Ministries and Prison Ministries. Registration is free. To find out more information about this event, visit the Festival of Laity website and then register online.

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Manny Rodriguez, an active member in the Cleveland Hispanic district, was the weekend speaker. He shared a series of messages focused on “Letting Go and Letting God,” where he encouraged the young people to allow God to take control of their lives and to share His love with others.
Oswaldo Magaña, conference Hispanic Ministries director, and Steve Carlson, Youth Ministries director, address the young attendees.

The Columbus District presents their Bible musical.
The Cleveland District performs their drama “Are u Ready or Not?”

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*Please limit your comments to 500 words or less. Only one comment per person will be published.*
Allegheny East Church Plants Love at Public School

Story by Taashi Rowe Published 8/14/2013

Baldwin Williams, Pastor Brenda Billingy and Pastor Marquis Johns flank two elementary students as they install a vegetable garden.

It’s a hot Thursday afternoon and Brenda Billingy and Marquis Johns, pastors at Allegheny East Conference’s Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Md., are kneeling in front of a garden box with second-graders at a local public elementary school. All are listening closely as Baldwin Williams, a Metropolitan member, shows them how to plant peppers, collard greens and strawberries.

Seeing one little boy’s excitement after transplanting tomatoes into the planter box is an answer to prayer for Denise Dunn, who, for the past year, has served as the school’s principal. “Some 90 percent of our students get free or reduced lunch,” she says. “I wanted to have a school garden so we can teach parents and students how to eat healthy and give them access to food over the summer months when school is not in session.”

The garden came as a result of providence. The Metropolitan church campus, which includes their own George E. Peters Adventist School, has been located across from the Ridgecrest public elementary school for many years. Last year one member reached out to the school just when they were looking for speakers to attend career day. She told them the church was looking for ways to embrace the community. “Embrace us,” Dunn recalls saying.

And that is what Metropolitan members are doing. Over the past few months, they have circled the school and prayed; held a clothing drive; invited parents to make use of the church’s food pantry and started the school’s garden with eight boxes. That’s not all. The church also launched an English as a Second Language classes.

Dunn remembers how excited the parents were when they received clothes from church members. “The clothes and shoes were brand new,” she said. “We were not used to receiving new [items] and they were so beautifully packed with loving kindness.”

Billingy, Metropolitan’s senior pastor, is thrilled that the Ridgecrest community can feel Christ’s love through them. “This feels better than regular evangelism as we are really touching the community now and that is what Jesus would have us do” she says. Another added bonus is that the church’s young people are fully supporting and backing this partnership with the school.
Denise Dunn, (back in black blouse), principal of the Ridgecrest elementary school, is overjoyed to have a garden at the school.
Just like an after church fellowship lunch, Potluck is where members of the Columbia Union Conference can share what they've cooked up in terms of spiritually-based music, literature and arts. Have a book, recording or project to share? Email us at visitor@columbiaunion.net.

Book Release: Let's Talk

Story by V. Michelle Bernard Published 8/14/13

Seventh-day Adventists under the age of 35 often feel like their concerns aren’t being heard, says Jan Paulsen, DTh. Paulsen, who retired from his role as president of the worldwide Adventist Church in 2010, recently published Let’s Talk, which covers issues raised by young adults on the Hope Channel’s broadcast of the same name and throughout his time as president.

“In some ways it’s fairly raw,” says Paulsen, a member of Chesapeake Conference’s Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md. “It comes straight from their mouths ... I wanted the church to feel how passionately and caringly they feel about church issues.”

Each chapter begins with feedback and questions from young adults, followed by a response from Paulsen. They end with discussion
questions to help keep the conversations going at a local level.

Q: What themes did you hear the most in your talks with young Adventists?
A: They feel that although they make up 50 percent of the church community they have so little practical engagement. They would like to be part of the life of the church, to be trusted with some responsibility. They have a wealth of ideas, and they would like to use them. They are also very concerned with community issues and think the church should be too.

Although they have lots of questions, they didn’t except me to have all the answers. They were pleased that I cared enough to give them serious time. That should be a signal to us as a church.

Q: What would you like church leaders to take away from this book?
A: I would like my fellow leaders to go away with a conviction and vision of the incredible value that the youth and young professionals bring to the church. If we want them to stay, we have to trust them with an affirmation or a recognition of the spiritual gifts they have and allow them to practice them in our church.

I also think it is important for leaders to not be intimidated by the questions that come. We need to let the church be an open society.

Q: You must have gotten many questions about marriage and sexual relationships. What was your response?
A: How do we sound to our young people when we talk to them about God’s ideal for human relationships? What principles should guide our message and tone of voice?

I believe our starting point is simply this: The church, as God’s chosen instrument to communicate the gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus, will reach out to embrace all people. There is no one who shall not be wanted and loved by the church. Yet, at the same time, the church can’t be a body of maximum accommodation for all points of view, constantly shifting and adjusting her values and personality to fit the broadest possible spectrum of human opinion.

Buy the book at your local Adventist Book Center or at adventistbookcenter.com.

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