Weekly News From Around the Columbia Union Conference

May 21, 2014

First Adventist Church in Nation’s Capital Celebrates 125 Years in Ministry

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Spurred on by Roland J. Hill, their new senior pastor, members successfully spearheaded a 125-day initiative that saw them fundraise and renovate the sanctuary. Last weekend was the first time in about two months that members were able to worship in their own facility at 810 Shepherd Street, northwest.
—Story by Rhonda M. Covington

Delegates Elect Officers to Continue Vision for Ohio

During Ohio Conference's 41st regular constituency meeting held Sunday, more than 400 delegates and delegates-at-large filled the Worthington church in Worthington and elected new administrators to lead the conference during the 2014-18 term. President Ron Halvorsen Jr., (pictured, right) who joined the conference family in February, was elected to office by an overwhelming majority of the vote. Director of Clergy Care and Leadership Development, Oswaldo Magaña (pictured, left) was elected executive secretary and will continue to hold both positions. Earlier this year, the nominating committee opted to separate the treasurer and secretary positions, and a new treasurer was elected, but at press time has not officially accepted.

During the last quadrennium, membership has gradually increased from 11,446 in 2010 to 11,655 at the close of 2013. Tithe for the same period increased by 2 percent from $9,223,240 to $9,427,240. Addressing the conference’s pending budgetary deficits Halvorsen elaborated on what could be done to “right this ship,” and closed his remarks by saying he believed “you and I will be people that will put it on the line for Him.”—Story by Heidi Shoemaker; Photo by Mariya Marton

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Baltimore Ravens, Howard County
Recognizes Chesapeake Conference School

Two community organizations recently recognized the Crossroads Adventist Preparatory School in Ellicott City, Md., and its principal, Karohn Young (pictured first row, right), for a job well done. First, the Baltimore Ravens presented Principal Young with the 2014 Touchdown for Teachers Award. This prestigious honor recognizes local teachers for their leadership, dedication and commitment to education. Young was among five finalists who were honored at the M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore, and received 10 tickets to the event, a personalized Ravens jersey and an award certificate.

Second, the entire school was recognized as a 2014 Healthy Howard School Silver Winner. Out of more than 60-plus nominated schools in Howard County, Maryland, Crossroads was one of seven private schools and the only Seventh-day Adventist school to receive the award.—Story by Jackie Farquharson

WGTS Spring Fundraising Goal Surpassed
Last week, in the space of four days, the WGTS 91.9 FM radio station in Takoma Park, Md., surpassed their spring fundraising goal! “We saw a 47 percent increase in giving over last year's spring event,” said Kevin Krueger, manager of the Washington Adventist University-owned station. “We are so incredibly blessed.” In addition to reaching their main goal, listeners also pledged additional funds to their Project Renewal, which will fund broadcasting equipment infrastructure.

Around the same time she lost her job, one listener, who said she loves to listen to the station during her morning commute, called into the station on May 14 and pledged $1,000. “I was terrified—extremely terrified—but felt somewhere down, deep, seriously deep, that this was right,” she said. By May 19, the listener received an offer for another job. “God hasn’t just blessed me to be able to support WGTS but all of this tells me that this is right where I should be. I’m walking with him and He is guiding my path,” she said. Pictured is Chaplain Pete Garza recording a thank-you video.

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**Potomac Members Spend Sabbath in Jeans**

About two Sabbaths ago, members of Potomac Conference’s Arise Hispanic-American church in Silver Spring, Md., were encouraged to trade in their Sabbath clothes for jeans and not be afraid to “get dirty” helping others. Intent on following the instructions Christ gave following his resurrection—to go and make disciples—Arise members have dedicated the month of May to exploring what this instruction means.

On this particular Sabbath, six Arise church members met at CASA de Maryland in Hyattsville, Md., and spent several hours helping members of the immigrant community fill out their citizenship forms. For Jackie Ventouris, an elder at Arise church, the day involved more than simply translating and filling out information. “Helping out was such a blessing,” she said.—*Story by Sylvia Urrutia*

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Spotted: Allegheny East Church's Longest Attending Member

During First church's 125th anniversary service last Sabbath in Washington, D.C., Betty F. Gillis, who recently celebrated her 89th birthday and holds the longest membership of 77 years, was honored and presented with a plaque and flowers. Over the years, she served as the organist, assistant choir director, minister of music and assistant Sabbath School leader.—Story by Rhonda J. Covington

