Columbia Union Hosts Hispanic Evangelism Event

More than 2,000 Hispanic pastors and leaders attended the Columbia Union Conference’s Lay Evangelism Festival (Livevangelism 2015) at the Ocean City Convention Center in Ocean City, Md., last weekend.

Click here to see a photo gallery of the event.

BMA Students Host Revelation Seminar
To kick off the second semester, Ever Perez, Blue Mountain Academy chaplain, planned a prophecy seminar about the book of Revelation that focused on Jesus. The students at the Pennsylvania Conference's school in Hamburg, Pa., benefited not only from hearing the seminar, but preaching it.—Caron Oswald

READ MORE

New Jersey Ministry Leaders Retool for 2015

New Jersey Conference leaders recently hosted training sessions and classes for local church leaders and department coordinators. “The purpose of the trainings is to motivate and give the tools to the leaders to do the mission of Jesus in their local churches,” says Jorge Aguero, Personal Ministries director.—New Jersey Conference Staff

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Editorial: It's Not All Bad News

Have you noticed that much of the news on TV is bad, even bordering on depressing? Heinous crimes, heartless terrorist attacks, sexual victimization—it's enough to inspire even the most ardent news junkie to quit viewing news reports “cold turkey.”

But, as terrible as the news usually is, it isn't truly all bad. Why? Because Jesus said, “When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (Luke 21:28, NIV). Jesus turns bad news upside down, redirecting our focus to His soon return!—Gary Gibbs

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Read the entire February Visitor online here!

More Adventist News

50 Congolese Refugees Show Up at Ebenezer Church

CNN Features Adventists on Show About Healthy Living

Coach Builds a Basketball Powerhouse at Takoma Academy

Columbia Union ASI to Host Convention in April

Highland Adventist School Earns Top Ranking

Read the February Bulletin Board

Spencerville Acro-Squad Performs NBA Halftime Show

Visitor Hosts Chat About Important GC Session Vote

Washington Adventist University Mock Trial Team Participates in Competition
Last weekend the Columbia Union hosted the Lay Evangelism Festival (Livevangelism 2015) at the Ocean City Convention Center in Ocean City, Md.

The event focused on the basic means of fulfilling Christ's mission. The four parts of that mission are: every disciple praying and reaching out in love to five friends; small groups nurturing revival and evangelism throughout 500 houses; reaching out to new territories by planting 15 new churches; and church ministries and departments intentionally focusing on congregation and community needs.

Pastor Homero Salazar and Alabanza Pura lead song service.

Frank Bondurant prays during the Sabbath divine service. Jose Cortez, Jr. translates. Photograph by David Leiva

Dave Weigley giving Sabbath divine service message translated by Jose Cortez, Jr. Photograph by David Leiva

Dave Weigley giving Sabbath divine service message translated by Jose Cortez, Jr. Photograph by David Leiva

Kevin Patiño, Director of evangelism for Greencastle church in Allegany East Conference presenting the latest evangelism reports among various churches including Waldorf, MD, Greencastle, PA and Gettysburg, PA. Photograph by David Leiva

Pastor Roger Hernandez from Southern Union Saturday evening closing message. Photograph by David Leiva

Jocelyn Quintanilla performing a special song during the Saturday evening concert. Photograph by David Leiva

Javier Santana sharing a powerful conversion testimony on Sunday morning. Photograph by David Leiva

Final song and altar call. Small lights were given to symbolize the commitment to let their light shine in their communities. Photograph by David Leiva

Melecio Benjamin Villalpando Garcia and his wife Gloria Elena Mallorca Kremer(back) getting baptized as new members of the recently established Landmark church in Potomac Conference. Photograph by David Leiva

Jose Cortez Sr. giving the opening message Friday night. Photograph by David Leiva
Blue Mountain Academy Students Present Revelation Seminar

Michelle Bernard

Blue Mountain Academy Students Present Revelation Seminar
Story by Caron Oswald

When Ever Perez started working at Blue Mountain Academy, the new chaplain, senior Bible class teacher and church pastor knew his priority—to give the students a solid foundation in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

One of his responsibilities includes organizing four FOCUS (Focus on Christ’s Ultimate Sacrifice) weeks each year. To kick off the second semester, Perez planned a prophecy seminar about the book of Revelation that focused on Jesus. “I wanted to make sure that, [at] the beginning and the end, the focus is Jesus,” he says.

