

# FLORIDA FOCUS

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*The beginning  
of a new year  
carries hope and  
plans for a new  
start—a clean slate,  
a fresh, new begin-  
ning in our lives.*

*This year, Florida Conference  
officers encourage members  
in their spiritual lives with  
this year's theme:*

*Faithful 'til  
He Comes...*

*...to God  
...to Family  
...to Church  
...to Mission*

*President Lewis Hendershot, foreground; Treasurer Randee Reynolds, standing; Executive Secretary Evan Valencia, right. Faithful 'til He Comes text on page 2. ▶ Artículos en español en la página 7.*

# Faithful 'TIL HE COMES

2003

We live in a world filled with anxieties and uncertainties. Threats to personal safety abound. World religions offer little more than an array of confusion. And yet, against this backdrop, God has called you and me—like Abraham of old—to be “faithful among the faithless.”

The theme we have chosen for the Florida Conference in 2003 is:

*Faithful 'til He Comes...*  
 ...to God  
 ...to Family  
 ...to Church  
 ...to Mission

## FAITHFUL TO GOD

Yes, the promise is bright, our God is coming soon! But, until then, let us recommit ourselves to be *faithful to Him!* As it was said of Abraham, so it should be said of us . . . “he was uncorrupted by the prevailing apostasy, he steadfastly adhered to the worship of the one true God.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, Ellen G. White, page 125.

Our faithfulness to God is only possible because He has been faithful to us. His love never fails. He is a faithful High Priest. In fact, His name is Faithful and True. In reality, it is God who will be *Faithful 'til He Comes!*

## FAITHFUL TO FAMILY

God has called us to place our families in a priority position in our lives. In the midst of a perverted age in this world, what better time to commit ourselves to be faithful to our family.

Divorce is still rampant, even in the Church. In today's society, perversions of every description exist against children. What a time for us to stand tall and, yes, to stand out as a people who will be faithful to family.

## FAITHFUL TO CHURCH

In an age of post-modern thinking where there are few, if any, absolutes of truth, God has placed His Church. It exists to stand for truth and to bear that light to a world in great need. You and I have the privilege of being a part of a wonderful church family, which will one day soon become the Church triumphant! This Church is the bride of Christ. And, we are told that even with its imperfections, it is the “object of God's supreme regard.” Let us remain faithful to His Church.

## FAITHFUL TO MISSION

And finally, faithful to the mission. What is the mission? The last time I checked, it was still the same—the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, many of whom live in Florida!

In its simplest form, someone once described the mission as “one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.”

Jesus was faithful in His mission . . . to provide a way of salvation for everyone who believes. Surely, His faithfulness will produce the same in us.

“Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” —*Matthew 25:21*

—*Lewis Hendershot, Florida Conference president*

### ESPAÑOL—

*Fieles hasta que Él venga...*  
 ...a Dios  
 ...a la familia  
 ...a la iglesia  
 ...a nuestra misión

### VIETNAMESE—

*Trung Tín Với:*  
 ...Đức Chúa Trời  
 ...Gia Đình  
 ...Hội Thánh  
 ...Chức Vụ  
*Cho Đến Khi Chúa Trở Lại*

### PORTUGUÊS—

*Fiéis até que Ele venha...*  
 ...a Deus  
 ...à Família  
 ...à Igreja  
 ...à Missão

### GUJOSLAVIAN—

*Veran dok On ne dodje...*  
 ...Bogu  
 ...porodici  
 ...Crkvi  
 ...misiji

### FRANÇAIS—

*Sois Fidèle à...*  
 ...Dieu  
 ...ta Famille  
 ...ton Eglise  
 ...ta mission  
*Jusqu'au retour de Jésus!*

### PILIPINO—

*Tapat Hanggang sa Kanyang Pagdating...*  
 ...sa Diyos  
 ...sa Pamilya  
 ...sa Iglesia  
 ...sa Misyon

### KOREAN—

주님께서 오실 때까지 충성  
 하나님께 . . .  
 가족에게 . . .  
 교회에 . . .  
 선교에 . . .

### HEBREW—

...אמנים עד ביאתו  
 לאלהים...  
 למשפחה...  
 לקהילה...  
 למיסיה...

## FLORIDA FOCUS

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# SPIRITUAL FOCUS IS SHARP AT FOREST LAKE ACADEMY



Seniors Zach McDonald, above right, Religious Activities leader, and Simone Da Silva, Student Association treasurer, talk about the joy of witnessing transformation in the lives of fellow students.



Chaplain Jeff Wood, right, thanks Sam Israel, senior and Student Association president, for his leadership and asks about the ministry for the homeless which has FLA students reaching out in the community.



