Weekly News From Around the Columbia Union Conference

October 16, 2013

33 Attend Addictions Recovery Training

Some 33 people recently attended the first Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin): Journey to Wholeness training in the Columbia Union Conference. An official training of the North American Division (NAD), the training is generally offered at their annual Health Ministries Summit and also at a few unions every year, according to Katia Reinert, PhD, NAD Health Ministries and ARMin director.

As a longtime leader of the ARMin ministry at Allegheny East Conference’s Mount Olivet church and director of several treatment programs, Jimmy Jackson (pictured) expected, “everything to be a repetition of things I already knew. I especially thought everything would be focused on drugs and alcohol. It kind of surprised me that not only were we actually focusing on the underlying issues that lead to addictions in the first place, we also talked about a whole lot more than these two types of addictions.” That was intentional, Reinert says. “The reality is
that everyone in our church has addicted to some unhealthy behavior. “—Story by Taashi Rowe

Local College Success Charity Celebrates Fifth Anniversary

College Educate Our Sons (CEOS), an organization born in the Columbia Union with the goal of helping more young men graduate college, recently marked the fifth year of its founding with their Fifth Annual International Week of Hope and Inspiration for Boys and Young Men. According to founder Bertram Melbourne, PhD, (pictured left) who pastors Potomac Conference’s Rockville and Gaithersburg churches in Maryland, the week was designed to inspire and provide education for boys and young men, parents, teachers and mentors. The organization, which seeks to increase global college graduation of young men by 50 percent in 20 years, serves as an international, multi-faith organization and clearinghouse of resources and opportunities for entities that mentor boys and young men.

The celebration began with a banquet held in Arlington, Va., with more than 100 guests in attendance. Pastor Eric Lee (center), a former Harlem Globetrotter and now senior pastor in Mississippi; was the keynote while Rev. Richard Smallwood (right), a singer, Grammy and Dove awardee and Music Hall of Fame inductee, blessed the gathering with through song.—Story by Yolande Melbourne

Washington Adventist Hospital Pilots CHIP Program

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.
Some 13 community members and employees (some pictured) recently graduated from the Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP), offered for the first time at the Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, Md. CHIP, generally offered through Seventh-day Adventist churches, is a lifestyle-enrichment program designed to reduce disease risk factors through the adoption of better health habits and appropriate lifestyle modifications. The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, the Center for Science in the Public Interest and the International Nutrition Research Foundation endorse this research-based program.

“CHIP was an opportunity for me to learn how to take charge of my health for myself,” says participant Michele Briley.—Story by Washington Adventist Hospital Staff

READ MORE

New Allegheny West Multicultural Director Named

Sergio Romero was recently welcomed as the new Multicultural Ministries and Church Growth director for the Allegheny West Conference. Romero, who holds a doctorate in counseling, has served in ministry for 23 years. He transfers from the Nevada-Utah Conference where he was the Hispanic Ministries coordinator. He helped plant six new churches in Las Vegas and Salt Lake City and he organized and led 11 mission trips where six churches, a school and permanent children’s camp were built.

He will be focused on expanding relevant training and evangelism programs across the Allegheny West territory. “Each church should duplicate themselves every two years and plant churches in areas where we don't have any,” he says. “The slogan ‘I Go, I Support’ will be part of our plan, which means some people will go to plant new churches while others will support those going.” Romero and his wife, Laura, have one son, Sergio. The family is pictured in the Spanish-language story below.
Nuevo director de Ministerios Multiculturales de Allegheny West

Sergio Romero fue recientemente nombrado director de Ministerios Multiculturales y Crecimiento de Iglesia de Allegheny West Conference. Romero, que tiene un doctorado en asesoramiento, ha trabajado en el ministerio durante 23 años y proviene de Nevada-Utah Conference, donde sirvió como coordinador de Ministerios Hispanos. Ayudó a establecer seis nuevas iglesias en Las Vegas y en Salt Lake City, y organizó y dirigió once viajes misioneros en los que se construyeron seis iglesias, una escuela y un campamento permanente para niños.

Romero se dedicará a aumentar la capacitación necesaria y los programas de evangelización en todo el territorio de Allegheny West. “Cada iglesia debería duplicarse cada dos años y establecer iglesias en lugares donde no las hay”, aseguró. “El eslogan ‘Yo voy, yo apoyo’ formará parte de nuestro plan, lo que significa que algunas personas establecerán iglesias y otras apoyarán a dichas personas”. Romero y su esposa Laura tienen un hijo, Sergio.