January 12-17 students preached at the evening meetings and Perez spoke on the closing Sabbath. The topics were “The Revelation of Jesus Christ,” “The Truth About Prophecy,” “The Sea Beast Revealed,” “The Land Beast Revealed,” “Signs of the Times” and “How to Prepare.”

Senior Angelina Shevchenko, an exchange student from Russia, spoke on the first night. “I was worried about my accent,” she says about her first time preaching in English. “I prayed, ‘If you want me to speak, you have to do this.’ When I got on the platform, I felt God was by my side.’”

The speakers inspired the attentive audience. “It was interesting to learn about Revelation,” says sophomore Brianna Maxwell, who had never attended a prophecy seminar. “Most students are afraid of end times. But, there is no reason to be afraid because God is right beside you.”

Registrar Diana Engen became a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church through a prophecy seminar. “I haven’t been to a prophecy seminar in years. It was really nice to attend one again. The students did a great job,” she says.
New Jersey Ministry Leaders Retool for 2015

Michelle Bernard

Conference leaders kicked off 2015 with training sessions and classes for local church leaders and department coordinators. “The purpose of the trainings is to motivate and give the tools to the leaders to do the mission of Jesus in their local churches,” says Jorge Aguero, Personal Ministries director.

Story by New Jersey Conference Staff

Under the theme “Proclaiming Hope in Jesus,” more than 200 Personal Ministries leaders and their pastors filled the conference auditorium in Lawrenceville to learn new evangelism strategies and how to bring unbelievers to Jesus. Leaders were challenged to find five friends to pray for and say they left the meeting motivated to serve. New youth coordinators also met to plan and organize for the year. Event planners encouraged coordinators to work with the Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs, Master Guides, Ambassadors, Adventist Youth members, teens and young adults. They also recorded a video announcing the 2015 youth theme, “Faith in Action,” and discussed how they will help the youth implement the theme.

The Family Ministries Department held training for their local coordinators. Every coordinator received Building Family Memories, a plan book that includes sermons and seminars for Family Christian Home Week, February 7-14. They also received helpful resources.
It's Not All Bad News

Web Editor

It’s Not All Bad News
Editorial by Gary Gibbs, Chesapeake Conference Evangelism and Ministries Development director

Have you noticed that much of the news on TV is bad, even bordering on depressing? Heinous crimes, heartless terrorist attacks, sexual victimization—it’s enough to inspire even the most ardent news junkie to quit viewing news reports “cold turkey.”

But, as terrible as the news usually is, it isn’t truly all bad. Why? Because Jesus said, “When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (Luke 21:28, NIV). Jesus turns bad news upside down, redirecting our focus to His soon return!

It is this hopeful outlook that makes us Seventh-day Adventists. But, this positive way of life is not to be hoarded. We are called to share the good news that Jesus is coming again. And, in a few weeks, churches across the Chesapeake Conference will do this in a very large and tangible way.

April 11, more than 50 Chesapeake churches will unite with 50 Allegheny East and Potomac conference churches to launch “Living With Hope” evangelistic meetings. Pastors and lay leaders of these churches will present the nightly messages, themed “Prophecies of Hope,” as part of the Columbia Union Conference’s initiative.

“Prophecies of Hope” will be advertised through a major marketing campaign designed to reach several million people through advertising brochures, radio and newspaper ads, social media posts and word-of-mouth invitations. Many of these people are feeling hopeless because of a personal crisis or from just observing what is happening in our world.

You can help others find a new, brighter future by inviting them to “Prophecies of Hope.” Plan to attend and be part of this exciting outreach. And, be sure to bring a friend, share invitations and pray for God’s Spirit to be poured out.
You can find a “Prophecies of Hope” location near you and learn more by visiting hopeinprophecy.org.
Here’s what you can do to help the growing inflow of refugees to your community.

Posted February 16, 2015

By Robert Booker, Columbia Union Visitor;
Richard Clark JR., assistant editor, Christian Record Services for the Blind;
and Andrew McChesney, news editor, Adventist Review

The phone call surprised the Ebenezer Adventist Church in Philadelphia.

The caller represented the Nationalities Service Center, an agency that assists the U.S. government in resettling refugees, and he said he had 50 people from the Democratic Republic of Congo who were looking for an Adventist house of worship.

The refugees — a fraction of the 1,583 Congolese Adventists who resettled in the United States last year — had asked to be connected to a Seventh-day Adventist church upon leaving their war-torn homeland in Africa. The U.S. agency had determined that the Ebenezer Church was the closest to their new home in Philadelphia.

Ebenezer church members sprang into action.

The church secured the assistance of a man who speaks Kinyarwanda, the native tongue of the Congolese, and obtained Sabbath School lessons in Kinyarwanda. It also purchased translation equipment, transmitters, and earphones to interpret worship services into Kiswahili, which many of the refugees can understand.

“The church has rallied around these families,” said Crystal Drake, wife of Ebenezer pastor Charles Drake, who is spearheading the efforts. “They have given so much in clothing and household goods until we had to ask them to stop.”

The refugees’ arrival at the Ebenezer church may seem unusual, but the story should replay itself in other churches as Adventists reach out to a growing community of refugees in their neighborhoods, said Judy Aitken, founder of ASAP Ministries, an independent Adventist organization that works with refugees.

“God is calling on us to reach out to refugees who are destitute and are coming to us,” Aitken said.

In the United States, a total of 1,826 Adventists were among the 70,000 people granted refugee status last year, according to data from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

Eighty-seven percent of those Adventists —1,583 people — came from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, followed by Cuba (100 people), the former Soviet republic of Moldova (40), Myanmar (36), and Ukraine (34). An additional 51 Adventist refugees arrived in the first six weeks of 2015, including 35 Congolese.

Africa accounts for roughly a fourth of all refugees to the U.S., with the largest percentage of nearly half coming from the Middle East and South Asia. The larger proportion of Adventists from the Democratic Republic of the Congo may be linked to the fact that the church has a quarter million members in the country of 77 million.

More than 3 million people have been displaced by years of fighting between government forces and rebels, and 50,000 Congolese refugees alone are expected to settle in the United States by 2018.

While the government might come calling at times, Adventists should take the initiative to learn about refugee needs
by visiting the local office of the Red Cross or
Save the Children, Aitken said.

“Investigate and find out what refugees are
coming to your cities and what you can do,” she
said. “Then you can volunteer.”

She said that her daughter, a counselor in
Albany, New York, volunteered at a refugee
center and quickly adopted a family from
Myanmar, taking members to the doctor and
arranging for food stamps at social services.

But the understaffed refugee office gave her
more refugees than she could manage, and she
turned to other Adventists for help, including a
pastor from Myanmar who also lived on the U.S.
East Coast. The pastor ended up moving to Albany and opening a church for the refugees. Today, 80 to 100 people
worship every Sabbath in the church, rented from a group of Adventist African Americans.

“I thank God when all Americans — no matter what nationality — can reach out to the people in their community,”
Aitken said. “This is the work of Jesus.”

### Congolese Refugees by Religion 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cumulative Total</th>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pentecostalist</td>
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<td>487</td>
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<td>Protestant</td>
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<td>375</td>
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<td>776</td>
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<td>13</td>
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### Adventist Refugees by Country 2014

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<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
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<td>Eritrea</td>
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<td>Ethiopia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
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<td>Republic of South Sudan</td>
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<td>Russia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,826</strong></td>
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CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta highlights the longevity of Adventists in Loma Linda, California.