Book Release: Miracle of Courage, Color and Christ—The History of the First Church
Douglas Morgan, PhD, a history professor at Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Md., wrote this limited edition, coffee table book about the oldest Seventh-day Adventist Church (established in 1889) in Washington, D.C., and the Columbia Union. In the book, Morgan highlights how:

- The three angels’ messages came to the nation's capital before and beyond Takoma Park
- The church brought black and white together in its early years and resisted the tide of segregation in the nation and the denomination with the transforming power of the gospel
- Ellen G. White, Adventist church co-founder, conducted weeks of prayer during the church’s early days and how many other Adventist pioneers helped build up the church, including Uriah Smith, Alonzo T. Jones Harvey Kellogg and A.G. Daniells

Donations will be accepted for the book to fund planned renovations, which include installing an elevator, a fourth level and educational tower. For copies of the book, contact Pastor Hill at secretary@fcsda.org.

READ MORE

Spotted: Spencerville Welcomes a New Member
Last Sabbath after Pastor Marilyn Scott baptized him, Ryan Salinas became the newest member of Chesapeake Conference’s Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md.—Photo by Mark Froelich

Unprecedented Meeting Examines Church’s Missional Structure

An historic meeting of administrative leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America met near Dulles Airport outside of Washington, D.C., May 13-15, to discuss the future of the church and its structure, organization, and mission. It is the first time presidents, executive secretaries and chief financial officers of each of the church’s administrative units, conferences and unions, have met in a joint session.

The conference began with church leaders, which also included education and healthcare leaders, expressing a strong willingness to place the needs of the church’s effectiveness and mission before their own position. When asked, an
overwhelming 95 percent of attendees said they would be willing to sacrifice their position, if it would help further the mission of the Adventist Church.

Titled “Shaping the NAD of Tomorrow”, the conference featured presentations on: the changing face of the religious environment in North America, challenges to the Adventist education system, reaching the emergent secular society, and how governance and organizational structure affect the efficiency of the church and its mission.—Story by the North American Division

READ MORE

ADRA Staff Prays for Missing Nigerian Girls

Last Wednesday afternoon, a month after some 300 girls were abducted from a school in Nigeria, members of the ADRA International staff in Silver Spring, Md., and at its offices around the world, paused to pray for their safe return. The fundamentalist group Boko Haram, which opposes education of women, has claimed responsibility for their abduction.

Jason Brooks, ADRA’s water and sanitation expert, said because of ADRA’s work in that area, there are thousands of girls in school. “We believe that prayer changes things,” he said. Click here to see the video of the prayer.

See the People and Places of Haiti
On a recent trip to Haiti reporter Taashi Rowe photographed the beautiful people and places of Haiti. Click here to see a photo gallery of the trip. Read more about what the Seventh-day Adventist Church is doing there in our May Visitor feature article.

Columbia Union Members in the Media

Dr. Ben Carson’s riding high now, but he’s no political tonic for America

Westminster carnival, Hawaiian luau planned for Sunday

Olney Adventist Prep students win art contest

Shady Grove Adventist earns breastfeeding designation

Watch Dr. Ben Carson’s Powerful Point on Welfare That Had Liberals Fuming & The View Crowd Clapping

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARYLAND

June 4: Joyce Newmyer, president and CEO of Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, Md., will sing at ‘Washington Adventist Hospital Night at the Nationals’ baseball game. Some proceeds will go to hospital’s foundation. Newmyer starts singing at 7:05 p.m.

June 8: Discover which wild plants are edible by participating in a one-day class on Sunday, June 8, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., at the Mount Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md. The $48 fee includes two meals (made with edible wild plants gathered during class time), guided identification hikes, lectures, textbook and color plant identification packets. Must register to participate. To register, call (301) 824-6045, or email mtaetnacamp@myactv.net.

Taashi Rowe, Visitor News Bulletin Editor
First Adventist Church in Nation’s Capital Celebrates 125 Years in Ministry

May 21, 2014 · by Taashi Rowe · in Allegheny East Conference, Uncategorized

Members of Allegheny East Conference’s First church celebrate a trailblazing past, renovated sanctuary, a new book and anticipate a bright future as a prophetic voice in the nation’s capital.