Spring Valley Seniors Score Near Top of National Scholarship Test
Out of the 1.5 million juniors nationwide that took the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), three students at Spring Valley Academy in Centerville, Ohio, placed near the top. Hannah Odenthal, a senior, has been named as a 2014 semifinalist while Robert Bacheller (left) and Martin Clayton (right) have been named commended students in the 2014 National Merit Scholarship Program. Commended students score among the top 5 percent of those taking the test and semi-finalists score in the top 1 percent.

These SVA seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition that each spring offers thousands of college scholarships worth millions of dollars.—Story by Vicki Swetnam

__Dupont Student Makes Final Four__

KidsPost, a section of the Washington Post, and The Nature Conservancy recently challenged students in grades 3 to 8 from the Washington, D.C.-metropolitan area
to write an essay sharing their best ideas for conserving water. Out of the 200 who participated, Madelyne Cabico, an eighth-grader at Dupont Park Adventist School in Washington, D.C., was one of four finalists.

Cabico wrote in her essay, “I would … start a program at school to participate in cleaning up streams. We could even adopt a stream to clean up. This will keep all of the trash out of the water that may pollute and harm the animals.”

The finalists were treated to a picnic lunch and hike at the Potomac Gorge along with the Nature Conservancy staff.

Read more of Cabico’s essay in the Kidspost.

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**Book Release: Miracles at the Door**

* Miracles at the Door gives a sneak peek into Don Draper’s 37-year literature evangelism career.

During this time Draper, a member of Chesapeake Conference’s Hagerstown (Md.) church, faced many challenges. Read more about his journey here. —Interview by V. Michelle Bernard

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**Remembrance: She Loved People**
Norma Jean Sahlin, a daughter of the Columbia Union, lost her fight against ovarian cancer last Wednesday. She was 61. Sahlin was born in Takoma Park, Md., was in the Takoma Academy Class of 1970, and graduated from Columbia Union College in 1974 with a bachelor's degree in communication. She married Monte Sahlin on October 20, 1974, at Potomac Conference’s Sligo church in Takoma Park.

Although Norma joined her husband in urban ministry, she served in many other capacities throughout the union. She served as Ohio Conference newsletter editor, international director of marketing at the former Home Study International, director of development and alumni relations at Takoma Academy, media relations manager at ADRA and as Women’s Ministries director for the Columbia Union Conference. Her daughters remember Norma as someone who loved people, the church, gardening, tea, books and grandkids. She leaves behind her husband, Monte; daughters Stephanie Jackson and Melissa Bruno and their families; and two brothers and a sister. [READ MORE FOR MEMORIAL SERVICE INFORMATION]

**What Did Our Founding Fathers Really Think About Religious Freedom?**

Although there was never a national religion in America, some religious oppression lingered even after the American Revolution. In the latest *Talking about Freedom* podcast, Michael Myerson (pictured), a University of Baltimore School of Law professor, discusses what helped shift the American focus toward a focus on individual freedom.

[Click here to listen to the latest *Talking About Freedom* podcast. Download and listen to past podcasts here.]

**Join the Conversation: How Involved Should Our Church be in Public Policy?**
Karl Lawrence shared via Facebook that he doesn't believe the church should play a “direct role in public policy. Its role should instead be an indirect one through its spiritual and ethical education of its members.”

Louise Longmooore said this on our Facebook page—“If an issue comes up for vote, we should always take a stand for what is right, otherwise, we are just letting the devil have his way.”

What do you think?  

**End Quote: We Need Divine Intervention**

“We believe that as a church we need to be sensitive to the needs of those who are suffering and speak truth to power. The way we are doing that is through prayer. It is a great tool and we believing in using it in earnest. Our members are taking time each day to speak to the Lord about the impasse in the Congress and ask Him to stop the madness. We are asking our congregants to choose one thing to fast from until this issue plaguing our nation comes to an end. In circumstances like this we know that the Holy Spirit of God remains in control.”—Gene Donaldson, pastor of Allegheny East Conference’s Capitol Hill church in Washington, D.C., explains why his church is fasting and praying until the government shutdown ends.

**Columbia Union Members in the News**

- [Charlottesville Church Hosts Vegetarian Food Fair](#)
- [Church Prays for Government Shutdown to End](#)
- [Stroudsburg church launches ambitious plans for community center](#)
UPCOMING EVENTS

MARYLAND

October 19: Takoma Academy is hosting their third annual "Men Who Cook" tasting event. Come sample foods from different cultures deliciously prepared by all male chefs from 7 to 9 p.m. at Takoma Academy. Tickets are $10 for adults and $5 children and students with ID. Tickets are available at on line. For more information, email patapresident@ta.edu.

October 25-26: “Christ our Rock” is the theme for Highland View Academy's (HVA) Academy Days. Students in grades 7-11 who have an interest in learning more about HVA should contact Renee Williams by email at rwilliams@highlandviewacademy.com or call (301) 739-7480. Registration is required. The campus is located at 10100 Academy Drive in Hagerstown, Md.

