

# FLORIDA FOCUS

A Quarterly Publication of the  
Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists  
Volume 20, Number 1 • January–February–March 2004



**“I’m not lucky,  
I’m blessed!”**

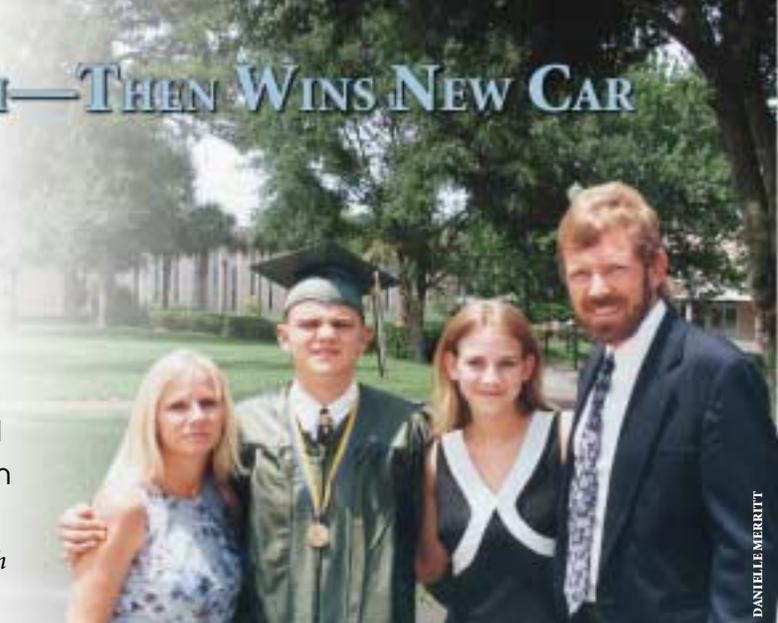
*Dave Merritt had the winning key to this new 2004 Chevy Cavalier two days after he and Barbara emptied their car savings account for the church building fund.*

# COUPLE TAKES STEP OF FAITH—THEN WINS NEW CAR

There wasn't enough money in the building fund to purchase land on which to build our new church. So, when choice property became available, I challenged the congregation from the pulpit of our rented church: "Please go home and talk it over. Pray about what you can give and bring your offering back next Sabbath."

Two of our elders, David and Barbara Merritt, returned with an amazing story of God's faithfulness. I called them forward that Sabbath to share what God had done.

—Antonio Avila, pastor, Coral Springs church



DANIELLE MERRITT

**"We've always believed in Christian education," say the Merritts, Dave, right, and Barbara, left. All three of their children graduated from Forest Lake Academy (FLA) in Apopka—David, in cap and gown, 1999; Aimee, 1998; and Danielle, 1994, not pictured. Barbara (Dodd) graduated from FLA in 1972.**

The year 2003 started out with many good intentions for the Merritt household. With two children in college, Dave, my husband, and I planned to meet financial challenges in a way to help our children achieve their dreams, be an example to them, and continue to serve the Lord through our giving.

Hardly into the new year, we realized that our son's car was on its last leg. We began saving for a used car for me so he could have mine.

In April, I was diagnosed with two types of thyroid cancer. Our family was devastated. We fell on our knees,

praying for guidance and healing. I went to the pastor and asked for anointing.

The minute I asked, a peace came over me with assurance that I could face whatever might happen. Surgery was scheduled and, when I woke up in recovery, my doctor had the biggest grin on his face. "There's no cancer!" he said in amazement. I knew God had healed me.

In late August, Pastor Avila asked our members to pitch in with a special offering for the building fund. Dave and I felt impressed to take our "car money" out of savings.

Two days later, a

promotional letter came in the mail with a key from a local car dealership. The letter read, "Come on down. If the key fits, you have a new car."

On Friday morning, September 5, 2003, Dave was on his way to an appointment in Miami, so he decided to swing by the dealership and try the key. Slowly, he slipped the car key into the door lock and the door latch opened right away, like it was meant to be.

As well-wishers from the dealership

came by to congratulate him, the general manager asked, "Where's the lucky guy?" Dave responded, "I'm not the lucky guy, I'm the blessed guy."

Just six days after we gave God our savings, a key opened the door to my new 2004 Chevy Cavalier. That same weekend, the transmission on our son's car went out and I was able to give him my old car.

Through experiences this past year, we learned many lessons. One is to open our eyes to what God has

planned for us—we need to look and listen for His voice. Another is that we should not forget to read the fine print—keep reading the Bible and God will provide. The third lesson is to never forget that God answers prayer. There is a miracle waiting for you—be ready and listen to what He has in store.

—Barbara Merritt

## 110TH ANNUAL FLORIDA CONFERENCE CAMP MEETING

MAY 28-JUNE 5, 2004 — HELD AT FOREST LAKE ACADEMY IN APOPKA

### Guest Speakers



1st WEEKEND-MON.  
**José Rojas**  
N. American Division Adventist Volunteer Ministries



DEVOTIONALS  
**Newton Hoilette**  
Fla. Conference



BIBLE STUDY  
**Ivan Blazen**  
Loma Linda Univ.



TUE.-THU.  
**Bill Knott**  
Adventist Review



2nd WEEKEND  
**Benjamin Reaves**  
Adventist Health System



CONCLUSION  
**Gordon Retzer**  
Southern Union Conference

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Vol. 20, No. 1

JANUARY-FEBRUARY-MARCH 2004

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# PASTOR'S STORIES OF HOW GOD FINANCIALLY BLESSED HIS CHURCH

Many churches have a difficult time meeting their budget each month and our church is no exception.

It was decided some time ago, perhaps years ago, that the loose offering each Sabbath would go to local church budget and any designated Conference offerings would be marked on a tithe envelope and appropriated accordingly.

We found out from our auditor that this was not correct procedure and loose offerings each Sabbath should go to that Sabbath's designated offering appeal. This amounted to approximately \$400 per month. We weren't sure how we would make up the loss, but the Church Board decided to follow the suggested plan for three months to see what would happen.

We began to promote stewardship from the pulpit; educate the congregation on the needs of the church, which we had done in the past; and pray a lot.

That following Sabbath, I preached a sermon entitled, "Too Afraid to Fight?" I reminded the folk how Jehoshaphat was too afraid to fight and that, like us, sometimes our problems seem to overwhelm us, even our church finances.

The scripture I used was 2 Chronicles 20:17, "Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set



John Wolfe, pastor, St. Petersburg First church.

yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you."

Then, I encouraged our members to support our school and our monthly budget.

After the service, I was greeting the folk as they left. A man and a woman were standing inside the church talking to some other people while waiting for me to finish.

I walked up to them and wished them a happy Sabbath. The man, not an Adventist but a friend of a church

*God seems to be returning blessings to the church, replacing what we thought would be a loss.*

member, said he felt impressed by God during the sermon to give us \$10,000, especially when he heard the appeal for our school.

What a tremendous blessing that God would replace the \$400 we might be short each month with \$10,000 we never expected!

## SECOND STORY

That same week, I checked my e-mail at the office. An inactive Adventist in the area offered to help a single-parent family with children in church school.

He told how families helped his mother when he was a child attending Adventist schools. He wanted to return the blessing to someone else.

I replied to him with some names and addresses, and thanked him for his generosity.

About a week later, I received a phone call around 9 p.m. from one of my members, wondering if the man on their doorstep was legitimate or crazy.

They informed me he wanted to give them a check for \$500 with no strings attached. It was one of the families I recommended. I assured them it was legitimate!

God seems to be returning blessings to the church—replacing what we thought would be a loss. I also believe God is telling us that Christian education is His divine plan.

—John Wolfe

## E-MAIL LETTER FROM THE SECOND GIVER

I grew up in Berrien Springs, Michigan, attended Andrews Elementary until third grade, moved to Angwin, California, where I attended Pacific Union College (PUC) Elementary School. I went on to PUC Preparatory School, and then back to Andrews University.

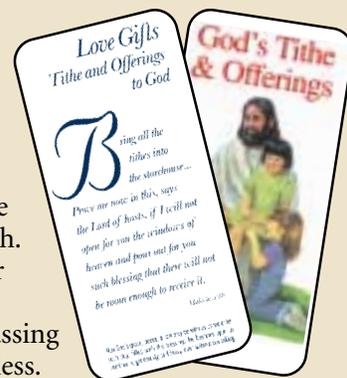
Growing up, my mother and I had nothing [in the way of] material objects—no car, no television, no furniture...barely enough food to keep my stomach from growling.

The [local] Adventist church helped us with everything from paying my tuition, surprise donations from church members, clothes from the Dorcas, and transportation from caring members to school while my mother attended nursing school. Having nothing while growing up was very hard on me.

God has allowed me to become successful, happy, and content in life. It's now my turn to pass on the favor. I and a few associates would like you to help us help others in this area. I know you have members who are needy, hungry, and in need of some sort of help. I would like to help single parents who need some sort of assistance.

I propose that you make a list of items needed by less fortunate members of your church. I would appreciate your help in this matter.

I look forward to "passing on the blessing." God bless.





LEE BENNETT

## ADDRESSING CURRENT ISSUES

Dear Fellow Believer:

Perhaps by now you have heard that there have been reductions of our office and evangelism work force by approximately 28 people, both full-time and part-time staff, or the equivalent of 21 full-time positions. Approximately 30 pastoral positions will also be reduced from the work force in the coming weeks. The total number of full-time-equivalent reductions in Florida Conference will be in excess of 50 employees. There will also be reductions in other operating expenses, but the Conference's major costs are in the area of personnel.

Let me briefly explain our situation. We currently have a \$5 million operating deficit. Simply put, we are spending \$5 million more than we have income. We can't keep doing this for very much longer, otherwise our reserves will be totally depleted.

For many years, our Conference has liberally funded ministries. When new congregations have sprung up, we have readily added pastoral staff. Whenever a program to serve the churches or schools seemed advantageous, we have added it to our list of Conference services. This could be done because, each year, we received excellent tithe increases over the previous year's income. It was natural to assume it would happen last year as well. Unfortunately, our tithe gain for 2002 was only 1.8%. This was far less than expected. In addition, our expenses were much greater than anticipated. The largest of these expenses was a 54% increase over budget in medical expenses. Because of a combination of these factors, the 2004 budget is forecast to have a \$5 million deficit. Remedial action is necessary now and not later.

I can assure you that the personnel reductions will be handled with great compassion. We will do as much as possible to assist them in finding placement. They will be given three months additional salary with the opportunity to search for another position.

The Lord will guide us as we adjust our expenses to live within our means. God has a great future for His work in Florida. I do not for once think that this is the beginning of a decline of the ministry of this great Conference. We will recover and continue to grow and be better for this experience of austerity. By God's grace, we will be efficient stewards of the money entrusted to us. We will rebuild adequate reserves and anticipate times of economic downturn.

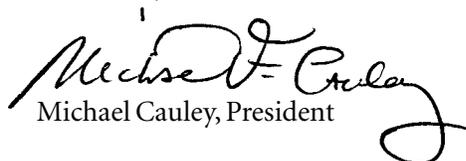
It is inspiring to read the list of priorities set forth by our people at the Constituency pre-sessions in August. Near the top of the list are:

1. Spiritual renewal—praying for the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Discipling both our young people and adults to Christian maturity—involvement in service.
3. Fostering churches which have warm, loving fellowship—safe places to bring hurting people.

These are some of the key areas that we will focus upon in the months to come.

2004 will be a great year for God's work here. The greatest days in Florida Conference are just before us. Let's begin this new year praying, as never before, for our homes, churches, and schools. Let's partner together to pray for one another. Our God answers prayer and is eager to demonstrate that to us.

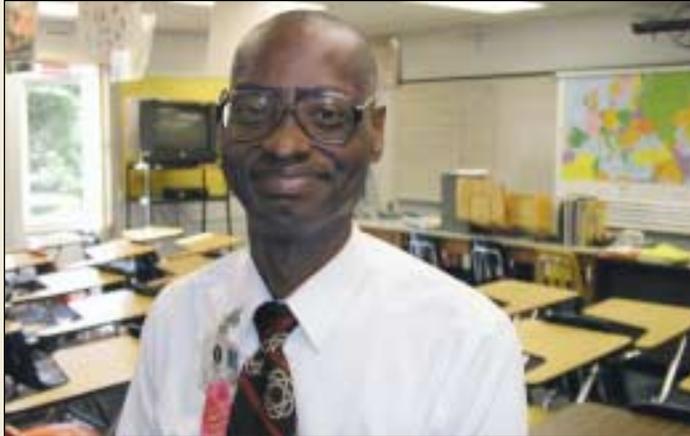
God bless you. Your brother in Christ,

  
Michael Cauley, President

# NEWSLETTER SHOWS GOD'S HAND AT WORK

*The Manna is one of many quality church newsletters produced throughout Florida Conference. Editor Sherry Johnson's summer 2003 issue showed God's hand at work in the lives of St. Petersburg members.*

**L**atas Edwards grew up in the South when most public places and businesses were “off limits” for blacks. “To an extent, my early development was the result of the environment into which I was born,” he says.



LEE BENNETT

**Latas Edwards teaches social studies at marine environmental-themed Madeira Beach Middle School, near St. Petersburg.**

“At first, I only dreamed of escaping this dreaded situation. Later, I discovered that God hears and answers not only prayers, but our innermost thoughts as well.

“In third grade, my teacher taught us how to use the dictionary

and I was amazed that many words came from the Greek language. **I prayed that someday I would study Greek.**

“I would sit at my desk and, while reading, vicariously go places where I would never be accepted. I could join a scientific

expedition to the Great Barrier Reef or study people in the rain forests. **I prayed that one day I could meet someone from every culture.**

“These dreams of world travel were my escape mechanism—my own underground railroad—of getting

away from the melancholy of the segregated South where I couldn't do anything or go anywhere. It was a way to extricate myself from the dangerous neighborhood that was an enclave for me.

“When my parents, who were both teachers, realized my love for learning, they ordered kits that introduced me to scientific fields such as botany, astronomy, and physics. **I prayed that in future years I could continue to study these fields.**

“Later, higher learning opportunities took me to Oakwood College for science courses as a pre-med student; Andrews University as

a theology major where I studied Greek; and into the classroom where, today, I teach students from many cultural backgrounds for the Pinellas County School Board.”

Edwards continues to be an avid student of the Word and, this year, serves his church as an elder, a school and church board member, and health ministries leader. He enjoys his church family which “is a foretaste of heaven because of the many nationalities represented.”

—Latas Edwards,  
Bill Johnson

**T**helma Figueroa's desire to help needy children prompted her to gather clothing last year for families in Romania. Unfortunately, getting the items there safely and cost effectively was insurmountable.

Meanwhile, Figueroa met Trinnie Torrez, who was born and raised in Arizona as a member of the Navajo Nation. As they visited, the two St. Petersburg members realized the unshipped children's clothing could benefit Torrez' people at Holbrook Seventh-day Adventist Indian School in Arizona.

Ten boxes were filled and sent to Arizona. Soon afterward, a letter

came from the school.

“The many huge boxes arrived here and we had a heyday going through them. What a blessing! The students are grateful for your efforts. It's people like you who help keep our doors open so we may minister to the Native American young people.”

Inspired by this response, Figueroa and Torrez began collecting more new clothing and stuffed animals for the children. They talked with church members, relatives, friends, and friends of friends about giving to the project. Figueroa hit the “red sticker” sales at department stores, saved up to 90%, and left with



SYLVIA SLEZAK

**Thelma Figueroa, left, and Trinnie Torrez organized clothing and stuffed animals they collected for children at Holbrook Indian School in Arizona.**

cart loads of clothing and stuffed toys.

As storage space at the church ran out, Children's Ministries Leader Sylvia Slezak lamented with a friend about the cost of getting more than a dozen

boxes to Arizona.

Slezak's friend contacted Fred Rogers, Southern Union Conference Native American Ministries Coordinator, in Atlanta, Georgia. “Recently, a bus was donated to an-

other Navajo Indian school in Arizona,” said Rogers. “If you can get the boxes here, we can take them to Holbrook, free of charge.”

A telephone call was placed to a moving company that fills extra space on commercial moves with its anonymous Angel Moves Ministry. The owner was delighted to take the boxes at no charge.

“It was so exciting to see Providence work to get our boxes to Arizona in time for Thanksgiving,” says Slezak. “This outreach has brought so much joy to us, we're encouraging other churches to adopt a Native American project.”

—Marian Kloth

# 19 YEARS OF *FLORIDA FOCUS*...



When the Gordons came from the Carolina Conference to serve here, he as president, they brought along the idea of their *Carolina Action* conference newsletter.

"In Administrative Committee (ADCOM), we discussed [producing] a periodical which would be a tool for communication to the members. We felt that an informed constituency is a supportive constituency," says Malcolm Gordon, left, now retired president of the Southern Union Conference, Atlanta, Georgia. "I asked Volker Henning, then communication director, that Cindy

Kurtzhals have the responsibility of writing this publication called *Florida Focus*.

"It's been a great joy to me to see how *Florida Focus* has developed over the years into an award-winning, full-color, world-class publication on a Conference level. And, even now, people say how much they enjoyed and miss Hazel's article on the back cover, *Heart to Heart With Hazel*."

## OUR HISTORY

Over the past 19 years, we've shared stories of how God has used, and continues to use, people, churches, schools, and hospitals, to make relationships for—and win people to—Him. We've purposed to reflect the geography of this expansive state, gender, culture, and age.

We come up with story ideas and stories are submitted by communication directors, members, teachers, pastors, and teenagers. We also get stories in Monday morning worships at the Conference office when staff report on news from around the Conference.

Stories have been edited, expanded, bumped, held over, and sent to *Southern Tidings*, *Adventist Review*, and the public press. Some have been declined; others are waiting on shelves or in a big box for consideration. There's never enough space for all of them!

We create a publication to capture your attention visually and with content, so you will pick it up and read it, and that you will turn

**Malcolm and Hazel Gordon hold the first *Florida Focus*, April-May 1985, and Director/Editor Cindy Kurtzhals holds a recent issue.**



***Florida Focus* has earned four International Silver Angel Awards and five Awards of Excellence from Excellence in Media, Hollywood, California; and both first place and merit awards from the Central Florida Press Club.**



PHOTOS: LEE BENNETT #1-2 & 11-13; CINDY KURTZHALS

each page and read it all the way through.

Stories have to be newsworthy, interest-

ing, thorough, accurate, and easy to read. Happy reading!

—Cindy Kurtzhals

#### IT'S A TEAM EFFORT—FROM CONCEPT TO PRINT

Director Cindy Kurtzhals chooses stories; submits a story lineup to administration; assigns a writer or editor from on staff, including herself, or a freelancer. She creates a dummy—a penciled-in page layout; edits copy; and art directs the issue start to finish.

In the early years, she wrote nearly all of the 12-page, bimonthly publication. Today, there is more help:

**1** Associate Director Martin Butler interviews, researches, writes, edits, gets approvals, and is always on the phone! Freelance writers have included Lynn Huff, Lynn Sauls, Terry Hall, and Becky Knapp. All communication department employees serve as staff photographers, including Gladys Neigel, support staff.

**2** Assistant Director Lee Bennett arranges copy and graphics onto the pages, color corrects every photo, and follows up on missing story facts. Freelance designers have included Linda Henning, Oz Rugless, Melahn Cable, René Perez, Stephan Barrett, and Chris Carey.

**3** Accuracy is essential! Over the years, proofreaders have included: *standing*, Elaine Jeffers, Betty Acosta, Naomi Perez, and Kathy Fairchild; *seated*, Aletha Nee, Margaretta Cone, and Lillian Aldridge; and *not pictured*, Barbara Wilson, Elaine Shepard, Bettie Gilliam-Jordan, Adriana Pasos, and Gladys Neigel.

**4** On the Heidelberg Speedmaster press at Progressive Communications. Past printing companies: *1st issue*, Mike Wilks; Kirstein Printing, Vernon Kirstein; AppleInk, Wimberly Wolfe and Ken Jeffers; and Four Graphics.

**5** Press checks at 6:30 in the morning or 11 at night! Carl Simpkins, Progressive Communications vice president of sales and marketing, joins Kurtzhals and Bennett to ensure quality.

**6** Kurtzhals approves a press sheet.

**7-9** Stacks of finished press sheets are folded and excess paper is trimmed.

**10** A stitching machine staples each copy.

**11** Personal Touch Mailing Service addresses 23,000 copies. Owner Gino Santilli finds every postage discount available.

**12** Bonnie Santilli feeds the addressing machine and Michelle Jones gathers the copies.

**13** Jennifer Zeisloft stuffs mail sacks for the United States Postal Service.

We are grateful to Don Johnson, Graphic House, for introducing us to Four Graphics—and our customer service representatives Debby Knorowski and Joe Lewis, who have shepherded our jobs at the press.

## REBELLIOUS SON JOINS FAMILY IN BAPTISM



**Baptismal candidates from left: Tiara Castellon; Guilmará, Xiomara, and Linda Miranda; Genesis and Jean Carlos Castellon; and Alex Miranda, with Pastor Elias Macias.**

Walter Soto, a Poinciana Spanish church member, began Bible studies in the home of Gilbert and Xiomara Miranda and soon they accepted his invitation to attend church services. Their attendance became sporadic as they faced difficulties with their rebellious son, Alex, 15.

About the same time, Herma Serpa, Florida Conference personal evangelist,

took over the Bible studies. When she arrived each evening, Alex would hide to avoid hearing God's Word. However, God had another plan to reach him.

Three dreams came to Alex where he saw the destruction of the world and Jesus' coming. Each night, he awoke anxious and afraid. Alex sensed God's voice speaking to him with the invitation to be in His kingdom.

Alex gave his heart to Jesus, studied with Pastor Elias Macias,

and was baptized August 9, 2003, in the Poinciana Spanish church with his mother Xiomara; his sisters Guilmará and Linda; and cousins Tiara, Genesis, and Jean Carlos. Three weeks later, Gilbert, Alex's father, was also baptized.

Soon, Alex, along with his sisters and cousins, joined the Poinciana church Pathfinder club where they are learning how to follow Jesus more closely as they await His return.

—Herma Serpa, Walter Soto

### CLEARWATER YOUTH MENTORED

Zachary Juniper, task force worker and Southern Adventist University graduate, spent last summer with Clearwater church youth—mentoring, discipling, and teaching leadership skills for using their God-given abilities to His glory.

Juniper inspired Hazel Auyban's youth leadership team with new plans and direction. Youth said, "Zach taught me how to know God deeply ... I learned to be open in my relationships with Jesus and my friends."



**Pastor Minervino Labrador, right, prayed for Victor Vasquez, left, before he was baptized by Zachary Juniper.**

# AROUND THE CONFERENCE...

PHOTOS: JUAN BAPTISTA



**The Point...**  
Students were challenged to stop playing games and to give their lives completely to God—"All or Nothing!"



## "All or Nothing" High School Bible Retreat was held October 23-26

### HIGH SPRINGS CHURCH WITNESSES 24 BAPTISMS

Deborah Lamons, center, drove past the High Springs church, saw the *Bible Prophecy Made Simple* sign, and called the toll-free number. That evening, she came and heard about the "Mark of the Beast," continued attending the meetings, and was one of 24 baptized. "I'm thrilled to belong to a Bible-believing church," Lamons testifies.

She was baptized in August 2003 in Hornsby Spring at Camp Kulaqua. On "Welcome Sabbath," she was presented to the church family by Florida Conference team evangelists, Bill and Cora "Sunshine" Waters, along with all those who made decisions to follow Jesus through baptism or profession of faith. Tim and Dayna Ecker, *inset*, were among those baptized.

"I studied the Bible with Tim two years ago, then the seed of interest died," says Wayne Niemeyer, left, High Springs pastor. "Suddenly, God's grace brought life back to the seed that was planted." —*Sunshine Waters*



PHOTOS: KIBBI FERBA-NIEMEYER



JENNIFER DIALS/SARA MOALLEM

### ADVENTURERS TAKE SPACE WALK ON SUPER FUN DAY

"Space Walk with Jesus" was the theme of Florida Conference's Adventurer Super Fun Day, November 16, at the Cocoa Expo Stadium in Cocoa. Admission to the event included unlimited use of rides for the nearly 1,500 Adventurers and volunteers at the simultaneously-held Space Coast State Fair.

"Space talk" was in everyone's vocabulary throughout the day, whether answering Bible questions about heaven, running in the astronaut relay, pinning a star to Orion, or crafting a shuttle fuselage out of a toilet paper roll. Adventurers gleaned spiritual lessons such as comparing an astronaut's need for a lifeline to our need for a continued connection with Jesus. —*Lisa Gary*

### HOMELESS MAN'S FAITH IS STRONG

Making friends, sharing food, speaking encouraging words—this was the target of a recent Ocala teen mission trip to the homeless of Atlanta, Georgia. However, it was Wendy Finlay, assistant youth leader, left, and Peggy Sfalanga, a parent, who were taught an unforgettable lesson.

When they met Renard, center, he pulled a Bible out of his meager backpack. Smiling, he stated his mission was to encourage fellow homeless with God's good news of a heavenly home where streets are gold and happiness reigns supreme.

Facing pending cancer surgery, his trust never wavered. He said, "God isn't finished with me yet." —*Wendy Finlay*



MIKE GOETZ

# CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

**SEPTEMBER 23, 2003**

**DEVOTIONAL.** Thomas Verrill, treasurer, presented the devotional. He spoke about the response of Nehemiah, the prophet, to the report that the people of Jerusalem were in great distress because the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the gates were on fire. Hearing this news, Nehemiah began to fast and pray about the situation, for himself, and for God's people.

Nehemiah's response is counsel for us today. He acknowledged God's great and awesome power and recognized that the battle was His. Nehemiah also determined to be a part of the solution. As we look at our current financial challenges, it is not God's plan for us to point fingers or cast blame.

In Nehemiah 2:5, Nehemiah asked for leave and for letters from the King to obtain resources. This demonstrated he was a man of foresight. As we look at any challenge, we acknowledge it is God's battle; however, we need to do our part by planning.

When Nehemiah arrived at the wall, he called the people together to review and make plans. The people then made the decision to rebuild the wall. When they were ridiculed, they ignored it. They did not take their eyes off God. They kept going with the plan. Each family worked on their section of the wall, side by side, shoulder to shoulder—a beautiful picture of God's Church.

In Nehemiah 4:16, half of the people kept working and half protected and defended the rest—good counsel for us.

Some time later, the enemies of Israel requested a meeting. Nehemiah's response was that he could not come. Four times he said this. He would not be distracted by others. In Nehemiah 6:15, the people praised God for what He had done.

What lessons can we learn from Nehemiah? Pray, place problems in God's hand, don't blame others, do all within our power and plan, work harmoniously with others, do not be distracted from God's work, and give honor and praise to God when He blesses and brings success.

**EVANGELISM REPORT.** Abel Paulín, evangelism coordinator, presented a report on meetings conducted by pastors and laity and the training of the laity. He stated, "Evangelism is the reason for the existence of the Church."

In September, Lay Pastoral Assistant training sessions were held in Winter Park. There were 57 in attendance with much enthusiasm and dedication. The training session focused on preaching.

Paulín stated, "We should be encouraged by the attitude of the laity and the Holy Spirit at work. The greatest resources of the Church are its members. We need to go back to the New Testament model.

The first six months of the year, we have had 1,218 baptisms.

**APPROVED** the July 31, 2003, period seven Financial Statement for the Florida Conference and Association, subject to audit, as presented by Verrill.

**APPROVED** the recommendation of the three year plan which provides guidelines for addressing the Conference budget needs, as presented.

**APPROVED** the organization of the Costa del Tesoro mission group in Fort Pierce into company status, sponsored by the Fort Pierce church.

**APPROVED** the organization of the Elim French company into church status.

**OCTOBER 12, 2003**

**DEVOTIONAL.**

Robert Boggess, senior pastor of the Miami Temple church, reported on his recent trip to Nicaragua to see the current literacy training program first hand. Through *Hope for Humanity/Ingathering*, Florida Conference, in partnership with the Inter-American Division, will send 40% of its Ingathering funds for literacy train-

ing of our fellow brothers and sisters.

**APPROVED** lists of subcommittee members. *Details: contact Florida Conference secretariat.*

**DECEMBER 9, 2003**

**DEVOTIONAL.**

Michael Cauley, president, began his devotional thought with prayer followed by quotes and words of encouragement from page 701 of *Evangelism:*

"The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and Heaven is waiting to bestow it."

—*Review and Herald*, March 19, 1895.

"The Latter Rain: Let Christians... ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the former rain, and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant."

—*Signs of the Times*, Feb. 17, 1914.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT.** Cauley presented the priorities voted at the September 28, 2003 Constituency Meeting. *See page 4.*

**APPROVED** the recommendation to apply for matching evangelism funds in the amount of \$50,000 from the North American Division.

**APPROVED** the

recommendation for the new Church Borrowing Policy as presented by Thomas Verrill, treasurer. A church will be able to borrow up to 300% of annual tithe.

**APPROVED** the November 18, 2003, period nine Financial Statement for the Florida Conference and Association, subject to audit, as presented by Verrill.

**APPROVED** the Budget Criteria and Budget Balancing Guidelines for the 2004 budget as presented by Verrill.

**APPROVED** the recommendation to implement the reduction of the Conference building subsidy by 50%. This would grandfather churches that are in the process of building and would allow up to one year for the church to begin the actual construction.

**APPROVED** the organization of the Palm Coast Portuguese and Margate companies into church status.

**APPROVED** the organization of the Tallahassee Spanish mission group into company status, sponsored by the Tallahassee church.

**APPROVED** the merge of the Normandy Spanish company and the Miami Beach First Spanish church. The combined congregation will retain the Miami Beach First Spanish name.

—*Evan Valencia, Conference Executive Secretary*

**VISIT US ONLINE!**

FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

**WHAT'S ON OUR SITE?**

12/24	12/25	12/26	12/27	12/28	12/29	12/30	12/31
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

**EVENT CALENDAR**

**CHURCH MAPS**



**ADOBE ACROBAT FILES OF PRINTED PUBLICATIONS**

**REGULARLY UPDATED CAMP MEETING DETAILS**

...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

POINT YOUR BROWSER TO:  
**www.adventist-fl.com**



**WHAT ELSE IS ON THE FLORIDA CONFERENCE WEB SITE?**

- All about Seventh-day Adventists, our name, our beliefs, and our history.
- Directories of Adventist institutions: schools, book centers, media/publication offices, medical centers, camps...
- Links of interest: Ellen G. White Estate, Bibleinfo.com, Adventist PlusLine, AdventSource...
- Maps for the 205+ Florida Conference churches and companies.
- Calendar of events, including an event submission form.
- New member orientation.
- Offering schedule.
- Link to sunset calculator.
- Information for the annual Camp Meeting programming, satellite schedules, tape order forms, and more.
- Online publications in Adobe Acrobat format: Florida Focus, Southern Tidings, For The Cause: Youth Leadership, Camp Meeting, Adventist Review...
- Adventist radio and television broadcasts in Florida.

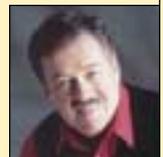
**WEB UPDATES ARE MADE CONTINUALLY. VISIT OFTEN TO SEE WHAT'S NEW!**

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(407) 844-5000 Fax: (407) 844-7059  
Samir & Madeline; R. Lee Bennett, Jr.

**NORTH FLORIDA CAMP MEETING** — March 5-7 • *Details in calendar.*



Guest Speaker,  
Mike Cauley



Music,  
Larry Ford

**NORTH AMERICAN & INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION HEALTH CERTIFICATION WEEK**

Feb. 1-7 • *Details in calendar.*



Working to improve the personal health of others is a great way to build friendships and is God's chosen method for revealing His character to the world.

- Become qualified in the field of your passion.
- Hear nationally recognized experts.
- Learn cutting-edge methods for preventive health education.
- Prepare to fulfill your call to health ministry.
- Enrollment is limited. Register early.

CAMP PHOTOS: CINDY KURZHALS

# Coming Events

A complete calendar is available online:

<http://www.adventist-fl.com/calendar.html>

## