Small-School Teachers Make Connections

Some 20 teachers who work in one-room school houses around the Columbia Union Conference, gathered Sunday and Monday at the union’s headquarters in Columbia, Md., for training and encouragement. Ileana Espinosa (pictured right), an associate in the union’s Office of Education who organized the training, said the purpose of the training was three-fold. “We wanted these teachers to feel special, important, validated and affirmed,” she said. “We also wanted them to make connections with teachers who had the same workload and have them learn something practical that they can take back to improve their personal and professional lives.”

The participants, which included several conference superintendents, learned about the new North American Division math and science curriculum, time
management, marketing, fruitful pastor/teacher partnerships and spirituality. This is the first in a series of training planned for small-school teachers.

Jennifer Ewers (pictured left), who teaches at Mountain View Conference’s Greenbrier Valley Academy in Lewisburg, W.Va., is in her first year teaching in a one-room school house. “I love it,” she said. “... I love how the little kids listen when I’m teaching something to the older kids, and the older kids listen when I’m teaching older kids.”—Story by Taashi Rowe

READ MORE

Adventist Chaplain Supports Those Affected by Navy Yard Shooter

Commander Paul S. Anderson was one of 12 Navy chaplains, including the Navy Chief of Chaplains, who assembled to assist the FBI and Metropolitan Police officers in notifying family members of the 12 killed in the shooting at the Navy Yard on Monday in Washington, D.C.

“I was present at the reception station at the Washington Nationals stadium to greet and instruct employees who arrived by bus about food and beverages,” Commander Anderson said. “It was an assessment point to discern if any of the employees needed pastoral or counseling assistance.”

Anderson, a member of Allegheny East Conference’s Emmanuel-Brinklow church
in Ashton, Md., was then diverted to assist with death notifications and to provide family support. He continues to minister to families today.

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New Jersey Church’s Third "Let’s Move!" Day Draws 140

This past Sunday, New Jersey Conference’s Wayne church hosted its third annual "Let's Move!" Day 5K Run/Walk. They also held a 100-meter dash for kids under age 15 and games for children aged 3 though 8.

More than 140 people participated in the three events, about 40 percent of whom were visitors. "I liked doing a 5K, now I want to get ready for a 10K," said 13-year-old Angel Pena, a visitor.

"As a parent, it is extremely important to me that my son understands the importance of making healthy food choices and staying active. This process must begin at a tender age so they actually know what is good and crucial for their mental, physical and spiritual growth," said Amalia Meliti (pictured with her son), a Wayne member and event spokesperson. The event also drew sponsorship from several local businesses who provided each runner with an individual timer.—Story by Delma Avila
Allegheny East Members Give Away 640 Backpacks

Members of Allegheny East Conference’s Macedonia church in Chester, Pa, who run the town’s Better Living Center, recently organized the eighth annual Chester Community Fair. The fair drew some 1,000, area residents for live music, healthcare information and screenings and other fun activities. The church also donated 640 backpacks and school supplies worth more than $12,800.

The church also hosted a prayer garden and offered counseling. Some 30 nonprofit and for-profit vendors participated, providing blood pressure screenings, healthy food options, natural skin care products, health insurance and a soccer clinic by the Philadelphia Union Soccer Team. Other sponsors included, Genesis Health Care, the Rocky Run YMCA, the Andrew L. Hicks Jr. Foundation, Cradles to Crayons, KidsPartners, Keystone First, Adventist Community Services and The Chester Spirit newspaper.—Story by Blane Stoddart; Photos by Patricia Wagner

Potomac Conference Women’s Retreat
Draws 150

More than 150 women attended Potomac Conference’s English Women’s Retreat held last weekend in Chantilly, Va. “There’s no record of an English women’s retreat being held in recent history,” said Sharon Cress, Potomac’s associate for pastoral ministries and coordinator for Women’s Ministries. “Women comprise such a large percent of the population, and the demands of their daily lives continue to get more strenuous in today’s society. It’s important to take time to come together, recharge, nurture and energize one another so we may pass those empowering tools on to someone else and share God’s Good News.”

The weekend featured many “Glimpses of Grace,” with inspiring talks from people all over the Columbia Union, including Bill Miller, conference president, and Brenda Billingly, an Allegheny East Conference pastor. Women selected from several seminars, including demonstrating grace and improving emotional intelligence. Other high points of the weekend included a Saturday evening gala and several exercise sessions.— Story by Tiffany Doss

READ MORE ON POTOMAC’S WEBSITE

Allegheny West Church Celebrates 90 Years

Borrowing words from a gospel song, Allegheny West Conference’s Ethan Temple chose the theme “… and No Ways Tired!” to commemorate their congregation's 90th birthday. They celebrated during a recent weekend that started with a lively Friday evening service, where three men raised at Ethan Temple broke bread: pastors Michael Dyson, Terry Giles and Albert Dyson.