PENNSYLVANIA

October 20: The Bucks County church is hosting their fourth, annual harvest festival from 2 to 6 p.m. The festival will feature food, face painting, bobbing for apples, prizes, pumpkin decorating, baked goods, hay rides, free blood pressure screening, a real heroes awards ceremony, musical performances and a skit. The church is located at 10 Greene Road in Warminster, Pa. For more information call (215) 672 - 3011 or visit bcadventistchurch.org.

November 1-3: “Intimate Moments With God” is the theme of Chesapeake Conference’s women’s retreat, which will take place at Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pa. Over the weekend, attendees will learn valuable strategies for developing a deep, authentic relationship with the Creator. Gwen Foster, former Philadelphia health czar, and “Binding the Wounds” facilitator Sharyn Joseph will present. There will also be seminars for young women (age 15-21) on topics such as dating/relationships and beauty. For more information and to register, visit ccosda.org, or contact Jennifer Stefan by email at jstefan@ccosda.org, or by phone at (410) 995-1910.

OHIO

October 25: The King's Heralds will performing at The Majestic Theater in Chillicothe, Ohio, starting at 7 p.m. There will be a suggested donation of two cans of food or $3. For more information, call (740) 637-9010.

October 26: Lonnie Melashenko will be speaking at the Chillicothe (Ohio) church at 9:30 and 11 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. A potluck lunch and supper will be provided. The church is located at 510 Metzger Avenue. For more information, call (740) 637-9010.

October 27: Lonnie Melashenko will present “Missing the Message: Six Words to Take Us To Glory” at 10 a.m. at the Jackson (Ohio) church. The church is located at 11184 State Route 93. For more information, call (740) 637-9010.

NATIONWIDE
October 18-19: Several students and church youth groups in the Columbia Union will join a nationwide fast from sunset Friday to sunset Sabbath to support orphans. The DO Fast, or Defend Orphans Fast, is a 24-hour fast that aims to get Seventh-day Adventists all across the North American Division (NAD) involved in supporting orphans. For more information about the fast and to obtain free materials, visit restoreachild.org/do.

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

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Visitor News Bulletin is an electronic newsletter published by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Columbia Union Conference. You are free to reprint any portion of the bulletin, however, please identify Visitor News Bulletin as the source.
Some 33 people recently attended the first Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin): Journey to Wholeness training in the Columbia Union Conference. An official training of the North American Division (NAD), the training is generally offered at their annual Health Ministries Summit and also at a few unions every year, according to Katia Reinert, PhD, NAD Health Ministries and ARMin director. The three-day training, held at the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital Conference Center in Rockville, Md., focused on helping members recover from or minister to those suffering from various addictions through a Christ-centered, 12-step program. Participants received expert insights from Christian professionals working in the academic and clinical field of addictions, learned how addictions and obsessive-compulsive behaviors are formed and explored the relevance of creating a Christ-centered, 12-step ministry in their churches.

Some of the presenters included Reinert; Peter Landless, MD, General Conference Health Ministries director; and Ricardo Whyte, MD, psychiatrist and professor in the School of Medicine at Loma Linda University and director of the chemical dependency program at the Loma Linda Behavioral Center (Calif.).

Seventh-day Adventists have been involved in helping each other extinguish their addictions since 1986 when Hal Gates, a recovering alcoholic and drug addict, formed a support group at a church he pastored in Seattle, Wash. However, only recently did addictions recovery officially came under the umbrella of NAD’s Health Ministries. The ministry had multiple iterations and was long known as Regeneration. In 2011 it became known as Adventist Recovery Ministries.

Not Just About Drugs and Alcohol
As a leader of the ARMin ministry at Allegheny East Conference’s Mount Olivet church and director of several treatment programs, Jimmy Jackson was sure he’d be bored attending the program. A longtime recovering alcoholic, Jackson said he expected, “everything to be a repetition of things I already knew. I especially thought everything would be focused on drugs and alcohol. It kind of surprised me that not only were we actually focusing on the underlying issues that lead to addictions in the first place, we also talked about a whole lot more than these two types of addictions.”

Jackson said this difference was critical. “While Regeneration has been very important to my recovery, some people did not want to be
identified with a group that was so narrowly focused on drugs and alcohol. This worried me because I could see it becoming a dying ministry. But with the new direction that ARMin is taking, I can see this developing into an important ministry. I was also really excited to see that the training also focused on not just the resulting behavior—the addiction—but the underlying cause of the addiction.”