Story by Rhonda M. Covington

Approximately 125 years after it was first founded, members of the oldest Seventh-day Adventist congregation in metropolitan Washington, D.C., nay the Columbia Union, celebrated a milestone anniversary last weekend, May 16-17. Often referred to as the mother church of the Washington metropolitan area, the church was organized with 26 charter members and resisted the tide of segregation in the nation and denomination through the transforming power of the gospel. Last Sabbath, members celebrated not only their staying power and trailblazing history, but also a renovated sanctuary made possible by months of faith, financial commitments and prayers.

Spurred on by Roland J. Hill, their new senior pastor, members successfully spearheaded a 125-day initiative that saw them fundraise and renovate the sanctuary. The renovation include installing three-and-half bathrooms and new carpeting, redoing tile in the foyer on the main level and upstairs in the mezzanine level, putting in two new rooms in the balcony, redoing the steps coming into the church, and reupholstering and refinishing the pews. After worshiping in a nearby Baptist church during the renovations, last weekend was the first time in about two months that members were able to worship in their own facility at 810 Shepherd Street, northwest.

With hearts of gladness and thanksgiving, members kicked off the celebration with a spirited Friday evening service that included prayer; a welcome by Lisa Reid-Smith, associate pastor; special music; reflections and a sermon by Ivan Williams, Ministerial director for the North American Division.

The next morning featured an early service with prayer, music and a sermon from Pastor Hill. The second service featured music by an orchestra, a mass choir and a sermon from former senior pastor Mark A. McCleary, PhD. In his sermon he reminded attendees, “Don’t Worry Because God is for You.”

During the divine worship service, Betty F. Gillis, who recently celebrated her 89th birthday and holds the longest membership of 77 years, was honored and presented with a plaque and flowers. Over the years, she served as the organist, assistant choir director, minister of music and assistant Sabbath School leader.

Henry J. Fordham, president of the Allegheny East Conference, spoke during the Sabbath evening rededication of the sanctuary and told the congregation, “You must be obedient in order to produce seed and we must protect the remnant of the church.”

After the mass choir sang, “We are gonna have a good time in the Lord,” Pastor Hill invited congregants to recite the church’s motto: “I’m on a mission for the master to produce seed for the kingdom. It’s bigger than me!”

Pastor Hill explains that the church’s “It’s Bigger Than Me” slogan derives from Elezer in Genesis 24, where he
prayed, “Oh, Lord God of my master Abraham, please give me success today and show kindness to my master Abraham.” Hill says, “The slogan reminds the church of its past influence on the present generations, while challenging current members to view their lives and church work as bigger than themselves. Their lives will affect future generations.”

Former member, Elder Jessie White delivered the prayer for the Saturday evening service. She became a First Church member in 1964. Prior to moving to Georgia six years ago, she had served in many church ministries. She said of the weekend, “I felt overwhelmed at how God has led this church through 125 years of existence. Greater miracles are in the future if we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us.”

Members ended the Sabbath by learning about and participating in a signing of the recently released book *Miracle of Courage, Color and Christ—The History of the First Church of Seventh-day Adventists*. The limited edition, coffee table book was written by Douglas Morgan, PhD, a history professor at Washington Adventist University in nearby Takoma Park, Md. Donations will be accepted for the book to fund planned renovations, which include installing an elevator and a fourth level and educational tower. For copies of the book, contact the church at secretary@fcsda.org.
Delegates Elect Officers to Continue Vision for Ohio Conference

columbiaunionvisitor.com/ohioconstituency/

May 19, 2014 · by Taashi Rowe · in Ohio Conference, Uncategorized

At yesterday’s constituency session, Ron Halvorsen Jr., was elected president of the Ohio Conference and Oswaldo Magaña was elected executive secretary. A new treasurer was also elected.

Story by Heidi Shoemaker; Photos by Mariya Marton

During Ohio Conference's 41st Regular Constituency Meeting, held May 18, more than 400 delegates and delegates-at-large filled the Worthington church in Worthington and elected new administrators to lead the conference during the 2014-2018 term. President Ron Halvorsen Jr., who joined the conference family in February, was elected to office by an overwhelming majority of the vote. Director of Clergy Care and Leadership Development, Oswaldo Magaña was elected executive secretary and will continue to hold both positions. Earlier this year, the nominating committee opted to separate the treasurer and secretary positions, and a new treasurer was elected, but at press time has not officially accepted.

During the last quadrennium, membership has gradually increased from 11,446 in 2010 to 11,655 at the close of 2013. Tithe for the same period increased by 2 percent from $9,223,240 to $9,427,240. Departmental reports were shared at well-attended town hall meetings this spring, and highlighted the explosion of activity in the youth department, community outreach at Camp Mohaven and exponential expansion of Hispanic Ministries during the past four years.

Stressing he is more pastor than chief executive officer, Halvorsen shared, “I am concerned with strengthening local churches, strengthening our local schools.”

Addressing the conference’s pending budgetary deficits, Halvorsen shared, “The Lord has called me to be president of your conference … You need to know how much I care about the wellbeing of this conference. It seems to me we are at a juncture—not just Ohio, but as a church—where we are going to have to ask ourselves just how serious are we about the mission we’ve been called to [in this conference].” Halvorsen elaborated on what could be done to “right this ship,” and closed his remarks by praying “you and I will be people that will put it on the line for Him.”

Other business conducted included the election of the conference executive committee and reports from the articles and regulations committee and Mount Vernon Academy (MVA) Board of Trustees. The meeting concluded with a DVD from MVA featuring academy highlights and comments from principal Dan Kittle, who emphasized their commitment to “powerful relationships” with members across the conference, alumni and other organizations. “I extend to you the offer to partner with Mount Vernon Academy to build futures for the kingdom of God,” he said while sharing details about their strategic plan, Destination 2016, a vision for growth for the academy.
Ohio delegates vote during the 2014 constituency session.
May 20, 2014 · by Taashi Rowe · in Noticias, Potomac Conference, Uncategorized

Members of Potomac's first English-speaking, Hispanic-American church spend the Sabbath in jeans as they volunteered in their community.

Story by Sylvia Urrutia

About two Sabbaths ago, members of Potomac Conference's Arise Hispanic-American church in Silver Spring, Md., were encouraged to trade in their Sabbath clothes for jeans and not be afraid to "get dirty" helping others. Intent on following the instructions Christ gave following his resurrection—to go and make disciples—Arise members have dedicated the month of May to exploring what this instruction means.

On this particular Sabbath, six Arise church members met at CASA de Maryland in Hyattsville, Md., and spent several hours helping members of the immigrant community fill out their citizenship forms. For Jackie Ventouris, an elder at Arise church, the day involved more than simply translating and filling out information. "Helping out was such a blessing," she said. "To lay self aside and do something that means so much to someone else, I [got to be] a part of their dream. It was great to know that for that day, I had made a difference in that one person’s life. I look forward to more opportunities where I can serve our community."

About 12 other Arise members took on a second project that day where they took the "getting dirty" part a little more literally. This group met at the Adventist Community Services of Greater Washington (ACSGW) center parking lot in Silver Spring, and participated in a short devotional before heading out to serve. They started by cleaning up the grounds of the ACSGW building. Then, with gloves on and trash bags in hand, headed down to nearby Sligo Creek where they cleaned up the community. They filled several bags of trash. Victor Martinez, also an elder at Arise, summed up the meaning of Jean Sabbath when he said, "Sabbath is meant to do good deeds, big or small. It's not just to sit in a church for several hours, but to extend a hand to care for Earth and for our fellow mankind."

After much positive feedback, Arise leaders decided to make Jean Sabbath a recurring event, and have already started looking at outreach opportunities that have opened up in the community.

To learn more about future Jean Sabbaths or to submit an outreach opportunity, visit arisesda.com or on Facebook.com/arisesda.
Pastor Roland J. Hill holds high a copy of a recently released book that chronicles the history of the First church.

May 21, 2014 · by Taashi Rowe · in Allegheny East Conference, Uncategorized

Story by Rhonda M. Covington

Douglas Morgan, PhD, a history professor at Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Md., wrote this limited edition, coffee table book about the oldest Seventh-day Adventist Church (established in 1889) in Washington, D.C., and the Columbia Union. In the book, Morgan highlights how:

- The Three Angels’ messages came to the nation’s capital before and beyond Takoma Park
- The church brought black and white together in its early years and resisted the tide of segregation in the nation and the denomination with the transforming power of the gospel
- Ellen G. White, Adventist church co-founder, conducted weeks of prayer during the church’s early days and how many other Adventist pioneers helped build up the church, including Uriah Smith, Alonzo T. Jones Harvey Kellogg and A.G. Daniells
- The church became a base for opposing the national Sunday law and advocating religious liberty on Capitol Hill
- The church grew and thrived despite the strictures of segregation and became a thriving center for spiritual vitality, education, fellowship and community outreach
- Legendary Bible worker Ethel Hall and scores of other women powered church life and mission
- The landmark evangelistic campaigns of Lewis C. Sheafe (1902-103), E.E. Cleaveland (1958) and C.D. Brooks (1978-1979) took the church’s mission to higher levels
- Church members and pastors helped move the entire denomination toward racial unity and justice
- Extraordinary pastoral leadership has blessed the church and how these men and women of God have each made distinct contributions