PHOTOS: MARTIN BUTLER

“Changes on campus have everything to do with the students’ passion for Christ,” says Diane Halvorsen, left, FLA chaplain. “They are on fire! I’ve seen it in their eyes.” Alex Froom, senior and Religious Activities leader adds, “It’s our goal to keep focused on what matters most—our relationship with Jesus.”

## FOREST LAKE ACADEMY IS...

...a Seventh-day Adventist Christian high school. Its mission is to challenge students and staff to achieve:

- Love and service for God
- Respect for self and others
- Intellectual growth
- Character for eternity

Spiritual focus is the major difference between Seventh-day Adventist education and that of public schools. This school year, that focus is noticeably sharper at Forest Lake Academy (FLA) in Apopka where Florida Conference provides a haven for young people to learn and grow.

Faculty, staff, and students prayed for unity and the spiritual tone was set even before the 2002-2003 term began. Chaplains and student religious leaders’ mission statement this year is to help “guide students and staff into an active, secure friend-

ship with Jesus.”

“The school is experiencing a real spiritual revival,” observes Wilcley Lima, a junior. “Every day students are finding Jesus.” He credits part of the revival to *Going Public*, a new forum at every religious program where students share three-minute testimonies of what God is doing in their lives. “It gets my attention because I’m listening to my peers,” says Freshman Juan Martinez.

### CELL GROUPS

The spiritual revival also stems from cell groups which meet for prayer and Bible study,

then grow and split much like living cells—hence the name. Here, students talk about their week, their struggles, their joys, and pray a lot. “Cell groups are a wonderful opportunity to share my feelings and to grow spiritually,” says Junior Melissa Tortal.

### PRAYER & HIS PRESENCE

If prayer is the key to heaven, students are learning that faith unlocks the door. “Prayer has become more than an invocation,” says Lima. “It’s a powerful, faith-building experience as God’s Presence is felt in the classroom

and on campus.”

This Presence has even reached the cafeteria. “I can see the difference in students coming through line,” says Pat Marshall, food service director. “They’re just nicer.”

Marshall has worked at FLA for more than 25 years and is touched by e-mail notes of encouragement that students send to faculty and staff every day through the chaplain’s office. “As staff members, we’re here to take care of the students,” says Marshall, “and this year they are telling us, ‘we are praying for you.’”

Visitors, such as Carl Moeckel, Conference

associate superintendent of education, have also noticed a change on campus. While observing classes this fall, he heard teacher comments such as, “Carl, this is the best year we have ever experienced,” and, “The difference is in the students. They are taking the spiritual leadership role. We are simply facilitators.”

“FLA is a wonderful place to be,” says Lima. Senior Alex Gardner observes, “It’s amazing to see young people so enthusiastic about building a relationship with God. That’s what this year is all about.”

—Wilcley Lima, Carolyn Jensen, Martin Butler

# FLORIDA HOSPITAL CELEBRATES EXPANDED MISSION

RECORD MERGER ADDS \$175 MILLION ASSETS TO ADVENTIST HEALTH SYSTEM



## FLAGLER COUNTY'S NEW FLORIDA HOSPITAL CAMPUSES

Florida Hospital-Ormond Memorial  
875 Sterthaus Avenue  
Ormond Beach  
(386) 676-6000

Florida Hospital-Oceanside  
264 South Atlantic Avenue  
Ormond Beach  
(386) 672-4161

Florida Hospital-Flagler  
60 Memorial Medical Parkway  
Palm Coast  
(386) 586-2000

A fireworks display heralded the opening of the new Florida Hospital-Flagler facility in Palm Coast.

PHOTOS: SPENCER FREEMAN

Two Florida health systems recently celebrated the second anniversary of what is proving to be a highly successful marriage. In a transaction valued at \$175 million in assets, Memorial Health Systems (MHS), Ormond Beach, now known as the Florida Hospital Memorial Division, merged with Adventist Health System (AHS), Winter Park, in October 2000.

Even though the agreement came with \$123 million in liabilities, the remaining \$52 million equity represents the largest gift ever given to the Sev-

enth-day Adventist Church according to Kenneth Turpen, director of Philanthropic Services for Institutions for the North American Division.

### IN SEARCH OF A LEADER

Everybody likes a winner, and that's what Memorial Health Systems wanted when it approached Adventist Health System about a possible merger. Over the years, MHS president Dick Lind befriended Tom Werner, former president of Florida Hospital and current AHS president. In time, each organization developed a high

regard for the other's emphasis on quality.

"Lind trusted Werner. That was key to the merger," says Mike Gentry, Florida

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*Hospital employees are trained by the chaplain to pray with their patients.*

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Hospital Memorial Division president.