Posted February 24, 2015

By Loma Linda University Health and Adventist Review staff

CNN television is featuring Loma Linda University and the surrounding Seventh-day Adventist community in southern California on a program about how to live a longer, healthier life.

The 30-minute program, “Vital Signs with Dr. Sanjay Gupta,” is being broadcast on CNN International throughout February and tackles the question, “What can one do to live a healthier, happier, and longer life?”

The setting for the opening portion of the show is the city of Loma Linda, and interviewees mention the key factors of healthy living as maintaining a plant-based diet, regular exercise, rest and relaxation, and having close social connections. They also speak of the importance of a sense of mission, which for Adventists is closely linked to their faith in God and their hope in Jesus’ soon coming.

One of the key factors to a better life is “having a purpose in what you are doing,” Richard H. Hart, president of Loma Linda University Health, tells the program.

Gupta, CNN's chief medical correspondent, notes that Adventists observe the seventh-day Sabbath, giving them a break from everyday stresses and a chance to gather with fellow Adventists.

"Adventists also observe a strict Saturday Sabbath. It's a time to unplug, and unwind, and share time with other like-minded people," he says.

Author and explorer Dan Buettner explains on the program that a secret to living longer is to spend time with health-minded people rather than those who eat poorly and don't exercise.

In the show, Gupta focuses on the commonalities within the world’s five “Blue Zones,” which Buettner has identified as areas where residents live the longest. Loma Linda is the only Blue Zone in the United States.

Loma Linda University Health also has the distinction of engaging in the world's longest-running research studies on aging and longevity. The studies, collectively called the Adventist Health Studies, are cited in the show.

The CNN show is posted online and can be accessed here.

Adventists in Loma Linda have been featured by a number of media organizations in recent years. In addition to the CNN program this month, Loma Linda Adventists took centerstage in a lengthy article by Christian Broadcasting Network News titled, "Secrets to Longevity Revealed in Denomination's Lifestyle."

We reserve the right to approve and disapprove comments accordingly and will not be able to respond to inquiries regarding that. Please keep all comments respectful and courteous to authors and fellow readers.
Coach builds a powerhouse at Takoma

by Adam Gutekunst Staff writer

Tom Fedor/The Gazette

Takoma Academy’s Malik Smith tries to get control of a rebound against The Heights Andrew Lutes (left) and James Dugan during Thursday’s game.

Malik Smith, senior guard for the Takoma Academy boys basketball team, said he remembers exactly what it felt like when he and his teammates walked through a Texas airport in late January. Smith remembers because, as he put it, “we were in the spotlight.” The Tigers were on their way to the Southwestern Adventist University Hoops Classic — a competition Takoma ended up sweeping for the second straight season.

Just a year ago, Smith was a point guard at T.C. Williams High School (Alexandria, Va.) and was playing a basic 20-something league games as the point guard for the Titans.

Then he met Jerry McFarland, now in his second year at the helm of the Tigers. Smith saw the vision the veteran coach had for Takoma Academy, with the trip to Texas, the 30-plus game schedule and marquee matchups with the likes of Montrose Christian, Riverdale Baptist and Bishop O’Connell.

McFarland was trying to build the foundation for a powerhouse program, much like those the Tigers were set to square off with. Smith decided he wanted to be a part of it.

Two years ago when McFarland accepted the head coaching position at Takoma, the seasoned coach turned down offers from schools with basketball programs far more established and rooted in success. He wanted to build a power and he wanted to start at ground zero.

“For me, it was the opportunity to build a program from the ground up and the opportunity to be around kids that I thought fit my spiritual, social and academic values, athletic as well,” McFarland said. “[I liked] having a chance to be able to mold the program the way that I want to and the fact that we’re independent allowed me to play the type of schedule I want to play.”

The changes were swift and immediate upon McFarland’s arrival. In his first season as coach, McFarland pitted his team against Paul VI, Montrose Christian, Riverdale Baptist and Dunbar (D.C.) among others.