Donations will be accepted for the book to fund planned renovations, which include installing an elevator and a third floor. For copies of the book, contact the church at secretary@fcsda.org.
An historic meeting of administrative leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America met near Dulles Airport outside Washington D.C. on May 13-15, 2014, to discuss the future of the Church and its structure, organization and mission. It is the first time presidents, executive secretaries, and chief financial officers of each of the Church’s administrative units, conferences and unions have met in a joint session.

The conference began with Church leaders, including education and healthcare leaders, expressing a strong willingness to place the needs of the Church’s effectiveness and mission before their own position. When asked, an overwhelming 95 percent of attendees said they would be willing to sacrifice their position if it would help further the
mission of the Adventist Church. The delegates welcomed the voted result with strong applause. “It is so wonderful that this body of North American Church leaders came to this extraordinary meeting with open hearts and open minds,” said Dan Jackson, president of the Adventist Church in North America. “This selfless spirit demonstrates a real desire to honestly examine our current organizational and missional delivery systems and how they need to be adapted to make the Adventist Church more relevant to our communities in the 21st century.”

Titled “Shaping the NAD of Tomorrow,” the conference featured presentations on the changing face of the religious environment in North America, challenges to the Adventist education system, reaching the emergent secular society, and how governance and organizational structure affect the efficiency of the Church and its mission. After each presentation conference attendees separated into small groups to discuss issues in one of three priority areas: mission to contemporary audiences, education, and the Church administrative structure. The points raised by the breakout groups were synthesized and presented to attendees who then prioritized the issues for further action. The top priorities selected by the delegates were to:

1. Develop a branding strategy for Adventism tied to a clearer positive sense of our identity, empowering members to mingle with the secular community including opening our churches more hours to be available to local communities; 2. Make recommendations specifying ways that administration and ministries of the Church can streamline operations and eliminate duplications where unnecessary at every level; and 3. Assign to a representative commission the challenge of exploring at least three scenarios for the redistribution of financial support from members for furthering the mission of the Church.

A group representative of the Church’s diverse membership will be commissioned by the North American leaders to further study the top priorities and make an initial report at the North American Division Year-end Meeting in November 2014. Prior to the conference more than 470 church pastors, educators, administrators and retirees throughout the North American territory were surveyed on a variety of topics. The response rate was 72%, which, according to survey analyst Dr. Karl Bailey, was “nearly unheard of” for participation in an anonymous survey. The results of the survey were evaluated and presented by Dr. Bailey and Dr. Duane McBride from the Behavioral Sciences Department of Andrews University. These survey results were used to support the subjects that were presented at the conference.

-- Communication Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America
May 2014 Feature: After the Earthquake

May 1, 2014 · by Michelle Bernard · in This Month's Issue, Uncategorized

After the Earthquake

*Article by Taashi Rowe*

It’s been four years since the ground quaked in Port-au-Prince. Members continue to fund small projects that are making a lasting impact in Haiti.

The journey to the village of Guinadee (Jean-Rabel) involves using a sport utility vehicle to fjord several streams and then enduring a herky-jerky climb up a narrow, winding, craggy, unlit and unpaved mountain pathway. The journey seems effortless for groups of three, four and sometimes five, traveling on the backs of small motorbikes or “tap-taps.”

Although they are about six hours away from Haiti’s crushingly crowded capital city of Port-au-Prince, the plight of Guinadee’s residents—many of whom live in tiny, one-room shacks—is similar to those in the capital, as they, too, live in heartbreaking poverty. Some four years ago, a deadly, 7.0-magnitude earthquake devastated the seaside capital and brought the world’s gaze and aid to the island. Even though the earthquake did not impact Guinadee, it is clear that help is needed.