On Sabbath morning, Pastor Joe Grider welcomed current and returning members from every decade, including their inaugural year. William Wright, from Germantown, Ohio, was just a boy 90 years ago when his parents, Nathan and Willa Wright, and others started Ethan Temple. He sat smiling on the front row during the special service. After a grand procession to recognize notable historic members, the eldest congregant, Bennie Grissom (99), sang “I Will Trust in the Lord.”
The Sabbath service also included congratulatory remarks from the city mayor and a state representative. Choirs from the Ethan Temple church and Dale Wright Memorial church (pictured) in Germantown added their harmonious selections to the momentous occasion.—Story by Allegheny West Conference Staff

Columbus Junior Academy Collect, Share Food

Darwyn Allen, new principal and teacher at Columbus Eastwood Junior Academy (EJA) in Westerville, Ohio, decided to begin the school year early by building connections with his neighbors in the Blendon Township. He brought together his local grocery store, students from EJA and nearby Mount Vernon Academy, local police and the fire department to collect food for the Mid-Ohio Food Bank. As part of the Operation Feed campaign, students went door to door and requested nonperishable food from their neighbors. They collected 425 pounds of food, which will feed 425 people.

We wanted to show students that their community is bigger than Eastwood and to "incorporate them into us," Allen said.

"Principal Allen brings with him a passionate dedication to service. EJA is blessed to have his leadership skills," remarked Alison Jobson, superintendent of education for Ohio. Future programs and service projects are in the pipeline, which Allen hopes will strengthen their relationships in their community.—Story by Heidi Shoemaker
York Fourth-Grader’s Prayer Leads to Dad’s Baptism

Desiree Erickson, a fourth-grader at Pennsylvania Conference’s York Adventist Christian School, and her mom had been praying that her dad, Ray Erickson, would take Bible studies and be baptized. Ray’s desire is to provide the “best chance in life for Desiree,” and believes this is doable when the family is one in Christ. Recognizing the touch and call of the Master, Ray requested to learn of Him through study. While acceptance of the biblical truth was gradual, Ray had long since felt the heart-tug by his Lord and was ready to make a commitment early on.

When Desiree learned that her dad was looking forward to baptism, she made her decision to join him. After all, this had been her prayer for a long time.—Story by Karen Link; Photo by Michael Brandt
Lynchburg Members Participate in Community "Day in the Park"

Last Sabbath several members of Potomac's Lynchburg (Va.) church participated in the community’s "Day in the Park." Although this tradition goes back for almost 40 years and draws about 10,000 people annually, this was the church's second year participating.

"We prayed, and God blessed in a huge way," said Mike Little. "We were able to give away a lot of GLOW [tracts], Guide magazines, subscription cards for REAL magazine, Hope Channel cards and other literature. Most exciting of all we had 105 people request Bible studies. Praise God! There is no question that, as Jesus told us, 'The harvest truly is great.'"

Filmmaker Discusses The Adventists 2

Documentary filmmaker Martin Doblmeier (above, right), the man behind three films focused on Seventh-day Adventists, recently talked with Michelle Bernard,
Q: One Columbia Union organization, Kettering Adventist HealthCare, is featured in this film. Why did you choose to highlight them?

A: The last story in The Adventists 2 profiles a group of doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals who volunteer their time and talents to go for a week to the developing world and perform medical procedures that otherwise would not be possible. Many of those volunteers are Adventists who work for Kettering Adventist HealthCare. ...It is a big commitment on the part of the volunteers each year, but it makes a profound difference in the lives of hundreds of people they help heal.

READ MORE

Christian Record Provides Unique Gift for Blind Vets

On Tuesday Christian Record Services for the Blind (CRSB) introduced InSight4Vets, a unique, thank-you gift for blinded veterans. At the heart of InSight4Vets is a pocket-sized solar audio player pre-loaded with a special collection of books.

"The books were chosen for their interest and inspiration. It's a mix of lighter and heavier reading, to see veterans through perhaps the most difficult season of their lives, adjusting to their 'new normal,'” said Larry Pitcher, CRSB president. “The audio player’s filled with stories; stories about overcoming during the worst possible circumstances, stories of survival, stories of hope, and stories of transformation.”
The audio player, smaller than an iPhone, is packed with seven complete audio books, about 100 hours of listening. It can be charged by the sun or other light source, through USB cable or with the plug-in charger provided.

Pictured is George Haley, a blind veteran from Dowagiac, Mich., and a consultant for the project.—Story by Ray Dabrowski

READ MORE ON THE CRSB WEBSITE

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**NAD Seeks Young Adult Opinions**

At the North American Division's (NAD) request, the Barna Group, a Christian research firm, will be conducting research with members and non-members to better understand their opinions and experiences. The firm is asking both groups to participate in a brief, online survey discussing the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The survey shouldn't take more than 10 minutes to complete.

Barna is also seeking a small group of people, with different experiences and perceptions, to participate in an online group discussion to be held on Tuesday, September 24, to Thursday, September 26. Those who qualify and fully participate in the online discussion group, will be issued a $75 thank-you gift.

All participant information will remain confidential. To take the survey, [click here](http://e2.ma/message/69erd/6diogi).

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**MARYLAND**

**September 20-21:** Walter Brueggemann, an acclaimed author and theologian, will be speaking at the 33rd G. Arthur Keough Lectures at Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Md. The topic will be "Reperforming our Best Narrative." His lectures will be in the Morrison Hall chapel. In his September 20 lecture, which begins at 6:30 p.m., he will address "Choosing an Alternative Life: Follow me." September 21, the lecture begins at 10 a.m. and he will address "Imagining Neighborliness: Love thy neighbor." For more information, contact the Religion Department at (301) 891-4033.

**September 21:** Join Adventist Behavioral Health's team for the Out of the Darkness Community Walk to benefit the National Capital Area Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) from 10 a.m. to noon in Rockville Town Center in Rockville, Md. Those who sign up to join the Adventist Behavioral Health walk team will receive a free T-shirt! The three-mile walk aims to raise awareness of suicide and mental illness in the community. For information on how to join the Adventist Behavioral Health walk team, please contact Clarencia Stephen at (301) 251-4594.

**September 22:** The Miracle Temple church in Baltimore is planning healthful activities all day to celebrate "Let's Move!" Day. Activities will be planned from 10-2 p.m. For more information, visit miracletemple.net.

**September 22:** The Vibrant Life 5K Fun Run and Walk is set for
Sunday morning, at the Review and Herald campus in Hagerstown, Md. This outreach event attracts both serious and casual runners from around the tri-state area. A total of 22 different trophies are given out in 10 different age categories starting as low as ages 5 to 8. A portion of the proceeds goes to Fed Up With Hunger in Hagerstown. Site registration is from 8 to 9 a.m. or runners can register online at VibrantLife.com

September 22: The Pennsylvania Avenue church in Capitol Heights, Md., is hosting a free “Let's Move!” Fitness Expo from 1 to 6 p.m. The expo includes fitness activities and demonstrations, health tips, a smoothie bar, cooking demonstrations and samples and much more. The church is located at 4010 Belt Road at the corner of Pennsylvania and Southern avenues.

September 22: The Emmanuel-Brinklow church hosts “Let's Move, Let’s Eat!” a day of fun activities in Ashton, Md., on the eastern side of New Hampshire Ave. Vendors as well as health and wellness information will be on the western side of their facility. For details and directions go to: emanuelbrinklow.org/lets-move.

September 28: The Columbia Union will sponsor Religious Liberty Day at Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md. Wally Carson, the union’s Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) director and general counsel, speaks in the first service; Brent Walker, from the Baptist Joint Committee, speaks in the second. Sabbath School features John Graz and Orlan Johnson from the General Conference’s PARL department. In the afternoon at 4 p.m. Karla Rivera Bucklew will present a mini-concert, followed by a panel of experts discussing various aspects of religious liberty in the United States and abroad.

October 4-5: Adventist Recovery Ministries will be hosting the official North American Division training for Recovery Ministries, “Journey to Wholeness,” in Rockville, Md., at the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital Conference Center. The registration fee is $50 and includes training materials and Sabbath and Sunday lunch. Pre-registration is required. Make checks payable to the Columbia Union Conference. To register, contact Gerry Davis at (301) 5960800; (410) 997 3414, ext. 561 or jdavis@columbiaunion.net. Click here for more.

OHIO

September 22: All motorcyclists are invited to participate in the second Annual Run for the Hungry, which starts at the Newark Moose Lodge #499 at 235 National Drive., in Newark, Ohio. The run benefits the Adventist Community Services Center and Food Bank of Licking County. The entry fee is $15 per bike and $20 per couple. Registration will be from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Ride departs at 12:00 p.m. and will return to the Adventist church 701 Linnville Rd. Heath, 43056 around 2 PM where participants will be given a Free Picnic Supper provided by the Center staff. For more information, call (740) 739-0750. Registered participants are eligible to enter a drawing for two leather jackets.

http://e2.ma/message/69erd/6diogi[9/19/2013 3:38:15 PM]
Pennsylvania

September 20: Pennsylvania Conference’s Fall Camp Meeting will feature speaker Tim Roosenburg. The camp meeting will be at the Laurel Lake Camp and Retreat Center in Rossiter. For more information or to register, contact the conference office at (610) 374-8331.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

September 28: Leslie Pollard, PhD, Oakwood University’s ( Ala.) president and the Advancement & Development Division are hosting a reception for graduates and friends at the Washington Hilton Hotel located at 1919 Connecticut Avenue NW in Washington, D.C. A short vespers program will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by light refreshments and fellowship. The Aeolians, recent gold medalists of the World Games, will perform starting at 7 p.m. Hear about the latest developments at Oakwood, enjoy the lively discussion, get a bite to eat, and come prepared to get involved and support your alma mater. For more details, email alumni@oakwood.edu or call (256) 726-7039.