ARMin is needed now more than ever before, said Leah Scott, the Columbia Union Health Ministries coordinator. “Addictions cover a broader spectrum than just drugs and alcohol. Many people are suffering from addiction to food, gambling, pornography, technology, video games you name it. And if we are going to be reaching people inside and outside the church, we need to understand how to help them,” she said.

Addiction can be a difficult topic to address in our churches because of stigma, Reinert said. However, the “reality is that everyone in our church has addicted to some unhealthy behavior. As humans we are all ‘addicted’ to sin. ARMin aims to break the stigma and embrace everyone who is willing to recognize their own ‘unhealthy behaviors and compulsions’ to things that are hurting them or their relationships.”

One Chesapeake Conference member, who asked that her name not be used, said an earlier form of the program literally brought her back to church. Before there was a 12-step program in the church, she had been attending Al-Anon, a 12-step program for family members impacted by a loved one’s alcoholism. She wanted to know how to deal with her husband who was impacted by the disease. “I was so embarrassed by what was happening in my marriage that I stopped going to church,” she said. But Step 11 encouraged her to make contact with God through prayer and meditation. After doing so consistently, she knew she had to return to her Adventist faith. Soon after she found Regeneration.

She said the recent weekend training reaffirmed the importance of an anonymous, 12-step support group. “Sometimes we think we are beyond help but Jesus can help anyone, anywhere,” she said. “I also think it’s really wonderful thing to have much more support from the administration of our church.”

Reinert noted that NAD has long supported Regeneration (ARMin former name) and bringing this Recovery Ministries under the Health Ministries is part of the church’s mandate. “We have a message of health and wholeness to give to others in our communities. Our communities need healing and families, parents, youth and children are suffering as a result of addictions and unhealthy compulsive behaviors. … As a church we need to be able to embrace them with love and compassion and walk beside them on the path to recovery in Christ.”

The NAD, Columbia Union and Adventist HealthCare cosponsored the program.

Click here to read about the ministry’s 25th anniversary celebration.

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Please limit your comments to 500 words or less. Only one comment per person will be published.
Local College Success Charity Celebrates Fifth Anniversary

Story by Yolande Melbourne Published 10/16/2013

Rev. Richard Smallwood, a singer, Grammy and Dove awardee and Music Hall of Fame inductee, performed at the fifth anniversary of the CEOs banquet.

College Educate Our Sons (CEOS), an organization born in the Columbia Union Conference with the goal of helping more young men graduate college, recently marked the fifth year of its founding with their Fifth Annual International Week of Hope and Inspiration for Boys and Young men. According to founder Bertram Melbourne, PhD, who pastors Potomac Conference’s Rockville and Gaithersburg churches in Maryland, the week was designed to inspire and provide education for boys and young men, parents, teachers and mentors. The organization, which seeks to increase global college graduation of young men by 50 percent in 20 years, serves as an international, multi-faith organization and clearinghouse of resources and opportunities for entities that mentor boys and young men.

The celebration began with a banquet held in Arlington, Va., with more than 100 guests in attendance. Pastor Eric Lee, the keynote speaker, a former Harlem Globetrotter and now senior pastor at the St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in Mississippi; challenged all to learn from Peter to seize the moment; attempt the unattempted; try the untried; step out of the boat; and move forward to walk on water. He also challenged attendees to be willing to do a new thing in a new way.

Musical performances came from Rev. Richard Smallwood, a singer, Grammy and Dove awardee and Music Hall of Fame inductee; and Philmore McKenzie, who played the steel drums. Tyrone Barksdale and Jacquie Gales Webb, radio personalities from Howard University’s WHUR-FM in Washington, D.C., emceed the program. During the evening’s award ceremony, Rev. Emmy Hart received the Bridge Building International Award for work with dropout boys in Suriname; while Ronnie and Stevan Vanderhorst, founders of Prepare Our Youth, received the corporate award. Two others received Bridge Builder awards. Morris Hudson of BROTHERS (Brothers Reaching Out to Help Each Reach Success) was recognized for outstanding work with male students at Gaithersburg High School in Gaithersburg, Md., and Weymouth Spence, EdD, president of Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Md., for outstanding work at the university and in the interest of young men. At the CEOs’ Third Annual Virtual Prayer Breakfast, Henry M. Wright, featured speaker and senior pastor of Potomac’s Community Center Praise church in Alexandria, Va., shared the story of Abraham and Isaac and challenged fathers and sons to work together to advance the tasks at hand. Participants attended via telephone or webcast. A rebroadcast of this event can be found at http://ez.com/ceos.

The festivities continued on Sabbath afternoon at Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Md. Roo McKenzie, EdD, WAU’s vice president for advancement began the afternoon session with a plenary address titled “Six Steps Plus 1 for Raising Organically-Grown Boys.” Various
workshops, highly credentialed speakers, followed with topics such as teachers, mentors, girls and young women and boys and young men.