Haiti has had its share of natural, manmade and economic disasters. The most recent, the 2010 earthquake, killed an estimated 230,000 people while an ensuing cholera outbreak, introduced by United Nations’ peacekeeping troops, took another 8,0001 and infected 635,000 more. As the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere with 10.4 million residents, the economic and development needs are great—reliable electricity, clean water and an affordable, basic education are not guaranteed.
Supporting a Better Tomorrow

Although they don’t have much of a budget, Yveniel St. Luc and Joseph Valcin want to help. The former is a pastor of three churches in the Allegheny East Conference (AEC), and the latter a member of the Atlantic Union Conference. In the immediate wake of the earthquake, billions were pledged for relief and development efforts, but the two men do not have access to such extravagant funds. So far, they have relied upon members of several Haitian Seventh-day Adventist churches in North America and some of the 20 Haitian churches in the Columbia Union to fund their tiny project.

“We can’t help everybody, but we try to help who we can,” explains St. Luc, who started making the annual trip to Guinadee in 2008 when drought caused a famine in the community. When he brought food with him, he noticed that the church located next door to his childhood home was in bad shape. Some 300 Adventists worshiped there every Sabbath, and some 100-plus children used it as a school during the week.

The building has cracks along several walls and the roof is vulnerable to collapse. Valcin, a civil engineer, estimates that it will cost $58,000 to rebuild the church. This is no small feat considering that Pastor Auguste Maxonnes says his members sometimes don’t have money for basics.

In the meantime, the men wanted to build a school for the children. In this country where 77 percent of the population lives in poverty, the United States Agency for International Development claims:

Approximately 35 percent of Haitian youth are unable to read and the average Haitian child spends less than four years in school. … For low-income families, annual school expenses account for about 40 percent of parents’ income and can represent a significant financial burden. In addition, the January 2010 earthquake damaged or destroyed 80 percent of primary and secondary schools in earthquake-affected areas, according to the government of Haiti (usaid.gov/haiti/education).

However, with the country already glutted with aid groups, one has to wonder if sending money to another small group is the solution? “If it is for school, yes. If it is for a soup kitchen, then no,” says Valcin, who believes that an education provides a path forward. “We must [help] … people make a living.” It took three years, but with support from private fundraisers and AEC members at Salem French—St. Luc’s former church in East Orange, N.J.—they were able to build a school in Guinadee. The school has nine teachers, but because the parents often can’t afford to pay the minimal monthly tuition, none of those teachers have been paid in the past three months. The ongoing drought, evidenced by yellowish-brown crops in the fields, doesn’t help as many in the community subsist on farming. Still, the teachers are at the school bright and early every morning.
Paving the Way for the Gospel

On the other side of the island, near the Dominican Republic border, another small Adventist group is working to make a difference. The village of Bois Pin in Las Cohobas is some three hours drive from the capital—three and a half if there are political protests resulting in road blockages. Nestled near the top of Mon Cabrit or “goat mountain,” Ronald Magloire and his wife, Marjorie, have worked to build a house and school.

Originally from Haiti, these members of the Southern Union did not plan to become full-time missionaries. But after the earthquake, Marjorie, a nurse, told her husband, “God is calling us to Haiti. Let’s go.”

Their first encounter with mission work resulted in threats against their lives, but the couple didn’t give up. Initially drawn to Haiti to help orphans, they used their own money to purchase land far away from the dangerous situation. They then worked with the Southern Union’s Larry Rahn of Upward Bound Ministries, and Norma Nashed, a Columbia Union member who runs the Restore a Child nonprofit, to continue their mission.

However, the Magloires soon realized there were no orphans in the region. There was also no school or Adventist church in the tiny community of Bois Pin. So Nashed, Rahn and the Magloires raised funds to build the earthquake-resistant Restore a Child Academie. Again, Valcin became the designer and builder, but only after seeing for himself that the group was not interested in “building another shack.”

After six months, the first floor of the school is completed with six classrooms, and classes started in January with 105 students. Again, the parents cannot afford to pay the tuition nor can they afford the uniforms and shoes required to attend school. Even so, Nashed, who speaks French fluently, visited every home in the community and promised each mother the impossible—that her child would have an education despite the costs.

Nashed, who grew up in Jordan as one of nine siblings, says she got involved in this project because “this is what Jesus would do. I’m committed to children—especially orphans—and that will not ever change. Mrs. [Ellen G.] White says they are lent to us. We cannot neglect them,” she says.

But, the Bois Pin school is just the beginning. The team has plans for a high school, vocational school, medical clinic and playground. This vision will end up costing a daunting $1.5 million, and they are a long way off from raising that amount. Even so, the group had reason to celebrate during the school’s recent dedication. The mothers of the community pulled together their meager resources and decorated the tables with flowers and fruit.