VIRGINIA

September 28: Vonda Beerman, an Angel Award winner, will appear in concert at the Courthouse Road church at 11 a.m.

Beerman travels the nation sharing God’s message of love through music. She is frequently aired throughout the world on 3ABN and numerous other networks. Bring your family and friends and enjoy this wonderful musical ministry. The church is located at 530 Courthouse Road in Richmond, Va.

September 22: Join the Courthouse Road church for a fun morning of exercise and fellowship at the “Let’s Move!” Day 5K Fun Run/Walk. Register HERE. Registration is free and includes a T-shirt, race participation, as well as a healthy brunch to follow. The time is 8:30am-12 p.m. at 3901 Patterson Ave. Richmond, VA 23221.

VIRTUAL

October 1: The alumni association for Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Md., is collecting stories of how the school has impacted your life. Send your stories to Susan Laurence Cooksey, alumni association president, at to susan.cooksey@ta.edu, or Ronnie Mills, director of institutional advancement, at rmills@ta.edu by October 1. The goal is to publish and present this book to alumni during the 2014 Alumni weekend. All proceeds from the book will benefit the Worthy Student Fund.

Click here for a full calendar of upcoming events around the Columbia Union.

Taashi Rowe, Visitor News Bulletin Editor
5427 Twin Knolls Road, Columbia, MD 21045
Email: visitor@columbiaunion.net • Website: www.columbiaunion.org
Facebook: facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor • Twitter: @VisitorNews
Small-School Teachers Connect

Story by Taashi Rowe Published 9/18/13

Teachers discuss real-life scenarios in small-group settings.

Some 20 teachers who work in one-room school houses around the Columbia Union Conference, gathered Sunday and Monday at the union’s headquarters in Columbia, Md., for training and encouragement. Ileana Espinosa, an associate in the union’s Office of Education who organized the training, said the purpose of the training was three-fold. “We wanted these teachers to feel special, important, validated and affirmed,” she said. “We also wanted them to make connections with teachers who had the same workload and have them learn something practical that they can take back to improve their personal and professional lives.” The training, which also included several conference superintendents, had a segment on the new North American Division Math and Science curriculum as well as segments on time management, marketing, fruitful pastor/teacher partnerships and spirituality. This is the first in a series of training planned for small-school teachers. This year training welcomed those who teach grades 1 through 8. Next year’s training will be for teachers of grades 1 through 4 and the following year for those who teach grades 5 through 8. Jennifer Ewers, who teaches at the Greenbrier Valley Academy in Lewisburg, W.Va., is in her first year teaching in a one-room school house. She has a total of 12 students in kindergarten, first, third and fifth through eighth grades. She admits that there are some challenges to teaching in a small school such as not having access to organized sports or making sure that all students are busily learning throughout the day. However, “I love it,” she said. “When you have the little kids, the older kids almost have to act better because they are examples. There’s just such a community feeling and character building. I also love how the little kids listen when I’m teaching something to the older kids and the older kids listen when I’m teaching older kids.” Espinosa agrees. “We have research that shows that one way of solidifying learning is teaching to someone else younger so that is one of the strength of small schools.” She also lists some of the other benefits of small schools: “Students also have individualized attention with teacher. We may not always be able to have an orchestra or a band, but we are more likely able to take a lot of field trips to important places. We may not be able to have sports teams but we are able to do other games and activities that larger schools aren’t able to. We treat small schools like Cinderellas, however, they should be very proud. Our statistics for our church shows they do just as well as larger schools and sometimes even better academically over all.” Ewers, who entered her fifth year of teaching this fall, is new to West Virginia and to teaching in a one-room school house, came to the training hoping to learn something from teachers who have been at it a lot longer than she has. She left, not only with tips and strategies for a successful year, but also with a reminder that she is not just teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, but she is also daily introducing her students to Jesus.
Ileana Espinosa (right) talks with Jennifer Ewers, the new teacher at the Greenbrier Valley Academy in Lewisburg, W.Va.