Beginning as a stand-alone hospital built in the 1960s, Memorial Hospital was the pride of Ormond

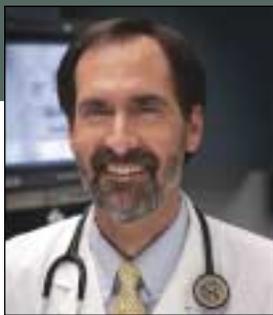
Beach. Although it grew into a four-hospital system, it had been unable to meet its financial expectations for about five years. For one thing, it was not large enough to attract some of the managed-care contracts that were needed. Also, a competing hospital started a heart program that cut Memorial's successful heart business by half.

In an effort to deter further competition, MHS used money needed for other major projects to buy the beachside Peninsula Hospital, now known as Florida Hospital-Oceanside. In addition, the leased West Volusia

Memorial Hospital in DeLand was draining MHS resources. There was only \$30 million in the bank, yet \$20 million was needed for renovations and \$67 million to replace one of its facilities.

### TWO BECOME ONE

Based on the long-standing relationship between Florida Hospital and MHS, Florida Hospital agreed to buy the leased facility—now known as Florida Hospital-DeLand—and MHS agreed to merge its other three hospitals with AHS. The total transaction added 562 patient beds to the Adventist system and



**“I found a lot of very caring people and a superb medical staff here,” says Mike Gentry, left, Memorial Health System president. Adventist physician and gastroenterologist Joseph Kretschmar, M.D., right, said Gentry’s open communication has helped win the support of the medical staff.**

expanded its service area to Flagler County.

Mike Gentry moved to Ormond Beach from North Carolina where he was CEO of Park Ridge Hospital in Fletcher, North Carolina, and the AHS Appalachia Region. He knew MHS had to turn around immediately—while building and staffing a new hospital and undertaking costly renovations at another. His directive was to accomplish this without creating a financial hardship on AHS.

**BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE**

Gentry advised the employees and staff members that it was up to them to make their hospitals be what they wanted them to be.

“The doctors’ attitude was ‘run this place like Florida Hospital and we’ll be fine,’” says Gentry.

“After a few months, I think the doctors realized the goal was to provide excellent patient care,” says Seventh-day Adventist pathologist James Arocho. “They could see the renovation, the new construction, and

the commitment to provide the next level of technology to care for the patients.”

**WHY ADVENTISTS?**

MHS chose to merge with AHS because of its commitment to quality and its emphasis on mission—which, except for the Christian component, was similar to the MHS mission. Based on Florida Hospital’s reputation, MHS welcomed the Christian component.

While Gentry is sensitive to the diversity of faiths in the community, employees and physicians understand his expectations are based on Christian values and standards. Upon joining Memorial, he immediately addressed matters such as prayer and the Sabbath. Today, meetings begin with prayer, prayer is offered at patient bedsides, and all unnecessary work—from elective surgery to mowing lawns—ceases from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.

Gentry challenged the chaplain to train 200 employees to pray with patients. In addition,



**Florida Hospital-Ormond Memorial in Ormond Beach is one of three facilities given to Adventist Health System in October 2000.**

tion, volunteer chaplains and clergy in the community help to meet the needs for chaplain services.

**TURNAROUND AND MORE**

Thanks to the cooperation of the medical staff and employees—and the acquisition of key managed-care con-

tracts—MHS realized \$15 million in net revenues in 2001, thus enhancing its mission as a not-for-profit health system to provide care to this community.

The merger is already having a positive impact on area Adventist churches and schools as the new hospital personnel become

involved with them. Lewis Hendershot, Florida Conference president, says, “the emphasis on mission at Memorial and the other Adventist hospitals in Florida add a tremendous impact to our work in the community and the mission of the Church.”

—Christine To

**FLAGLER COUNTY RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM FLORIDA HOSPITAL’S NEWEST FACILITY**

Florida Hospital-Flagler in Palm Coast opened its doors for patients September 29, 2002.

The 300,000-square-foot facility houses 81 private patient rooms with an additional 14 beds in the emergency department. “This new hospital embodies a whole new era of medical care in Flagler County,” said chief of staff, Dennis Alter, M.D.

A new Cancer Care Center, Women’s Center, a wellness center, and catheterization lab were included in tours of the hospital given to the community one week prior to its official opening. The day also included the dedica-



tion of the hospital, free health screenings, and entertainment. A fireworks display brought the day to a close.

“I’m very excited about the quality of our medical staff and employees. I believe we can provide Flagler County residents with the same level of care and technology found in large cities,” said hospital administrator Daryl Tol.

—Lewis Clark

# STRUGGLES LEAD TEEN TO BIBLE STUDIES



JOE HOLLOWAY

**Marco Martinez recently spent three months in Tallahassee, Florida, with Southern Outreach Leadership School (SOULS) students, selling books and giving Bible studies.**

Marco Martinez grew up in Miami where he often felt overwhelmed by life's struggles. One day, he was impressed to begin reading the Bible and, within a year, he read it through. "I had so many questions that needed answers," he says, "so I prayed that God would send someone to help me better understand the Bible."