“Education is a gift,” Ronald says. “We also want to preach the gospel and do medical work. With this school, we hope to also pave the way for the gospel, not just in words but in action.”
Forging Ahead

From the outside, and maybe from the inside, Haiti’s vast challenges may seem insurmountable—long after the earthquake hundreds of thousands of people are still living in camps, many parts of the country remain unsafe, mountains of rubble fill parts of the capital and, despite the numerous heavy duty work trucks rumbling throughout the country, progress seems slow.

Still, Haitians are resilient and proud of their history as the first independent, black republic. (They freed themselves from the French in 1804.) And, it is that pride and resilience that pushes Haitians both inside and outside the country to try to make a difference no matter how small.

“I care for my country,” says Ronald. “We are very poor but there’s a lot of potential. I would love to do [mission work] for the rest of my life until Christ comes.”

To learn more about these ministries, visit echoofhaiti.org or restoreachild.org/donate-haiti.

Dr. Ben Carson's riding high now, but he's no political tonic for America

Barry Ellsworth

The GOP movement to have Dr. Ben Carson [Unlink] drafted for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination is unlikely to be successful.

Far from riding a white horse charging in to save the day and America as presented by his Republican supporters, the retired neurosurgeon has made negative waves by comparing the United States of today to Nazi Germany and he is virulently opposed to same-sex marriage.

He is unlikely to appeal to the majority of Americans, and to further detract from his CV, the doctor is now a Fox News contributor.

But the out-of-touch fantasies of the staunchly conservative will not be denied.

While Carson is not expected to decide on running until next year, the super PAC group RunBenRun.org had raised $4 million by the middle of April and had collected 200,000 signatures, Fox News reported. The super PAC’s national chairman, John Philip Sousa IV, said members are sending him almost daily petition updates and hundreds of “clamorings” for him to take the plunge.

“I don’t like the direction in which the country is going,” Sousa said. “Carson doesn’t whine like some other Republicans. He brings a solution to the table.”

The “solution” to “godless government” is apparently found in Carson’s new book, “One Nation: What We Can All Do to Save America’s Future.”

So who is this savior?

Carson, 62, is an African-American and former director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University and by his own admission is comfortably in the 1 percent, Politico reported.

He is deeply Christian – what Republican hopeful isn’t – and a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is a rags-to-riches story, as detailed in a 2009 movie “Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story.”

But as usual, when you dig a little, the prejudices begin to become uncovered.

Take religion first.

The Seventh-day Adventists are not known as being progressive and have “rigid and dated” beliefs about same-sex marriage, church member Eliel Cruz wrote in The Huffington Post. Cruz is president of the Intercollegiate Adventist Gay-Straight Alliance Coalition and a student at Andrews University.

Here’s Carson’s views on marriage, as expounded on Fox News’s “Hannity” in March 2013:

“My thoughts are that marriage is between a man and a woman. It’s a well-established, fundamental pillar of society and no group, be they gays, be they NAMBLA, be they people who believe in bestiality.”

NAMBLA stands for the North American Man/Boy Love Association, a group that wants to make pedophilia legal by abolishing age-of-consent laws.
So, in one fell swoop, Carson is equating gays with child molesters and those who advocate sex between humans and animals. This is likely to be unpalatable to most voters.

Then there is the Nazi analogy.

“I mean, [we are] very much like Nazi Germany,” Carson said at a public event in New York in March, reported the Washington Times. “And I know you’re not supposed to say ‘Nazi Germany,’ but I don’t care about political correctness.”

Again, that is the kind of nonsensical hyperbole unlikely to win over a majority of voters of any political stripe.

Carson’s ascension with Republicans and the move to get him the GOP presidential nomination essentially began after he was the keynote speaker at the February 2013 Prayer Breakfast, reported Fox News. The YouTube video of the speech has had more than three million views.

“[H]e gave an unflattering assessment of American [sic] today, taking issue with everything from the size of the federal debt to the country’s education system to lawyers in politics – with President Obama sitting just a few feet away,” Fox reported.

He is also on record as wanting to trim big government, and as part of that, eliminate Obamacare. He went on to say that Obamacare is “the worst thing that has happened in this nation since slavery.”

Clearly, the man has no sense of proportionality.

“The issue is, the most important thing we have is our health care,” Carson told Fox. “Do we want that under government control?”

The answer is yes, if you want to save lives and allow medical care for all regardless of their financial position.