The Columbia Union Conference Visitor encourages quality conversation and welcomes your thoughtful comments. All comments are subject to approval but will not be edited.
Women Experience 'Glimpses of Grace' at Retreat

Over one-hundred and fifty women attended Potomac Conference’s English Women’s Retreat, *Glimpses of Grace*, September 14 – 15. The event, focused on grace, was held at the Westfield’s Marriott in Chantilly, Virginia, where the ladies were able to experience an opulent setting and enjoy beautiful nature trails around the facility.

“There’s no record of an English Women’s Retreat being held in recent history,” said Sharon Cress, associate for pastoral ministries and Potomac’s coordinator for women’s ministries. “Women comprise such a large percent of the population and the demands of their daily lives continue to get more strenuous in today’s society. It’s important to take time to come together, recharge, nurture and energize one another so we may pass those empowering tools on to someone else and share God’s Good News.”
Several unique focal points of the weekend included a Gala on Saturday evening, where women enjoyed rich food and musical entertainment by the Andrade family, who pastor of the Silver Spring Church (Md.), and breaks throughout the two days with Rae Lee Cooper, from the General Conference’s Health Ministries Department, who got the women moving with relaxing exercises to release stress and move gracefully.

The weekend also featured many ‘Glimpses of Grace,’ with inspiring talks from people all over the Columbia Union, including President Bill Miller, Brenda Billingy from the Allegheny East Conference, Ellen Missah from the General Conference and break out seminars which discussed showing grace to coworkers, adult children, unleashing the ability to demonstrate grace and improving emotional intelligence.
“I loved everything about this retreat,” said one goer. “The talks were so poignant and inspiring. I’m definitely going home feeling refreshed and ready to face some challenges I was having in my personal life. I was able to meet so many lovely people. This event allowed us a time to share our struggles and journeys. I can’t wait to attend the next one.”

Potomac re-launched women’s ministries at a conference level in June of 2012. This year, Cress has spoken at almost 10 events. “It’s so great to see these ministries rejuvenated,” said Cress. “Local church groups have been setting up events as a ‘re-launching’ of their own and I’ve had the privilege of being invited to speak at several of them. Each one is so different, as women tailor the meetings to best reach their communities. Recently, Beltsville’s group discussed what they could do to prevent domestic violence in Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties, Seabrook is focusing on impacting the community through various tools for education and last year the Roanoke Church provided a beautiful brunch for the community.”
Cress hopes to see a continued growth in this ministry and hopes to plan another women’s retreat for 2014. “I also need to thank the Potomac’s administration for sponsoring this event. They have been very supportive of this ministry and eager to see it grow as well.”

If you or your church family has an interesting in getting more involved with women’s ministries contact Cress at 540-886-0771.

-Tiffany Doss
Choirs from the Ethan Temple church and Dale Wright Memorial church in Germantown added their harmonious selections to the momentous occasion.

Borrowing words from a gospel song, Allegheny West Conference’s Ethan Temple chose the theme “…and No Ways Tired!” to commemorate their congregation’s 90th birthday. They celebrated during a recent weekend that started with a lively Friday evening service, where three men raised at Ethan Temple broke bread: pastors Michael Dyson, Terry Giles and Albert Dyson. On Sabbath morning, Pastor Joe Grider welcomed current and returning members from every decade, including their inaugural year. William Wright, from Germantown, Ohio, was just a boy 90 years ago when his parents, Nathan and Willa Wright, and others started Ethan Temple. He sat smiling on the front row during the special service. After a grand processional to recognize notable historic members, the eldest congregant, Bennie Grissom (99), sang “I Will Trust in the Lord.” The Sabbath service also included congratulatory remarks from the city mayor and a state representative. Choirs from the Ethan Temple church and Dale Wright Memorial church (pictured: choir.jpg) in Germantown added their harmonious selections to the momentous occasion.

“Singing ‘Total Praise’ with the choir, including members from the last 20 years, brought tears to my eyes and made me think of heaven,” responded Yvonne Bailey.

Another son of Ethan Temple, Calvin Watkins (pictured), the director of Evangelism Ministries at the South Atlantic Conference, concluded the divine service with God’s Word. Blessed by his message, many attendees consecrated and rededicated their lives to Christ.

Member Brooke Harris sings praises to Jesus during the celebration Sabbath.

Don Black is Ethan Temple’s 90th chairperson.
Calvin Watkins, the director of Evangelism Ministries at the South Atlantic Conference, concluded the divine service with God’s Word.
Documentary filmmaker Martin Doblmeier, the man behind three films focused on Seventh-day Adventists, recently talked with the Visitor staff about his newest film, The ADVENTISTS 2.

The film tells the story of how Adventists trailblazers are combining their faith and commitment to medical missions around the world.