Three months later, his prayer was answered when Bethania Siviero, a student MagaBook leader in the Florida Conference publishing department, came to his house. Martinez bought the book *The Great Controversy* and

requested Bible studies.

His name was given to Bible instructor Claudette Prieto to follow up his request with a telephone call. Martinez' mother answered. When she learned that her son had asked for Bible studies, her immediate concern was that someone was attempting to recruit him into some strange group. "I told her she didn't need to worry," Prieto said. "All I wanted to do was give him Bible studies." Finally, she agreed to let them begin. Here is the rest of their story.

Marco: I really looked forward to the Bible studies every week. One Saturday, Claudette invited me to church where I met the student MagaBook workers based at the Miami Temple church. I spent the entire day with them and it made me so happy, comfortable, and at peace. I wanted a closer walk with God like they had, so I asked if I could join their program.

Claudette: When Bethania told me that Marco wanted to be a literature evangelist I was in shock and praising the Lord at the same time. I thought about his mother's first words to me, "You aren't going to recruit him to some group, right?" But what could I do? The Lord was working on his heart and we needed to support him.

So, we went ahead and spoke to his mother that night and, to say the least, she was not

very excited about the news. We prayed before we left, although we didn't think she would agree. Once again, God touched her heart and, before we arrived at the church, Marco called to tell us that his mother had consented.

Marco: I joined the MagaBook workers for the last three weeks of their summer program and continued Bible studies with Claudette. On September 22, 2001, I was born again through the waters of baptism at the Miami Temple church. This past summer, I worked with the students again and sold MagaBooks for 10 weeks.

Claudette: Marco's testimony is a reminder to me that God answers our prayers and keeps His promises: "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." —Luke 11:9. If only we will allow God to use us, just as Marco is doing, great things will happen.

Marco: This fall, I enrolled in the Southern Outreach Leadership School (SOULS) where I am learning more about spreading the gospel through literature evangelism and conducting Bible studies. Often, I think about the day Bethania came to our door in Miami. I wasn't even supposed to be home, yet God in His Divine plan, arranged for me to be there. As a result, my life will never be the same.

—Claudette Prieto,  
Marco Martinez



BILL BECKWORTH



LEE BENNETT

**"What a difference Bethania [left] and Claudette have made in my life," says Martinez.**

**MagaBooks are:** Attractive, magazine-sized editions of *Spirit of Prophecy* and other Christian books, with the glossy look and format of *ideals* magazine. MagaBooks are sold by students to help spread the gospel while earning scholarships for school.

## SOUTHERN OUTREACH LEADERSHIP SCHOOL (SOULS) IS:

- A post-secondary, nonaccredited, one- or two-year program to develop leaders for literature evangelism and Bible work and train them to be missionaries to North America.
- A school that provides leadership training through both gospel-centered classes and field instruction.
- A school of personal evangelism, now in its sixth year, located at Florida Conference's Pine Lake Retreat in Groveland, Florida.
- A Southern Union Conference affiliate, sponsored by Home Health Education Service (HHES), and a partner with Florida Conference in this training ministry.

# DIOS OBRA EN PLANT CITY Y DOVER



**Iglesia de Plant City, 2349 Rising Sun Road.**

PHOTOS: ABEL PAULÍN



**De izquierda a derecha, Pr. José Emilio de León, Juan González y Eulolo Silva.**

El hermano Juan González, un humilde siervo de Dios, llegó a Florida en 1973. Compró un lote de más de tres acres de terreno cerca de la carretera 60, al este de Plant City, pensando construir allí su casa.

En 1982 completó una pequeña vivienda y se mudó al lugar.

Él sentía un gran deseo de construir una iglesia en su propiedad, donde sus vecinos y familiares pudiesen alabar a Dios, por eso se

dio a la tarea de construir con sus propios recursos y con sus propias manos una casa para Dios. En 1983 su sueño se hizo realidad cuando la pequeña iglesia que con tanto amor había construido sirvió como lugar de reuniones para un grupo de creyentes en el área. Un día el local de 44 x 28 pies quedó destruido por un incendio.

Eso no desanimó al hermano González quien se dedicó a la reconstrucción de un

un equipo moderno de amplificación, un proyector de videos y antena parabólica. Recientemente el pastor Abel Paulín los visitó y pudo notar el entusiasmo de estos hermanos. Había sillas en los pasillos para acomodar a



**Interior de la iglesia con bautisterio en el fondo.**

edificio más grande y adecuado que es hoy el local donde se reúne la iglesia de Plant City. Este local cuenta con dependencias para los departamentos de niños, baños, un pozo de unos 100 pies de profundidad y un salón social, donde almuerzan los sábados. También tiene aire acondicionado central, bautisterio, y capacidad para unas 80 personas. Cuenta además con un órgano,

los presentes, pues no cabían.

El hermano Juan González además de ser el primer anciano de la iglesia, disfruta impartiendo estudios bíblicos, visitando a los interesados y transportándolos a la iglesia en su propio vehículo.

Los hermanos de Plant City participaron vía satélite en la campaña del pastor Alejandro Bullón.

Ahora que la compañía de creyentes está establecida, a los hermanos les gustaría poder comprar un edificio más grande en la ciudad de Plant City, siendo que este lugar está ubicado en las afueras de la ciudad. Damos gracias a Dios por la dedicación de hermanos como Juan González, que lo dan todo para el avance de la causa del Maestro.

El grupo de Dover se está reuniendo con los hermanos de Plant City, y existe una hermosa relación de trabajo entre los hermanos.

—Irma Gomez

## FESTIVAL LAICO EN MIAMI

Bajo la dirección del pastor William Stout, que trabaja con el Instituto de Evangelismo Personal y Discipulado de la Florida, se llevó a cabo el Festival Laico en Miami, el 28 de septiembre en la Academia «Greater Miami» con más de cuatrocientos en asistencia.

Además de las presentaciones del pastor Raúl Rodríguez, de la Asociación del Potomac, hubo música y testimonios de la obra de los laicos. Es la meta del Instituto tener por lo menos 200 obreros bíblicos hispanos en acción para el fin de este año.

—Abel Paulín

# AROUND THE CONFERENCE... MEMBERS AND CHURCHES FOCUS



## FORT LAUDERDALE

Love in working clothes—5,869 bags of food were shared in 2002 with those in need by the Ft. Lauderdale congregation. The hub of service to the community is through the food distribution center. Volunteers include Marcia Bailey with daughter, Tiara, left; Rolean Conaway; Beverly Smith; and Community Services Directors Ranford Sanderson and Albert Shaw.

—Lorna Whittier



## HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS

Members of the newly formed Howey-in-the-Hills church in Lake County released helium-filled balloons as a creative evangelistic idea to reach their community. Members wrote the church name and their favorite Bible verse on a self-addressed postcard which was put inside each balloon. The card told when and where the balloons were released and asked the recipient when and where it was found. The 53-member group was organized into a church just one year ago, January 29, 2002.

—Ginny Corbitt



## OCALA

Ocala Pathfinders and Adventurers received third place in the youth-built category for their float in the December 2002 Ocala Chamber of Commerce Christmas parade. Their float was one of 112 parade entries with 3,000 participants and seen by 60,000-70,000 spectators on 17 city blocks.

Large six-, five-, and four-foot gift-wrapped boxes of "Love," "Joy," and "Peace" and a manger scene on the back expressed the parade's theme, "Christmas Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace." In each box were children with lights around their heads to represent how our lights can shine to the community, showing the love, joy, and peace of Jesus.

A representation of the three angels of Revelation 14 also provided a witnessing opportunity, along with an invitation on the rear of the float to join the Ocala Seventh-day Adventist congregation on Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.

—Herb Pritchard



## WALKER MEMORIAL

Mothers can pass on family traditions to their daughters as a means of building a more unified and loving family. Generations of women bonded at a Mother/Daughter Banquet at the Walker Memorial church in Avon Park. From left, grandmother, Raymunda Asumbrado; granddaughter, Deborah Roquiz; and mother, Nida Roquiz.

—Mavis Sager



## JACKSONVILLE SOUTHPOINT

A Veterans' Day celebration honored 18 veterans. Seven came in uniform and three currently serve our country. The congregation gave thanks for our freedoms, largely due to sacrifices made by those in uniform.

—Albert Ellis

# ON SERVICE, MISSION, GROWTH, AWARENESS, AND NURTURING



ALVIN BONNET

## MARION OAKS SPANISH

The Marion Oaks Spanish company was organized into a 118-member church September 28, 2002. The congregation has more than doubled in size over the past five years and constructed its own church building while still a company. Abel Paulín, Florida Conference vice president for Spanish-language ministries, conducted the organization service and challenged the church to move forward in growth and evangelism.

—Daniel Schiffbauer



CINDY KURTZHALS



LEE BENNETT

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES WORKSHOP

About 100 local church children's Sabbath school leaders were trained in the new North American Division Sabbath school curriculum at the Conference Children's Ministries Workshop at Pine Lake Retreat in Groveland, October 4-6, 2002. Attendees in each division's workshop experienced the program as actual children would on Sabbath mornings. Leaders learned to work with and understand the new generation of children.

—Lee Bennett



CINDY KURTZHALS

## WESLEY CHAPEL

Wesley Chapel members broke ground for a new 4,800-square-foot, 236-seat sanctuary September 22, 2002. Commissioner Pat Mulieri attended. The current sanctuary will be converted into a fellowship hall and classrooms.

In 1985, 28 members of the former Zephyrhills church began a new church in the Wesley Chapel area where there was no Seventh-day Adventist work. In 1996, they purchased, then renovated, above, what was once a convenience store and later Pasco Auto Wholesale.

—Cindy Kurtzhals



SIMON WITTEB

## FORT MYERS

More than 100 guests, 80-85% from the community, attended the church's first Vegetarian Taste-in Extravaganza, November 10, 2002. Guests were impressed with the attentive service, 39 recipe samples, and a complimentary cookbook.

—Pat Kovalski

## DeLand Beacon

### 9-year-old helps Adventists break ground for new church



## DeBary

Zachary O'Brien, 9, a member of the DeBary-Orange City church children's division, used a small, golden-colored shovel to break ground for the new church. Also participating was CEO Joe Johnson with a \$10,000 donation from Florida Hospital Fish Memorial in Orange City.

—Ernest Steed

# Department of Women's Ministries

Ministry resources are available to members from Conference departments. Most issues of Florida Focus will contain a departmental report or summary.

## HISTORY

The North American Commission for Adventist Women was voted into existence at the 1983 General Conference Annual Council. The Commission was formed in response to a request from the North American Divi-

and to experience a sisterhood of friendship through participating in social and outreach activities sponsored by women's ministries. We encourage the development of an environment within each local congregation which will encourage women



**Sheryal Vandenberghe,**  
director, department of  
women's ministries

they will become a significant part in hastening Christ's soon return. Our ultimate goal is to bring souls to Jesus Christ.

## RETREATS

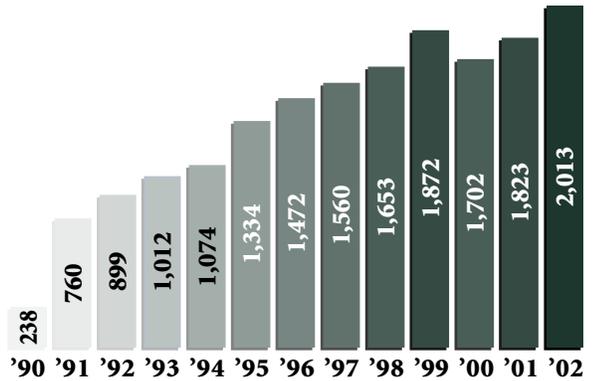
The first Florida Conference Women's Retreat was designed for spiritual and social renewal. Initiated by Hazel Gordon, it was held at Camp Kulaqua in 1990—238 women attending. Attendance tripled at the second retreat in 1991. The continually increasing attendance necessitated holding two English-language retreats beginning 1992 and three retreats starting in 1996.

In 2002, for the first time, more than 2,000 women attended the retreats as they were expanded to four English weekends.

Spanish-language Retreats have been held since 1991 for the Spanish-speaking women of Florida Conference. Attendance at these Retreats has also continued to grow.

The bar graph, above, vividly portrays

**WOMEN'S MINISTRIES RETREAT ATTENDANCE**



**Annual directors' workshop**

sion Office of Human Relations Advisory for an additional staff member in the department to represent the needs of women in the Church. Florida Conference began its conference-wide women's ministries program in 1989 with Hazel Gordon as the first director.

## OUR PURPOSE

Women's ministries strives to minister with affirmation and cultural sensitivity to all women. We are committed to inspire each woman member to experience God by seeking spiritual renewal through the study of His Word and inspiration of the Holy Spirit,

to have an awareness of the needs and concerns of other women.

We display and declare the love of God for fallen humanity as we minister with love and compassion to the spiritual, physical, mental, and social needs of women, children, and men.

Our goal is to provide an atmosphere where women can reach their full potential in Christ; to enable women to deepen their spiritual lives and act on their faith by recognizing and developing their unique gifts; and then to find opportunities in which these gifts may be used to the glory of God. In this,



**Gathering of Girls**

the growth which has occurred over the past 13 years. NOTE: Attendance for the last 12 years reflects the total attendance of both English-language and Spanish-language retreats.

## EVANGELISM

Evangelism is a predominant focus of women's ministries. The Maranatha church in Miami is formulating plans for a full-fledged evangelistic series to be conducted entirely by women. Directors of other churches have shown great interest in this type of event and have asked for resources that will help them begin to

develop plans for just such an event in their own churches.

## EXPANDING MINISTRY

In the past three years, the scope of the department has expanded dramatically. We just held our seventh annual Directors' Workshop training weekend for local church directors.

We now conduct several new annual conference-wide events. These include:

- Gathering of Girls for young women of high school age at Pine Lake Retreat.
- Joyful Journeys, a yearly conference for young adult



**Joyful Journey**

RAIZA FERNANDEZ



BYRON VOORHEIS

**Hope for Hurting Hearts retreats meet at Camp Kulaqua's scenic Stillwaters Lodge in High Springs.**

- women ages 20-40.
- Hope for Hurting Hearts retreat at Stillwaters Lodge—also in the Miami area in 2003. It is for women of all ages who were sexually abused in childhood. This ministry is one of our most important. Studies indicate one in four Seventh-day Adventist women suffered this kind of abuse in their formative years.
- Area Coordinators' Retreat is a training and think-tank weekend for regional directors. It was instituted as a result of an expansion of that program to better provide re-

- sources and support to individual local church directors.
- Mini-retreats. In 2003 we will conduct one-day area meetings in each geographic region of the Conference as well as the first-ever weekend area retreat in the Ridge Area.

**ADDITIONAL AREAS OF MINISTRY**

Heart Call reaches out to women who no longer worship with us. After sending them a gift subscription for the *Women of Spirit* magazine, a personal contact is made and Bible Studies with a feminine touch are made available to them. As a result of this

innovative program, more than 100 precious souls have found their way back to the Savior and the Church.

**CONCLUSION**

A successful and dynamic women's ministries program is best accomplished by members and pastors having an understanding of the contribution by women in the Church. Leadership within each congregation must realize that women have specialized needs just as much as children, youth, and men. It should be clearly understood that, most often, these needs *can only* be recognized and met by other women.

Since the Holy Spirit has given spiritual gifts to humankind, irrespective of gender, the Christian woman should seek to discover her gifts, develop them, and then use them for the edification of the Body of Christ. It is *only then* that the needs of the Church can be fully addressed as everyone works together to fulfill the Great Commission.

Complete calendar online—<http://www.adventist-fl.com/calendar.html>  
 Florida Pathfinder Events—<http://www.floridapathfinders.com/>  
 Singles' Ministries Events—(407) 869-0275 or [mwtest@ahss.org](mailto:mwtest@ahss.org)

**JANUARY**

- English-language Boot Camp for Evangelism.** Jan. 23-26. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Details: (407) 644-5000 x149.
- English-language Youth Leadership Convention.** Jan. 24-26. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Details: (407) 644-5000 x129.
- Estate Services Clinics.** Jan. 25: Belleview—Feb. 1: Titusville—Feb. 8: DeLand and Kissimmee Spanish—Feb. 22: Sunrise.
- Evangelistic Series.** Jan. 25-Feb. 22. Hialeah Spanish. Rolando and Rebeca de los Rios. Feb. 1-Mar. 15. Miami Temple. Bill and Sunshine Waters. Feb. 28-Apr. 5. DeBary. Lester and Zula Pratt and Roy and Amy Pauley. Mar. 1-29. Tallahassee. Steve and Susan DeLong. Mar. 21-Apr. 5. Sebring Spanish. Bob and Mary Kay Goransson.
- English-language Women's Ministries Retreats.** Jan. 31-Feb. 2. Renaissance Hotel, Orlando. Guest speaker: Richard Neil, M.D., president, Rilenco Associates, Redlands, California. Feb. 7-9. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Guest speaker: Wanda Davis, chaplain, Florida Hospital East Orlando. Feb. 14-16. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Guest speaker: Richard Neil, M.D., president, Rilenco Associates, Redlands, California. Feb. 21-23. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Guest speaker: JoAnn Davidson, Ph.D., associate professor of systematic theology, Andrews University Theological Seminar, Berrien Springs, Mich.
- Spanish-language Women's Ministries Retreat.** Feb. 28-Mar. 2. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Guest speaker: Alby Quispe, vice president, Total Renewal Ministries, Bakersfield, California.

**FEBRUARY**

- Florida Adventist Book Center.** Winter Park: (800) 765-6955. Miami: (305) 805-9900. High Springs: (386) 454-7956.
- Florida Adventist Bookmobile Schedule.** Feb. 1: Port Charlotte—Feb. 2: North Port, Venice-Nokomis, Sarasota, Bradenton, Brandon, Tampa First—Feb. 8: North Miami—Feb. 9: Ft. Lauderdale, Lauderhill, Pompano Beach—Feb. 15: St. Petersburg—Feb. 16: Clearwater, New Port Richey, Spring Hill, Brooksville, East Pasco in Zephyrhills, Plant City. Mar. 1: West Palm Beach—Mar. 2: Jensen Beach, Ft. Pierce, Melbourne, Cocoa—Mar. 8: Naples—Mar. 9: Ft. Myers, Ft. Myers Shores, Arcadia, Walker Memorial in Avon Park, Lake View, Winter Haven—Mar. 15: Maranatha in Miami—Mar. 16: Plantation, Lauderhill—Mar. 22: Jacksonville Southpoint—Mar. 23: Jacksonville First, Orange Cove, St. Augustine, Palatka, Palm Coast.
- 7th Annual Tampa Bay Area Convocation.** Feb. 14-15. See ad, page 12.
- Singles' Ministries Retreat.** Feb. 21-23. Pine Lake Retreat, Groveland. Details: (407) 644-5000 x123. Registration: (386) 454-1351.