But Dr. Ben Carson is not the savior the Republicans are seeking. In fact, his outdated and homophobic creed and hyperbole prove the man is little more than a joke, and a bad one at that. If he succeeds in winning the GOP presidential nomination for 2016, the Republicans will not be laughing but crying when the votes are counted.
Westminster carnival, Hawaiian luau planned for Sunday

By Lois Szymanski Neighborhoods correspondent | Posted: Friday, May 16, 2014 12:00 am

The Westminster Seventh-day Adventist Church will have its first Carnival & Hawaiian Luau from 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday at Crest Lane School.

“We’re going to have a limbo contest, face painting, a hula hoop contest, carnival games, a moon bounce, smoothies, massages and light Hawaiian [themed] foods,” said the Rev. Robert Martinez, church pastor.

“And all of these things are included with the entrance fee,” he said.

The entrance fee is $7 for ages 11 through adult and $3 for children ages 3 to 10. Children 2 or younger will be admitted free.

Martinez said proceeds from this fundraiser will go to their Crest Lane School and they are looking to have a lot of fun. “Prizes will be fun Hawaiian items,” he said, “and we’ll have some creative Hawaiian food. One thing we have is a croissant that looks like a crab.”

Martinez said visitors should dress like they are in Hawaii because they will also have awards for the top three people dressed the most Hawaiian.

Look for a silent auction with a variety of items up for bids. “We have baskets from McCormick Spices, Mary Kay, and Bladerunner [hair salon] with a $45 haircut included,” Martinez said. “Another thing we have are gift cards, including one for a manicure and pedicure.”

Live entertainment will fill the air with music. “We will have some [contemporary music] performances from our friends of the school,” Martinez said.

The school is at 324 Crest Lane, Westminster.

For more information call 443-952-7272 or email sda1955@yahoo.com.

Shop and eat

The Deer Park United Methodist Church Men’s Group and Deer Park Lions Club will have an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast from 7 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday at the church. This will be in conjunction with a yard sale from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the lawn of the church, at 2205 Sykesville Road, Smallwood.

Breakfast will include pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs, hash browns, applesauce, juice, coffee and hot tea. The cost is $6.50 for adults, $3 for children age 4 to 12, and free to kids 3 or younger.

The breakfast is hosted by the Lions club and the church and the yard sale is hosted by the church.

Look for all sorts of items at the yard sale, including fresh local potted plants and flowers and direct-sale vendors.

Luncheon fare and a bake sale will be offered by the United Methodist Women of the church. Look for
homemade soups, sandwiches and homemade desserts. You can buy soups by the quart to take home as well as bake sale items.

Call the church office at 410-848-2313 or visit www.deerparkumc.net for additional information.

**Sale, lunch**

Bixlers United Methodist Church will host its annual yard sale and luncheon from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at the church.

Look for homemade vegetable soup, hot dogs and barbecue sandwiches, and a bake sale table with lots of homemade baked goods for sale.

Yard sale items donated by church members will be sold to benefit the Bixlers Church Aid Society, which helps the needy and offers aid to various community members in need.

The church is at 3372 Bixler Church Road, Westminster.

For more information, call Mary at 410-374-6095.
Four students at Olney Adventist Preparatory School were first-place winners in an Earth Day contest sponsored by Planet Aid. They are: Lucas Marinho, kindergarten; Izzie Touma, grade 4; Joanna Scott, grade 6; and a second-grader whose parents requested that she not be identified.

More than 400 students participated from the United States and 200 from India, according to John Nagiecki, a spokesman for Planet Aid.

“Winners were selected in each locale,” Nagiecki wrote in an email.

Students were asked to think creatively about how we use the planet's resources and what roles they can play in helping protect the environment.

The winning entries can be seen at www.planetaid.org/latest-news/earth-day-art-contest-winners.
Shady Grove Adventist earns breastfeeding designation by Jenn Davis Staff writer

Shady Grove Adventist Hospital is the first hospital in the state to achieve a baby-friendly designation through the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, according to a hospital news release.

The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative is a global program that encourages and recognizes hospitals that offer an optimal level of care for infant feeding, the release said. It promotes breastfeeding as one of the most effective preventative health measures for both infants and mothers.

The Rockville hospital offers daily breastfeeding classes while new mothers are in the hospital, in addition to phone support on weekdays and a free weekly support group for mothers once they are home.

Shady Grove Adventist is one of only 177 hospitals in the United States to achieve the designation.