The public celebrations concluded with a gospel concert in the Takoma Academy Chapel featuring talent from Takoma Academy and Howard University School of Divinity. “I am extremely pleased with the accomplishments of the weekend. God has certainly blessed,” Melbourne shared. With this fresh endowment of inspiration, he invites participants in the weekend’s activities and readers to pour their passion and energies into making tomorrow brighter for our sons.

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News

Washington Adventist Hospital Embraces CHIP Pilot Program

Story by Washington Adventist Hospital Staff Published 10/16/2013

Three Washington Adventist Hospital staff members stand in support of the community members and employees who successfully completed the program.

Some 13 community members and employees recently graduated from the Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP), offered for the first time at the Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, Md. CHIP, generally offered through Seventh-day Adventist churches, is a lifestyle-enrichment program designed to reduce disease risk factors through the adoption of better health habits and appropriate lifestyle modifications. The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, the Center for Science in the Public Interest and the International Nutrition Research Foundation endorse this research-based program.

“CHIP was an opportunity for me to learn how to take charge of my health for myself,” says participant Michele Briley.

Kathleen Coleman, BSN, RN, MPH; Michele McBride, RN, BSN, CDE; and Felicia Addo, MPH, CHES, facilitated the program. “Studies show that some diseases can be connected to a variety of factors, such as a diet of processed foods, a lack of exercise and the use of cigarettes, alcohol and caffeine,” Coleman says. “Our health can also be negatively affected by increased levels of stress and the quality of our support systems.”

According to the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General, 75 percent or more of Western diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes, are “lifestyle-related.”

CHIP’s goal is to lower blood lipids, blood pressure, blood sugar levels, and reduce excess weight, which are all risk factors for more serious conditions. At the start of CHIP’s six-week program, participants completed health screenings, including lab measures for cholesterol and glucose, blood pressure, waist-to-hip ratio, Body Mass Index and body composition. Success was measured by the progress participants made in lowering their health screening measures after completion of the program.

“CHIP really opened my eyes to little-known connections between the food we consume and our health,” says LaTonya Jackson, another participant.

CHIP helps to provide motivation and the necessary tools needed to enact change, all while fitting around a participant’s day-to-day life. CHIP does not require a carefully controlled setting where diet and exercise are rigorously enforced to produce results; it produces results in the community by teaching participants how to navigate toward optimal health in their everyday lives.
“A few simple, painless, and deliberate lifestyle choices can make all the difference in the world and efforts can be rewarded in a matter of weeks,” Coleman says.

The CHIP instructional format also incorporated personal learning with a textbook, cookbook and workbook/journal, cooking demonstrations, nightly CHIP-friendly dinners and group accountability to support and encourage each other. Between sessions the participants were asked to “live” the program and incorporate the concepts learned.

“What I learned and achieved was nothing short of amazing,” says participant Mary Saville. “The program was not difficult at all, especially since I have been used to measuring, weighing and logging my food from previous weight-loss programs. Under the CHIP program, I did not need to do any of these, yet I still lost 16 pounds during the six-week program and never felt hungry.”

Following the pilot program graduation, CHIP has now transitioned from the bi-weekly sessions to a monthly session called “Club CHIP.” This phase sustains adherence to the program guidelines through an active member support organization. Washington Adventist Hospital officials are currently exploring how the program can be implemented in the future across the organization to improve the health of constituents and employees alike. “I think this is a revolutionary program that every American could benefit from,” participant Mary Pelz says.

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Cleaning up streams is one of the suggestions from finalists in the KidsPost/Nature... (Bigstock/)

KidsPost readers never fail to come up with good ideas. Our call asking what kids have done or will do to keep our drinking water clean was no exception.

We had nearly 200 entries from kids in Maryland, Virginia and Washington, and a panel of judges from KidsPost and the Nature Conservancy selected four finalists.

“We were so inspired by the many entries that included creative and committed suggestions,” said Stephanie Flack, Potomac River project director for the Nature Conservancy. “We were impressed by the kids’ terrific ideas of what they, their families and their friends can do to keep water clean.”

The finalists and their families will be treated to a picnic and hike at the Potomac Gorge with a Nature Conservancy scientist. A winner will be chosen from among the finalists and will receive KidsPost goodies and a behind-the-scenes tour at the National Aquarium in Baltimore.

We have included some of the finalists’ thoughts on keeping drinking water clean. You might try one or more of these ideas in your home or school, because every drop counts.

I would encourage my family, friends and community to take shorter showers, turn the faucet off when they aren’t using it, like when brushing your teeth or washing the dishes. . . . You would be amazed how much water and money you could save by turning the faucet off or even minimizing the time you use it.