**MARCH**

- Retired Workers' Retreat.** Mar. 7-9. Pine Lake Retreat, Groveland. Guest speaker: Jack Blanco, Ph.D., assistant to the president, Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, TN. Registration: (407) 331-8249.
- North Florida Camp Meeting.** Mar. 7-9. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Guest speaker: Benjamin Reeves, Ph.D., vice president for mission and ministries, Adventist Health System, Winter Park. Musicians: Wedgwood Trio. Registration: (386) 454-1351.
- Men's Ministries Conventions.** Camp Kulaqua. Register: (386) 454-1351. Mar. 21-23. Guest speakers: Ward Sumpter, Southern Union Conference secretary, Decatur, Georgia; Phil White, communication/men's ministries director, Washington Conference, Bothell, Washington. Mar. 28-30. Guest speakers: Ward Sumpter, Southern Union Conference secretary, Decatur, Georgia; Hal Gates, health services director, Washington Conference, Bothell Washington.

—Lee Bennett

# CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

## SEPTEMBER 24, 2002

**EVANGELISM REPORT.** Ralph Ringer, Conference evangelism coordinator, reported 1,572 baptisms to date, a slight decrease from this time last year. The fourth quarter traditionally has a large number of baptisms, therefore 3,000 baptisms may still be possible for 2002.

A number of lay meetings (20) are scheduled for this fall.

Next year, there will be a new field school in Florida taught by Ron Halvorsen. This will be a combination of area-wide and field school meetings.

The Jacksonville area-wide meeting has been postponed until October 2003. Boot

Camp for Lay Evangelism is scheduled for January 2003. Jewish Evangelism, in cooperation with the North American Division and *It Is Written Television*, is currently beginning in Altamonte Springs under the direction of Paul Lippi, with plans to move the work to South Florida once it is established at Altamonte Springs.

**APPROVED** the appointment of Iraida Suris, Forest City Spanish church member, to serve on the Executive Committee and Association Board. He replaces Ingrid Baria.

**APPROVED** the appointment of Dr. Wilfredo Nieves, Winter Park Spanish church member, to serve on the Executive Committee and Association Board. He replaces Wilfredo Rivera.

**APPROVED** the 2001 audit report by Bo Just, senior auditor, General Conference Auditing Service.

**APPROVED** the 2001 Adventist Book Center audit report by Tom Wuerstlin, auditor, General Conference Auditing Service.

**APPROVED** the

date for the 67th Constituency Meeting as September 28, 2003.

**APPROVED** Camp Kulaqua's proposal to construct a pool complex along with additional capital needs such as remodeling the mini-lodges and a new gymnasium floor.

**APPROVED** the recommendations for Richard DeLong and Beverly Zirakian to serve on the K-12 Board, replacing Travis Crawford and Kathy Snell, respectively.

## DECEMBER 8, 2002

Conference President Lewis Hendershot had a devotional thought on the *Faithful 'til He Comes* 2003 mission statement for Florida Conference, followed by prayer. See pages 1-2.

**EVANGELISM REPORT.** Ralph Ringer reported that evangelism continues to move in a positive direction.

Baptisms are expected to be above 2,500 for 2002. Many meetings that are planned for 2003 will be done at minimal or no cost to the Conference. Lay evangelism is on the rise with more

than 200 lay meetings being planned for 2003. The Hispanic Boot Camp for Evangelism is also being planned for 2003.

**APPROVED** a recommendation from the Forest Lake Academy Master Planning Committee to establish a subcommittee referred to as the Forest Lake Academy Building Committee, with the following members and additional individuals to be selected from Forest Lake teaching faculty: Rande Reynolds, chairperson; Lewis Hendershot; Evan Valencia; Rose Beavers; Eugene Brewer; Jerry Crews; Cynthia Duncanson; Ellsworth Gallimore; David Greenlaw; Jack Gillis; Lars Houmann; John Wheaton; Terry Pooler.

**APPROVED** the organization of the following companies into church status: Umatilla, Miami Beach Brazilian, West Palm Beach.

**APPROVED** the organization of the Palm Coast Portuguese mission group to company status, sponsored by the Daytona Beach church.

—Evan Valencia, Conference Executive Secretary

## 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Tampa Bay Area Adventist Convocation

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Chief of U.S. Navy Chaplains

**RICHARD DUERKSEN**  
Dir. of Mission Development, Florida Hospital

**Friday, February 14, 2003—7:30 P.M.**  
Tampa First Church, 822 W. Linebaugh Ave., Tampa

**Sabbath, February 15, 2003—9 A.M.-3:30 P.M.**  
Mahaffey Theater at the Bayfront Center,  
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