The sudden shift in competition, as senior guard Anthony Tate pointed out, came as a bit of a culture shock to the program.

“In a way it was really kind of a shock ... I really enjoyed it,” Tate, who transferred to Takoma Academy from DeMatha Catholic after his freshman season, said of the challenging schedule. “Honestly, we did [doubt] a little bit. But we got over that once we got on the court.”

The challenging slate McFarland has put in place over his two seasons at Takoma has served two purposes for the program. First, he said, playing against the likes of Montrose, Maret (D.C.) and Riverdale will force the Tigers to
begin competing at the same level — an integral step in becoming a program of the same fortitude.

But perhaps more importantly, McFarland intended for Takoma’s powerhouse-heavy schedule to attract more of the area’s talented players to the program.

“Kids want to play against the best players,” the Takoma coach said. “Whether it’s a freshman kid that wants to decide where he wants to go between all the private schools in the area, or a kid that is transferring. It’s attractive to know that you have something to offer a kid. I think playing a schedule like that definitely highlights what we have to offer.”

The moves have already paid dividends, as four talented players have transferred into Takoma since McFarland’s arrival, including Smith, who leads the Tigers in scoring with 13.2 points per game. Second on the list is 6-foot-6 senior forward Robert Montgomery, who transferred in from Watkins Mill over the summer. Both have been key in the Tigers’ 24-5 record heading into Monday’s game against Maret — a significant improvement upon last season’s 15-13 mark.

The numbers do not lie. McFarland’s plan is already playing itself out.

After a 0-4 start to the season, the Tigers have won 24 of their past 25 games, including a Dec. 23 triumph over Riverdale Baptist (66-60) — an opportunity to prove themselves that the program never would have without McFarland’s initiative.

“He’s pushed us to the point where we should almost be better than [the powerhouses],” Tate said. “He’s pushed us like we’re one of those schools and we have something to prove. We always have something to prove. We’re Takoma Academy and some people don’t even know where it is.”

But if McFarland’s plans unravel accordingly, soon everyone will know where Takoma Academy is.

“I do want to brand the program,” McFarland said. “I want to brand the program in such a way that years from now the sixth and seventh grade kids that come into our gym and play in church leagues have the desire, like, ‘When I get big, I’m going to Takoma.’”

agutekunst@gazette.net
Highland School Earns Top Ranking

Michelle Bernard

Highland Adventist School in Elkins, W.Va., was ranked fourth on Niche’s 2015 list of the best private high schools in West Virginia.

Story by Valerie Morikone

According to Niche’s website, a site that rates schools around the country, a high ranking indicates that the school is an exceptional academic institution with a diverse set of high-achieving students who rate their experience very highly. The rankings are based on academics, student culture and diversity, and, in some cases, student reviews.

“We are honored to receive this high ranking by Niche,” states Cheryl Jacko, principal. “While our student body has grown to 61 students—from several [additional] culture groups since Niche’s demographic data was gathered—the basic academic excellence and positive, Christian culture of our school remains the same. We are happy to have this help in getting the word out about our school!
Employment

RN LIVE-IN POSITION: Elternhaus, a Seventh-day Adventist assisted living facility near Columbia, Md., seeks qualified RN to live in 2-4 days per week as house mother. Qualities sought: Mature, patient, nurturing individual with experience in Hospital Med Surg, nursing home or assisted living care assessment. Responsibilities include: 8 hours of patient care, 8 hours delegation/teaching caregivers, 8 hours sleeping on-call. Meet the spiritual and emotional needs through quality time spent with residents providing social interaction, including Bible study and worship services. Call Diane at (410) 707-7071.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY Education and Psychology Department seeks full-time, qualified psychology professor, beginning July 1. Doctorate degree is required. Please submit CV and cover letter to Dr. Marcel Sargeant, sargeant@swau.edu. Position is open until filled.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks full-time physical education professor to begin July 1. Master’s degree required, doctoral degree preferred. Submit curriculum vitae and cover letter to Human Resources office. Must have some teaching experience. Contact Mr. Vesa Naukkarin at (817) 202-6684 or vnaukkar@swau.edu.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY, Communication Department, seeks full-time professor in advertising/public relations or radio/TV to begin July 1. Master’s degree required, doctoral degree desired. Must have teaching experience. Send cover letter and CV to Michael Agee at magee@swau.edu.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time nurse educator to serve as nursing department chair beginning fall 2015. Doctoral degree and three years of university/college teaching experience required. Must have an unencumbered Texas nursing license. Send cover letter and current CV to Dr. Amy Rosenthal at arosenthal@swau.edu.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY’S Business Department seeks faculty to begin fall 2015. Master’s degree required, PhD preferred, with emphasis in finance, marketing and accounting. Position includes instruction in multiple areas, undergraduate and graduate courses, and provides service to the university and community. Send cover letter and CV to Dr. Aaron Moses at mosesa@swau.edu.