Another action I would take is to start a program at school to participate in cleaning up streams. We could even adopt a stream to clean up. This will keep all of the trash out of the water that may pollute and harm the animals. We could also plant vegetation along the stream banks. Doing this would stabilize the bank and help prevent erosion, reduce sediment, filter runoff and create wildlife habitat.
My last idea is that I would encourage people to never pour chemicals down the sink or flush them down the toilet. Some of the chemicals might be hazardous to the environment. They shouldn’t end up in the city’s waste disposal department. ... You should also dispose of your trash and waste of all kind properly.

Don’t think about it as doing nature a favor but yourself a favor, because water is reused and I’m sure you don’t want to drink contaminated, unhealthy water.

— Madelyne Cabico, 13

Washington

Whenever you want to change the world around you, the best thing to do is to look at the world around you. One of the problems I see is the pollution of our water supply because of the improper disposal of chemicals, paints and medicines. There are many things that I do that you can do too! You can try to remind your friends and family to dispose of chemicals safely. Why not make a game of it? See who in your family can find the largest amount of unused products to recycle, then go as a family to the nearest transfer station to deposit them.

If everyone did their part our water would be so much cleaner. A lot of people do not realize how lucky we are to have clean water. Many of the young people in my generation do not fully appreciate that many people in other countries cannot turn on a tap and instantly have fresh, clean water. This needs to change. So look at yourself and others around you, and see what you can do to make change happen!

— Lily Bernero, 11

Fairfax

Well water is the most common source of drinking water where I live, so I have learned some creative ways to help keep our groundwater clean.

My family always uses organic, NEVER chemical, fertilizers for our yard. We apply vinegar to small areas and rubber mulch/wood chips for larger beds. It is more work than spraying chemicals that kill weeds within a couple of hours, but by going organic, we keep our groundwater and our consciences clean.

I always pick up after my dog, because his poo can leach toxins into the soil, which could add poisons to our groundwater. Animal waste is harmful to the long-term health of our groundwater. In a two-for-one green deal, instead of wasting plastic, I reuse the bag in which our daily newspaper is wrapped to pick up Sparky’s poo. It works really well, because it is the length of my arm and acts as a glove for this “big job”!

We keep a pasta pot in the kitchen sink to collect water from hand-washing and rinsing dishes, which we then use to water our indoor plants. Our lush green plants seem to approve.

— Sidharth Muralidhar, 13

Great Falls

From a very young age, I was fascinated with water. I remember sitting on the kitchen floor pouring water back and forth into different containers. My mom said I could drink that water but not the water from the fish pond. “Why?” I wondered.

As I grew older, I became a Girl Scout. We studied water conservation. Our service project was to encourage people to save water. We created signs to hang over every sink in the church to help them think about the amount of water they used. We also went to Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens and took samples of the water to see how clean it was. Not clean enough to drink, they told me. I felt like a scientist, and still wanted to know why.

My pen pal in Mozambique has to walk to the river to fetch water for her village. I want to write and ask her how they keep their water clean. We can learn from people all over the world and help each other.

My mom told me putting chemicals into the ground can hurt our water. My scientist self will keep learning so I can teach others about keeping our water clean.

— Ryanne Barstow, 8
Book Release: Miracles at the Door

Interview by V. Michelle Bernard Published 10/16/2013

_Miracles at the Door_ gives a sneak peek into Don Draper’s 37-year literature evangelism career.

During this time Draper, a member of the Chesapeake Conference’s Hagerstown Church in Hagerstown, Md., faced many challenges, including a death threat, dog bites and fear. But he also experienced many blessings. The book shares his stories of answered prayers and miracles that happened mostly in Maryland and its surrounding states.

Q: Why did you decide to write this book?

A: I wrote the book to show people how God works miracles today just as He did in the past.

Q: What was the biggest miracle that happened to you during your time as a literature evangelist?

A: When I was starting and went out on my own and prayed if God wanted me in this work, He would have to show me a miracle. That day I talked with three families and they all purchased the books. I didn't know how to write the contracts so I had to go back the next day with my district leader and all three families still wanted the books. That's when I knew that God wanted me in this work.

_Miracles at the Door_ was published by Teach Services, Inc., and is available at teachservices.com.

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Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Remembrance: Former Columbia Union Women’s Ministries Director Known for Loving People

Story by Visitor Staff
Published 10/16/13

Norma Jean Sahlin, a daughter of the Columbia Union Conference, lost her fight against ovarian cancer last Wednesday. She was 61. Sahlin was born in Takoma Park, Md., was in the Takoma Academy Class of 1970, and graduated from Columbia Union College in 1974 with a bachelor’s degree in communication. She married Monte Sahlin on October 20, 1974 at Potomac Conference’s Sligo church in Takoma Park. This Sunday marks their 39th anniversary.

