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As the Adventist educational system faces these challenges, leaders look to the past to determine a best path forward.—Alita Byrd

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Editorial: Laying a Strong Foundation
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As the Adventist educational system faces challenges, leaders look to the past to determine a best path forward.

**Story by Alita Byrd**

Seventh-day Adventist education in North America is facing some big challenges. In many schools, enrollment is down and costs are up. The aging of Adventist church members means that fewer have school-age children to send to Adventist schools. A cultural shift means that parents are less likely to send their children to boarding academy. These and other factors are believed to be why 170 Adventist schools in the North American Division (NAD) have been forced to close their doors in the past 10 years.

Ohio Conference's Mount Vernon Academy (MVA) in Mount Vernon, which opened in 1893 on the advice of church co-founder Ellen White, is the latest school impacted. At a special constituency in January, the conference gave MVA two benchmarks to meet or it would close its doors at the end of the school year.

Robert E. Lemon, General Conference treasurer, writing January 16, 2014, on the Adventist Review website, called the decision "a painful ultimatum that should serve as a wake-up call on the future of these schools in the U.S."

As it turns out, MVA failed to meet the first benchmark. As Ron Halvorsen Jr., Ohio Conference president, noted at the special constituency, "We need to figure out how to make Adventist education viable—now and in the future."

Indeed, despite remaining the second largest Christian school system in the world—with 83 schools (K-12), 727 teachers and 5,670 students in the Columbia Union alone—Adventist schools across North America are fighting to stay relevant, competitive and open. Larry Blackmer, NAD vice president for education, summarizes more pointedly why the church needs to pay close attention. "Adventist K-12 schools are critical to the survival of the church, in my opinion," he says. "We need evangelism, but if you want a strong second generation, with the same or similar values, Adventist education is the best way to do that."

From this difficult position, leaders at all levels are debating the problem and ways to solve it. One part of this larger discussion is to examine the founding principles of our education system, to review the reasons behind its existence and evolution, which can help us understand its uniqueness and importance. Recalling and implementing these broad principles might help revitalize some schools, or possibly make it easier when it is necessary to shutter a beloved institution. Looking back may help us navigate the future more effectively.

**Read and share the following articles from the March Visitor!**

- Feature: The Educational Shift
- Artículo principal de Visitor: El cambio educativo
- Profession Projection
- What are the Best Fasting Methods for Adventists?
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Artículo principal de Visitor: El cambio educativo

Michelle Bernard

Artículo principal de Visitor: El cambio educativo
Historia por Alita Byrd

La educación Adventista del Séptimo Día está enfrentando grandes desafíos. La matriculación ha bajado en muchas escuelas y los costos han aumentado. El envejecimiento de la feligresía adventista significa que hay menos miembros con hijos en edad escolar para enviar a las escuelas adventistas. Un cambio cultural significa que es menos probable que los padres envíen a sus hijos a un internado.

Se cree que tanto estos como otros factores son la razón por la que 170 escuelas adventistas en la División Norteamericana (DNA) se han visto forzadas a cerrar sus puertas en los últimos 10 años.

Larry Blackmer, vicepresidente para la educación en la DNA, resume más enfáticamente el por qué la iglesia necesita prestar más atención. “En mi opinión, las escuelas adventistas, desde kínder hasta el grado 12, son críticas para la sobrevivencia de la iglesia”, dice él. “Necesitamos evangelismo, pero si se desea una segunda generación más fuerte, con similares o los mismos valores, la educación adventista es la mejor manera de lograrlo”.

Desde esta posición tan difícil, los líderes de la iglesia y escuela, en todos los niveles, están debatiendo el problema y las maneras de resolverlo. Una parte de esta gran discusión es regresar y examinar los principios fundamentales de nuestro sistema de educación, y revisar las razones de su existencia y evolución. Mirar hacia atrás tal vez nos ayude a navegar el futuro más eficazmente.

Read “The Educational Shift” in English.

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Fasting is Regaining Popularity. What are the Best Methods and Benefits for Adventists?

Story by Sherry English

Fasting certainly isn't a new concept. It is practiced in nearly every religion in the world, and the Bible records many instances of it. God ordered the Israelites to fast during the Day of Atonement (see Lev. 16:29); Daniel fasted after he saw a vision (Dan. 10:3); Esther fasted in preparation for her mission (Esther 4:16); and Jesus fasted while in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11).

Now, however, mainstream culture is catching on. “Fasting is becoming more and more popular,” notes Fred Hardinge, DrPH, associate director of nutrition and media for the General Conference Health Ministries Department.

Indeed, at the end of 2014, Google released its list of the top 10 fad diets searched that year. Among them was the Military Diet, which is a form of intermittent fasting—followers eat less than 1,000 calories for three days, followed by four days off, repeating the cycle. The 5:2 Diet—eating five days and fasting two—was among the top diets reviewed for 2015 by the British Dietetic Association and featured on ABC’s Nightline as the “hot new craze.”

For Seventh-day Adventists, fasting is believed to be one of the spiritual disciplines, yet one we might practice less frequently. With so many new suggestions and approaches on how to do it, what are some of the best methods? And, how does the practice benefit us?
Editorial: Laying a Strong Foundation

Web Editor

Editorial: Laying a Strong Foundation

Editorial by Evelyn Sullivan, illustration by goodsalt.com

During my years as a classroom teacher, my favorite time of the day was when I read or recounted cherished Bible stories to my students. Moses’ mother, Jochebed, placing him in a basket while his older sister Miriam watched the scene never failed to captivate the children’s attention. Often they would ask, “How could Moses’ mother put her baby in a basket and watch it float away?” Even young children understand how critical is the bond between a mother and her child.