RADIO STATION MANAGER NEEDED: A new, full-power, commercial, Adventist radio station is in need of a station manager. Submit your resume and wage requirements to: MCBC, 1134 No. Townsend Ave., Montrose, CO 81401 or call (970) 856-4948.

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SHARE GOD’S REDEEMING LOVE while teaching Bible and English at Korean Language Institutes: koreanmission.ok@gmail.com or (405) 761-0655.

RECRUITING MID-LEVEL PROVIDERS (NP/PA) for a new Rural Health Clinic/Urgent Care in Weimar, Calif. Opportunities are available to specialize in a number of medical fields. Our urgent needs are mental health, pain management, outpatient surgery and emergency medicine. Contact Randy at (530) 296-4417 or r61@me.com.
Miscellaneous

BUTLER CREEK HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER for diabetes reversal, permanent weight loss and overcoming depression. April 5-17 and May 10-22. Prevention and recovery from lifestyle disease amidst the beauty of nature. Cost: $975. Register online at butlercreekhealth.org or call (931) 213-1329.

EARLITEEN AND YOUTH: ELLIOTDYLAN.COM for the Undercover Angels book series for Christian teens that builds on biblical principles and reinforces integrity. Great for Sabbath reading, church schools, home schools and gifts! Youth will enjoy these Christian novels filled with action, character-building lessons and Bible truths. Kindle and large print editions available.

THE WILDWOOD LIFESTYLE CENTER can help you naturally treat and reverse diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, obesity, arthritis, osteoporosis, fibromyalgia, lupus, multiple sclerosis, chronic fatigue, cancer, substance abuse, stress, anxiety, depression and many others. Invest in your health and call (800) 634-9355, for more information, or visit wildwoodhealth.com.

ADVENTIST RODDERS CLUB GC MEET-N-GREET: Members and those interested in joining/starting a local chapter, join us for refreshments and car talk, Sunday, July 5, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at Roosevelt Park, 331 Roosevelt Ave, San Antonio. For more information, email nomadder55@gmail.com. Bring your specialty car.

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Services

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MARYLAND ADVENTIST DENTIST, David Lee, DDS, FAGD, AFAAID, has practices located in Silver Spring and Ellicott City, Md. He is extensively trained in implant, cosmetic, TMD/TMJ, sedation and laser dentistry. Dr. Lee is an
Associate Fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry, as well as having many other certifications. For appointments, call (410) 461-6655 in Ellicott City, or (301) 649-5001 in Silver Spring. Mention this ad and receive a 10% discount on all services, excluding third-party payers. We welcome new patients!

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RELOCATING FROM ONE STATE TO ANOTHER? The move counselors at Stevens Van Lines can help! With special pricing for all Seventh-day Adventist families, and recommended by the General Conference for over 14 years, quality is inherent. Call the Clergy Move Center direct for a no cost or obligation estimate at (800) 248-8313, or visit us at stevensworldwide.com/sda.


Travel

ADVENTIST TOURS TO ISRAEL AND THAILAND EACH SUMMER! Israel: June 21-30, with authors Andy Nash and William Johnsson, longtime Adventist Review editor. Thailand: July 19-31, with Andy Nash and Thai guides. Affordable and family friendly. Contact: andynash5@gmail.com or facebook.com/tabghatours.

Announcements

Sabbath School and church. For communication purposes, we need your email addresses! Send to: Ed Gutierrez, edjulie1@att.net, or call (630) 232-9034. More Information to come. Don’t miss it!

“YE OLDE” CEDAR LAKE ACADEMY REUNION will take place June 5-7 for alumni and classmates of 1965 and earlier at Great Lakes Adventist Academy (GLAA), Cedar Lake, Mich. Honor classes: 1935, 1945, 1955 and 1965. Details will be forthcoming by postal service. For further information, you may contact GLAA Alumni Office at (989) 427-5181 or visit glaa.net.

2015 SONscreen FILM FESTIVAL, April 2-4, to be held at La Sierra University Campus, Riverside, Calif. Everything you need to know about the festival is on the website, sonscreen.com, including information on submitting a film, registering for the festival and even booking your hotel. Register now!

Obituaries

CULLUM, Gerald L., born June 25, 1926, in Portsmouth, Ohio; died August 28, 2104, in Dayton, Md. He was a member of the Triadelphia church in Clarksville, Md. After growing up around Norfolk, Va., he graduated from Shenandoah Valley Academy in New Market, Va., then in 1953 from Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Md. He married Helen Kollar in 1945. In 1965 he accepted a call to be secretary/treasurer of the Southeast African Union in Malawi, where the family lived until 1972. They then returned to the United States, where he served for two years in the New York Conference, and then moved back to Maryland to work for the Columbia Union, where he retired in 1991. He and Helen moved to Berkeley Springs, W.Va., where they stayed active in the local church and school. He will be remembered for all the activities he loved, including gardening, woodworking and building, model trains, ham radio, giving Bible studies and preaching an occasional sermon. Above all else, he loved to serve the Lord. He is survived by his two children, Cindy (Jim) Swanson of Laurel, Md., and Greg (Patty) Cullum of Huntingtown, Md.; his grandchildren, Maggie and Jake Swanson and Christopher, Kimberly and Ken Cullum; along with many nieces and nephews.

RUSSELL, Elsie M., born December 29, 1929, in Boulder, Colo.; died August 1, 2014, in Laurel, Md. She was a member of the Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md. Her mission in life was serving youth—Pathfinders especially. She was employed for many years in the General Conference Youth Department and helped write the Adventurer manual. A graduate of Southern Adventist University (Tenn.), she began her career as a secretary at the North Dakota Conference. She is survived by her husband, Don Russell, of Laurel, Md.—married nearly 59 years; her daughter, Kathy Comeau of Beltsville, Md.; her sons, Rick Russell of Charlotte, N.C., Jerry Russell of Bonney Lake, Wash., and Don Russell, Jr., of Naperville, Ill., their spouses and 10 grandchildren.

SHIRES, Norma D'Sena, born October 28, 1932, in Ajmer, Rajasthan, India; died September 7, 2014, at her home in Silver Spring, Md. She graduated from Spicer College and then received her RN at Gifford Memorial Hospital in South India. It was at Spicer College that she met Reginald Shires, then preparing for the ministry in South Indian English churches. After their marriage in 1957, they served Adventist churches in Madras, Vishakhapatnam and Hubli. In 1959 they were called to join the staff at Raymond Memorial Higher Secondary School at Falakata, down from Bhutan. Norma served as nurse and taught home science and physiology, and cared for village people near the school. The Leopard's Call: An Anglo-Indian Love Story is a book that tells the story of her life in this beautiful area, within reach of the jungle. In 1965 the Shires were called to the Pennsylvania Conference to work at the Lewistown and Mifflintown churches. They also led the Reading Hampden Boulevard and Allentown churches, and helped start the State College church. Their next call was to Potomac Conference’s Sligo church in Takoma Park. In all this work, Norma gave fully of her time and talent, singing at all the evangelistic meetings and teaching Sabbath School classes. She was also often invited to speak at churches of other denominations. Norma is survived by her husband and four children: Juanita, Michael, Donn and Robert.
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Spencerville Acro-Squad Performs Wizards Halftime Show

Story by Heidi Wetmore

Spencerville Adventist Academy’s (SAA) Acro-Squad recently performed the halftime show for a Washington Wizards basketball game in Washington, D.C. The team of 40 athletes and coaches huddled up and knelt on the VIP commons area by the court entrance to pray before and after their performance.

“We were glad to be given this opportunity and were intentional about always giving God the praise and also representing our school values,” says Richie Silié, head coach. “Our host was very impressed, and I’d like to believe we were a good witness to him and all the bystanders. We are proud to say that we love to learn, live to serve—all for Christ.”
Visitor Hosts Chat About Session Vote

Michelle Bernard

Visitor Hosts Chat About Session Vote

Should the Seventh-day Adventist world church allow divisions to choose whether or not women should be ordained in their territories? The Columbia Union Conference Executive Committee publicly voiced support at their November meeting. Join our Visitor Facebook chat, March 25, at noon, with Tara VinCross, director of the REACH Columbia Union School of Evangelism in Philadelphia, and other church leaders across the North American Division to discuss what a “yes” vote means for our church.
Michelle Bernard

The Mock Trial Team at Washington Adventist University (WAU) competed for the second year in a row at an American Mock Trial Association (AMTA) competition.

Story by Donna Bigler

The team competed over the weekend in the Baltimore Regional Competition at the University of Maryland School of Law. The competition included teams from Howard, Princeton, Towson, Mount St. Mary’s, Georgetown, Johns Hopkins, Rutgers, William & Mary, Swarthmore and Bucknell universities.

“The Mock Trial Competitions offer wonderful opportunities for our students to gain relevant experience in the field of law,” says Joan Francis, chair of the History and Political Studies Department at Washington Adventist University. “We work hard to challenge and educate our students beyond the classroom so that when they graduate, they are better prepared to pursue their goals.”

Washington Adventist University is the first and only Adventist institution of higher education to participate in the AMTA's Mock Trial Competition. Last year, the WAU team competed for the first time, taking part in the Richmond Regional Competition after being granted a Sabbath exemption. That exemption enabled the team (many of the members are Adventist) to compete at times that did not conflict with their Sabbath. The team competed in Round 1 on Friday afternoon at noon; Round 2 on Saturday evening at 6:30 p.m.; Round 3 on Sunday at 9:30 a.m.; and Round 4 on Sunday at 2:30 p.m. The closing ceremony was held on Sunday at 6:00 pm.

In this year’s competition, John Hofilena served as team captain. He is a senior who is majoring in political studies and minoring in marketing, and he represented a lawyer in the competition. Other team members include: Zjayah Baker, a sophomore political studies major who represented a lawyer; Arlindo Dos Santos, a senior political studies major (prelaw emphasis) who represented a lawyer; Eloney Perry-Ryan, a first-year political studies major (prelaw emphasis) who represented a lawyer; Shavonne Cadette, a junior political studies major who represented a witness; Jacky Jeanty, a senior theology major (prelaw emphasis) who represented a witness; Candice Green, a junior English major (prelaw emphasis) who represented a witness; and Lillian Wanjiku, a junior history major (prelaw emphasis) who also represented a witness. Melayna Brown, a junior political studies major served as the Time Keeper during the competition. Attorney coaches for the team are Petra Aaron and Joseph Caleb.

Teams in the competition are rewarded for witnesses and lawyers, as well as for overall teams. WAU received an award for Witness for the Plaintiff, Candice Green.

Four team members participated in both years’ competitions. They include Hofilena, Cadette, Wanjiku and Brown. Students are invited to join the Mock Trial team, based on their participation in the class PLST 275, American Judicial System.

For more information about the Mock Trial Team, email jfrancis@wau.edu or call 301-576-0110.