Although Norma joined her husband in urban ministry, she served in many other capacities throughout the union. She served as Ohio Conference newsletter editor, international director of marketing at the former Home Study International, director of development and alumni relations at Takoma Academy, media relations manager at ADRA and as Women’s Ministries director for the Columbia Union Conference. She has also volunteered in several churches as an elder and hospitality leader. In her final years, Norma led out in the membership ministry at Ohio Conference’s Village church in Mason and managed the church’s Agora community center.

Her daughters remember Norma as someone who loved people, the church, gardening, tea, books and grandkids. “She was known for treating people well,” they say, “for volunteering, taking care of people who cannot help themselves, hosting new member dinners at church … and opening her door to all and for reading and telling stories.”

Her husband says, “She was so full of life and gave so much to many people, including helping write many books and research reports.”

Norma leaves behind her husband, Monte; daughters Stephanie Jackson (Sam) in Laurel, Md., and Melissa Bruno (Gianluco) of Mason; brothers David and Robert Seal of Florida; sister, Martha Carol in Mississippi; three grandchildren, three nieces, three nephews and their families. A memorial service is scheduled for October 19 at 5 p.m. at the Village church, which is located at 8936 South Mason-Montgomery Road in Mason, Ohio. In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting that contributions be sent to The Agora Community Center, 118 E. Main Street, Ste. 103, Mason, OH 45040. Cards and letters can be sent there as well.

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Stroudsburg church launches ambitious plans for community center

Seventh Day Adventists hope to rally support for their cause during convention Sat. at Fernwood

By Andrew Scott
Pocono Record Writer
October 11, 2013

The Stroudsburg Seventh Day Adventist Church wants to renovate its West Main Street community center to accommodate an expanded food pantry and to add a health and wellness center.

“This would provide not only health care services but also information on things like proper dieting, reducing childhood obesity and self-help tools for people with diabetes and other conditions,” said church member and Pocono Medical Center nurse Herline Raphael.

The center currently provides donated clothes, furniture in good condition and food to the needy.

Specific items needed include: building materials, paint, a stove, a refrigerator with a working freezer, medical equipment and supplies, clothing bins and a van for residents with no personal transportation, said community center Director Jamala Asiyo.

“And while we have some church members with professional backgrounds in building renovation, we welcome more community volunteers to help,” said the Rev. Livingstone Aaron, church pastor.

“You don’t have to be a Seventh Day Adventist to be a volunteer or benefit from the community outreach services we provide. Though we’re a sectarian organization, when it comes to serving the community, we serve everyone, regardless of religious affiliation.”

Fulfilling its mission

That’s been one of the church’s philosophies for the more than 100 years the church has been in Stroudsburg, Livingstone said.

What: Seventh Day Adventist Convention, inviting Seventh Day Adventist churches from Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York.
When: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday with a 6 p.m. gospel concert.
Where: Fernwood Hotel and Convention Center, Route 209 and River Road, Bushkill, 570-588-9500.
Focus: Discussing community outreach services the Seventh Day Adventists hope to rally support for their cause during convention Sat. at Fernwood

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Ruth Heller sorts donated clothes at Seventh Day Adventist Church in Stroud Township.

David Kidwell/Pocono Record
functioned solely on tax-deductible donations, the church hopes to rally more such support at Saturday’s Seventh Day Adventist Convention at the Fernwood Hotel and Convention Center in Bushkill.

“The four components of the Seventh Day Adventist mission are proclaiming the Gospel, health and wellness, community outreach and education,” Aaron said. “This upcoming convention will focus not only on what we’ve done so far, but also on developing more comprehensive strategies for carrying out our mission as we go forward.”

What led to the church’s community center began more than 20 years ago, when several church members began collecting donated clothes for the less fortunate and soon discovered they needed a space to store those clothes, Asiyo said.

Though local resident Edith Funk made her garage available, the space quickly proved too small as more and more donations poured in.

Church member Bob Christman, the West Main Street building’s previous owner, then agreed to sell that building to the church, providing a larger space where clothes and later food and furniture could be stored, Asiyo said.

“Donors drop the clothes through a chute that comes down to the basement, where church members and community volunteers separate and sort the clothes by size and gender for adults and children,” Asiyo said. “We then hang the clothes upstairs in men’s, women’s and children’s sections.

“Right now, people needing clothes can pick them up only on Wednesdays, from 9 a.m. to noon,” she said. “We hope to expand pickup times to three to four days a week.”

Aaron said the church also will use part of the money from donations raised at the convention to support medical expenses for church members with various illnesses.