I always answered that question very cautiously, saying, “God led Jochebed to place her infant son in the river because He had a special plan for Moses’ life.” We all know how the story progresses. God heard the humble prayers of a Hebrew woman and rewarded her faith by allowing her son to return to her until he turned 12. During those precious years, she committed to educating her child for God. Since she knew her time was short, she was diligent in her instruction. Moses’ entire life, especially the great mission he fulfilled as the leader of Israel, testifies to the importance of the foundational training of his early childhood years.

Partners in Education

The early years are extremely important because new experiences impact the building blocks of the developing brain. Christian education provides such learning opportunities at each stage, from infancy to adulthood. When we as parents and educators ensure that all children have the opportunity to reach their fullest potential, the next generation will pay that investment back through a lifetime of productivity and trustworthy citizenship. Healthy child development is critical to the establishment of our education system, which is the bedrock of a successful nation.

Ellen G. White, in The Adventist Home, states, “Children are the heritage of the Lord, and we are answerable to Him for our management of His property…” (p. 159). The love and dedication required to care for our children is both a blessing and a major responsibility. The influence of the mother and father in a child’s life will impact them well into their adult years. God has committed His precious jewels to our care, to train and educate for His kingdom. We must pray earnestly each day and act in accordance with our prayers for God’s guidance in raising our children in harmony with His plans.

Providing our children with a stimulating environment, with plenty of opportunities to explore and discover, while interacting positively with other Christian families is also significant for their future learning. Effective learning experiences foster optimal development and give children the tools they need to succeed. In view of the responsibility we have to train our children to live productive lives and prepare them for God’s kingdom, let us partner together to aid our children in developing well-balanced minds and characters that will reflect the semblance of God.

Evelyn Sullivan is associate director for Early Childhood Education and Care for the Columbia Union Conference.
March 7, Anthony Hackett, a Washington, D.C., area filmmaker will premiere his first feature film, Catastasis, at Spencerville Adventist Academy in Spencerville, Md.

Interview by V. Michelle Bernard

This self-rated film will keep adult audiences on the edge of their seats. See how Hackett plans to witness through the project.

Visitor: What inspired you to write and produce the movie?

Hackett: God was my inspiration. Literally. God.

Visitor: How do you want it to be used once it is released?

Hackett: My prayer is that this film will be used by God to touch peoples lives in a way that they will either make changes, or at least begin thinking bout how much God REALLY Loves them.

Click here to purchase tickets to the 6 p.m. screening.
Students from Adventist schools around the Columbia Union have already put some thought into what careers they might pursue, and how they will use those jobs to be Christ’s disciples:

One job that I plan on having is being a physical therapist and be an example of someone who is close to Christ but isn’t a pastor.—Jordan Colbert, senior at Allegheny East Conference’s Pine Forge Academy in Pine Forge, Pa.

I would like to be a musician and reach people for Jesus through gospel music. I like to sing and I like to play the piano.—Samuel Seeders, sixth-grader at Mountain View Conference’s Mountaintop Seventh-day Adventist School in Oakland, Md.

[As a nurse], I would share the love of Jesus with others by the way I live, work and speak with the patients and their families and my co-workers.—Gracielia Gonzales, freshman at New Jersey Conference’s Lake Nelson Seventh-day Adventist School in Piscataway

I would like to be a vet so I can help people with their animals, so they can see how beautiful nature can be.—Erica Lopez-Montano, third-grader at Potomac Conference’s C.F. Richards Junior Academy in Staunton, Va.

Though I haven’t yet made a career choice, I’m considering going into the field of science or medicine. I want to be an instrument in God’s hands to relieve suffering and bless others.—Brenda Keppke, junior at Ohio Conference’s Spring Valley Academy in Centerville
One of the things I want to do when I grow up is to be a writer. I could write books about Jesus 'cause I read a lot of books like that and I think they are pretty cool.—Lauren Gantman, seventh-grader at Chesapeake Conference’s Atholton Adventist Academy in Columbia, Md.

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Bulletin Board

March 2015 Bulletin Board

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 Naukkarinen 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.

Real Estate

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Services

MARYLAND ADVENTIST PODIATRIST: Dr. Scott Nutter, highly trained, experienced and board certified, is available in several locations to help your foot/ankle problems, including arthritis, heel pain, spurs, diabetes, callouses, ingrown nails, sprains, fractures, warts, bunions, etc. Surgery, if it is needed, at Adventist hospitals. Laurel: (301) 317-6800, Greenbelt: (301) 345-5200, or Columbia, Md., (410) 531-6350.

ELTERNHAUS ASSISTED LIVING, owned and operated by Seventh-day Adventists, provides specialized care, in a family setting, for Adventist seniors. Visit us at elternhausalf.com. Elternhaus also offers a great work environment for Adventist caregivers, and RNs. Call Diane Crane 24/7 at (410) 707-7071.

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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Travel

ADVENTIST TOURS TO ISRAEL AND THAILAND EACH SUMMER! Israel: June 21-30, with authors Andy Nash and William Johnson, 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.
VISITOR MAILING LIST CHANGES. Want to have your name added? Deleted? Your address changed? Have multiple copies stopped? Contact: your conference membership clerk or church clerk. For contact information: visit columbiaunionvisitor.com. Click on: Advertising and Subscription Information tab, then Subscription Information or go to the Visitor magazine masthead on page 3 of every issue, under the “Conferences” subtitle.
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.