The film will air on various Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) stations this fall, but you can see it first at Potomac Conference’s Sligo church on October 5 at 7 p.m. at 7700 Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park, Md. (Get event details here.)

Q: What is the main story you want to tell through The ADVENTISTS 2?

A: I think one of the startling facts we bring out in the film is [that] there are as many as 1.2 billion people around the world who have little or no access to health care.

We should all be embarrassed by that number and honor organizations like the Seventh-day Adventists who are actually trying to do something about it. And what is most revealing is that Adventists have had this commitment to medical missions for more than a century—bringing their health message to the far reaches of the Earth where it is needed most. To me this is the most noble side of our human nature—caring for others who are very different from ourselves.

Q: This is your second documentary about Adventists and their health programs. What makes Adventists and their mission so unique that you (and PBS) want to feature them again?

A: In the first film—The ADVENTISTS—I wanted to introduce the audience to this unique faith group who are some of the most healthy people on the planet. But their good health is not arbitrary—it stems from a core belief that the body is the temple of God and needs to be cared for. That is the motivating reason why Adventists live on average seven to 10 years longer than others. But that idea also extends to the stranger and so the second film, the story of how Adventists bring that health message to the ends of the Earth, is really a logical extension of the first film.

Q: One of our Columbia Union Conference organizations, Kettering Adventist HealthCare, is featured in this film—what do you feel makes them different from similar organizations?

A: The last story in The ADVENTISTS 2 profiles a group of doctors, nurses and health care professionals who volunteer their time and talents to go for a week to the developing world and perform medical procedures that otherwise would not be possible. Many of those volunteers are Adventists who work for Kettering Adventist HealthCare.

The team leader, Dr. Steve Schmidt and his mother, Mafi Schmidt and brother, Gary, are wonderful examples of recognizing the gift of healing and sharing it with others. It is a big commitment on the part of the volunteers each year but it makes a profound difference in the lives of hundreds of people they help heal.

To watch the official trailer of The ADVENTISTS 2 on YouTube, click here.

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.**
Innovative 'Thank You' Gift to Blinded Veterans Uses Sunlight to Share Special Book Collection

September 18, 2013 ... Lincoln, NE [CRN]... InSight4Vets, a unique “Thank You” gift initiative for blinded veterans, was introduced on Tuesday, September 17 by an organization building on a century-plus of innovative service to individuals who can’t see.

“Together we saw a need. It connected perfectly with what we do best. Now it’s our privilege to share this gift with those coming home from military service without sight,” Larry Pitcher, president of Christian Record Services for the Blind, told the CRSB board of directors at their meeting.

Sparked by news reports of the prevalence of eye wounds from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the initiative caps months of research, collaboration, audio production, and planning. Eye trauma – from penetrating wounds and traumatic brain injury (TBI) – has been identified as the second most common injury among active military. 1 Serious eye wounds have accumulated at almost twice the rate as wounds requiring amputations. 2 Traumatic eye injuries have accounted for upwards of 16 percent of all injuries in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. 3

“What could we do about it? . . . something to show we care? . . . something to encourage?” asked Pitcher, then elaborated, “Unfortunately, an unseen wound of war – the inner anguish of sight loss – often becomes greater than the physical injury itself.” Then he explained, “It’s to address these emotional, social, spiritual, and moral injuries that inSight4Vets was developed. Including noncombat vision loss or loss in earlier conflicts, about 157,000 blind veterans and a million partially sighted vets 4 are spread across our country and we care about every single one of them.”

Exclusively available to these blinded veterans, at the heart of inSight4Vets is a pocket-size solar audio player pre-loaded with a special collection of books. “The books were chosen for their interest and inspiration. It’s a mix of lighter and heavier reading, to see veterans through perhaps the most difficult season of their lives, adjusting to their ‘new normal,’” Pitcher said. “The audio player’s filled with stories; stories about overcoming during the worst possible circumstances, stories of survival, stories of hope, and stories of transformation.”

“When I received the player, my first reaction was this: Such a small device but so much goodness in it!” says George Haley, blind veteran from Dowagiac, Michigan, and a consultant for the project. “In a small package I can carry with me a great amount of material that’s encouraging, entertaining, educational, and inspiring.” The audio player, smaller than an iPhone, is packed with seven complete audio books, about a hundred hours of listening. It can be charged by the sun or other light source, through USB cable, or with the plug-in charger provided.

“As grateful as we are, and as much as we would like to, we cannot restore sight to veterans who have lost it. But we can give them insight and hope as rays of inner light through this ‘library in your pocket’ player,” comments Chaplain (Colonel) US Army Retired, Dick Stenbakken, whose bestselling book, The Centurion, is included in the player. “This unique initiative will change lives,” he adds.

The “contents list” for the inSight4Vets player also includes Take the Risk by Ben Carson, Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand, The Blessings of Diversity by the US Senate Chaplain Barry Black, Hope Unseen by Captain Scott Smiley, The Book of Job : When Bad Things Happen to a Good Person by Rabbi Harold Kushner, and No Greater Glory by Dan Kurzman, as well as offering portions of Scripture – the Four Gospels, Psalms, and Proverbs.

“By providing such an important service, Christian Record is contributing to mending a hole in a social safety net 5 by reaching out to a small – yet so very important – group of people,” commented Chaplain (Colonel) US Army Retired, Gary Councell. Christian Record envisions cooperation with a number of organizations whose mission is to serve blind veterans.

Summing up Christian Record’s motivation for developing inSight4Vets, Pitcher states: “All of us benefit from the strength, courage, and
talent of those who invested in military service. Many did so at great sacrifice. As an inSight4Vets digital player reaches a blinded veteran, we hope it will bring with it our love, appreciation, and encouragement.”

Initial start-up support for the inSight4Vets project came from individual donors and a Versacare grant. Among co-sponsors of inSight4Vets is the Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries (ACM) in Silver Spring, Maryland. To access more information about inSight4Vets, including how to donate to the project, see www.insight4vets.org.

Innovation to meet specific needs has been a hallmark of Christian Record Services for the Blind since 1899. That same year Austin Wilson, a blind man in his early 20’s, took a hand-cranked clothes wringer like his mother used on wash days, then fed through it a hand-embossed metal plate and a sheet of heavy paper to produce the first page of a Braille magazine he titled The Christian Record. Today as one of 10 Braille, large-print, and audio magazines produced by Christian Record for blind and partially sighted readers, it holds the record as the longest continuously produced Braille magazine in the world.

Subsequent innovations include introduction in 1959 of Full-Vision™ children’s books, the first print/braille books meeting the needs of blind parents with sighted children. National Camps for Blind Children, launched in 1967, have provided more than 50,000 campers with outdoor experiences they would otherwise have missed. [Rajmund Dabrowski with Doris Burdick]

[Photo Caption] George Haley says: “Being blind is inconvenient – but this inSight4Vets pocket player takes away some of the inconvenience. It helps connect me to the rest of the reading world.”

1 The Value of Defense-Related Vision Research: Peer-Reviewed Vision Trauma Research Program in Defense Appropriations (September, 2012)


3 http://www.eyeresearch.org/pdf/brochure/DEFENSE_VISION_BROCHURE.pdf

4 http://www.va.gov/BLINDREHAB/BRSCoordinated_Care.asp

5 http://usnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/02/01/16811249-22-veterans-commit-suicide-each-day-va-report?lite
Upcoming Events Around the Columbia Union

MARYLAND

September 12-24: The Potomac Adventist Book and Health Food store is offering several free health classes at 6:30 p.m. On September 12, the class will be titled “Common Denominator of Chronic Disease,” September 19 “Eat More Weigh Less,” and September 24 “Fiber Your New Best Friend.” Classes take place in the Living Well Lifestyle Center’s room. The store is located at 12004 Cherry Hill Road in Silver Spring, Md.

September 13: Pastor Andre Hastick will lead Restore, a young adult worship gathering this Friday at New Hope. Join the group at 7 p.m. 12350 Hall Shop Road, Fulton, Md.

September 13-14: Pastor David Asscherick, known around the world for his speaking ability and intellectual prowess, will appear as “The Man Who Knows Nothing” at the Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Md. Confused? That’s okay! The program starts at 7:30 p.m. on September 13 and at 11 a.m. on Sabbath, September 14. For more information, visit metrosda.org/knowsnothing.

September 20-21: Walter Brueggemann, an acclaimed author and theologian, will be speaking at the 33rd G. Arthur Keough Lectures at Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Md. The topic will be “Reperforming our Best Narrative.” His lectures will be in the Morrison Hall chapel. His September 20, which begins at 6:30 p.m., he will address Choosing an Alternative Life: “Follow me.” On September 21, the lecture begins at 10 a.m. and he will address Imagining Neighborliness: “Love thy neighbor.” For more information, contact the Religion Department at (301) 891-4033.

September 22: The Magic Temple church in Baltimore is planning healthful activities all day to celebrate “Let’s Move! Day.” Activities will be planned from 10-2 p.m. For more information, visit miracletemple.net.

September 22: The Vibrant Life 5K Fun Run and Walk is set for Sunday morning, at the Review and Herald campus in Hagerstown, Md. This outreach event attracts both serious and casual runners from around the tri-state area. A total of 22 different trophies are given out in 10 different age categories starting as low as ages 5 to 8. A portion of the proceeds goes to Fed Up With Hunger in Hagerstown. Site registration is from 8 to 9 a.m. or runners can register online at VibrantLife.com

September 22: The Pennsylvania Avenue church in Capitol Heights, Md., is hosting a free “Let’s Move!” Fitness Expo from 1 to 6 p.m. The expo includes fitness activities and demonstrations, health tips, a smoothie bar, cooking demonstrations and samples and much more. The church is located at 4010 Belt Road at the corner of Pennsylvania and Southern avenues.

October 4-5: Adventist Recovery Ministries will be hosting the official North American Division training for Recovery Ministries, “Journey to Wholeness,” in Rockville, Md., at the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital Conference Center. The registration fee is $50 and includes training materials and Sabbath and Sunday lunch. Pre-registration is required. Make checks payable to the Columbia Union Conference. To register, contact Gerry Davis at (301) 596-0800; (410) 997-3414, ext. 561 or jdavis@columbiaunion.net. Click here for more.

October 5: There will be a special screening of The Adventists 2 across the division. This sequel to The Adventists documentary is being prepared for broadcast on PBS stations nationwide this fall. Special screenings will be shown at Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md. Watch the ANN interview with Emmy-winning director Martin Doblmeier. Watch The Adventists 2 trailer. Contact John Dillon for more information.

October 5: The 8th Annual Maryland Men of Faith Conference themed “I Will Make a Covenant,” will take place at the Mount
Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md. Shane Anderson, pastor of the New Market (Va.) church, focuses his messages on the story of Job. Seminar topics include media and the brain, how to have a personal relationship with Jesus, marriage, prayer, addictions, Prison Ministries, health and current Issues in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Register by September 30 at mnof.org. Questions? Email info@mnof.org, or call (410) 465-6864.

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NEW JERSEY
September 15: The Wayne church’s third annual Let’s Move Day 5k Run/Walk is scheduled for this Sunday. Registration begins at 7 a.m. and the race begins at 8 a.m. There will also be a 100-yard dash. Click here to register and you’ll be eligible to pick up a chip from Sports Authority at the Willowbrook Mall on September 13 from 3 to 7 p.m. and will be entered to win a $50 Sports Authority gift card. Registration is $25 dollars.

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OHIO
September 22: All motorcyclists are invited to participate in the second Annual Run for the Hungry, which starts at the Newark Moose Lodge #499 at 235 NATIONAL DR., in Newark, Ohio. The run benefits the Adventist Community Services Center and Food Bank of Licking County. The entry fee is $15 per bike and $20 per couple. Registration will be from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Ride departs at 12:00 p.m. and will return to the Adventist church 701 Linnville Rd. Heath, 43056 around 2 PM where participants will be given a Free Picnic Supper provided by the Center staff. For more information, call (740) 739-0750. Registered participants are eligible to enter a drawing for two leather jackets.

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PENNSYLVANIA
September 20: Pennsylvania Conference’s Fall Camp Meeting will feature speaker Tim Roosenburg. The camp meeting will be at the Laurel Lake Camp and Retreat Center in Rossiter. For more information or to register, contact the conference office at (610) 374-8331.

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VIRGINIA
September 6-21: Lonnie Melashenko will be the evangelist for a series of Bible prophecy meetings that will be held at Sandusky Middle School in Lynchburg, Va. The meetings begin at 7 p.m. each night. There will be no Thursday meetings. The final meeting will be held at the Lynchburg church. The school is located at 805 Chinook Place. For more information, contact Pastor Mike Hewitt at Mike Hewitt pastormikeh@mac.com.

September 14-15: 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

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VIRTUAL
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.

September 16: Planning to participate in “Let’s Move! Day” on September 22. The North American Division is planning a webinar to help you prepare. Learn more at AdventistsInStepForLife.com, or call (301) 680-6733 to find out how you, your church and your school can get involved.

October 1: The alumni association for Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Md., is collecting stories of how the school has impacted your life. Send your stories to Susan Laurence Cooksey, alumni association president at susan.cooksey@ta.edu, or Ronnie Mills, director of institutional advancement at rmills@ta.edu by October 1. The goal is to publish and present this book to alumni during the 2014 Alumni weekend. All proceeds from the book will benefit the Worthy Student Fund.
WASHINGTON, D.C.

September 28: Leslie Pollard, PhD, Oakwood University’s (Ala.) president and the Advancement & Development Division are hosting a reception for graduates and friends at the Washington Hilton Hotel located at 1919 Connecticut Avenue NW in Washington, D.C. A short vespers program will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by light refreshments and fellowship. The Aeolians, recent gold medalists of the World Games, will perform starting at 7 p.m. Hear about the latest developments at Oakwood, enjoy the lively discussion, get a bite to eat, and come prepared to get involved and support your alma mater. For more details, email alumni@oakwood.edu or call (256) 726-.7039.