A longer-term goal is starting an Adventist Community Development Center on 14 acres of church-owned land off North Fifth Street, near Big Wheel Roller Skating, in Stroud Township, Aaron said.

This would be a more centralized location providing expanded and other community outreach services.

Raising money to expand those services and help church members with various illnesses.

Short-term goal: Renovate the Stroudsburg Seventh Day Adventist Church’s West Main Street community center to expand the food pantry and add a health and wellness center.

Needed donations: Building materials, paint, a stove, a refrigerator with a working freezer, medical equipment and supplies, clothing bins and a van for residents with no personal transportation.

For information: Call 570-421-0891, stop by 2085 W. Main St., Stroudsburg, or visit stroudsburgsda.org
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Upcoming Events Around the Columbia Union

MARYLAND

October 11: Hear The King’s Heralds and experience ADRA's world through dynamic presenters and inspiring stories from the front lines. This free event takes place at the Southern Asian Adventist church—located at 2001 E. Randolph Road in Silver Spring, Md.—Friday, at 7 p.m. For more information, visit ADRA.org/OnTheEdge.

October 11-13: The Chesapeake Chapter of Adventist Single Adult Ministries hosts a weekend retreat at the Mount Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md. Keynote speaker Alphod Sinclair, a pastor and counselor, covers topics that are relevant to single adults. For details and to register, call Fred Thomas at (410) 992-9731 or email ftthomas1950@yahoo.com.

October 12: The 11th annual Project Love in Action Benefit Concert and reception takes place Saturday, 4 p.m., at the Northeast church located in the St. Andrews Lutheran church, 1201 Taylor Avenue in Baltimore, Md. Proceeds will be used to provide basic and preventive health care, HIV/AIDS education, food, clothes, shoes, vision care and reading glasses in the Ubakala community in Eastern Nigeria. The Visioneers, a popular Christian quartet from New York are featured. Admission is free, however a freewill offering will be collected. Have a question? Contact Iheanacho Odinma at (443) 631-4089.

October 12: The King's Heralds, formerly associated with the Voice of Prophecy radio broadcast, will be presenting the major portion of the morning worship service at the Hagerstown (Md.) church, from 10:45 to 11:30 a.m.

October 13: The annual Harvest Home Musical Program and dessert reception at the Rock Hall church takes place Sunday, at 2 p.m. The church is located at 21366 Sharp Street, Rock Hall, Md. Proceeds of the bake sale will be used to restock the church’s food pantry. For more details, contact Vickie Anderson at jvand4@verizon.net, or phone the church at (410) 639-2926.

October 19: The Hagerstown (Md.) church’s Sabbath Sundown Serenade will be presented by pianist Sherilynn Gibbs and her two daughters. The program starts at 5:30 p.m.

October 19: The Atholton church, located at 6520 Martin Road in Columbia, Md., extends an open invitation to attend a classical concert on Sabbath, at 4 p.m. The concert features pianist Jidong Zhong and violinist Oksana Skrypkar. For more information, call the church at (410) 740-5030.

October 19: Performers at this Awakening Friday night worship program will focus on hope and a new season for the walking dead. Attendees will enjoy creative and thoughtful worship through fellowship, music, skits, testimony, poetry, spoken word and other arts. The program starts at 7 p.m. For more information, call or text (703) 303-6480 or email awakening@arisesda.com. The program takes place at the Arise church, which is located at 5203 Manchester Drive in Camp Springs, Md. RSVP on their Facebook event page (https://www.facebook.com/events/169217753272516/).

October 25-26: “Christ our Rock” is the theme for Highland View Academy’s (HVA) Academy Days. Students in grades 7-11 who have an interest in learning more about HVA should contact Renee Williams by email at rwilliams@highlandviewacademy.com or call (301) 739-7480. Registration is required. The campus is located at 10100 Academy Drive in Hagerstown, Md.

NATIONAL

October 18-19: Several students and church youth groups in the Columbia Union will join a nationwide fast from sunset Friday to sunset Sabbath to support orphans. The DO Fast, or Defend Orphans Fast, is a 24-hour fast aims to get Seventh-day Adventists all across the North American Division (NAD) involved in supporting orphans. For more information about the fast and to obtain free materials, visit restorechild.org/do.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

October 13: All are invited to attend Dupont Park Adventist School’s fifth annual fall festival. There will be a moon bounce, dunk tank, french fries, baked goods, cotton candy, veggie burgers, Rita's Ice Cream and more. The hours are from 12 to 4 p.m., and
the school is located at 3942 Alabama Avenue, Southeast in Washington, D.C. For more information or to rent a table, contact the school at (202) 583-8500. To rent a table for half a day, the fee is $40, for a half a day the fee is $20.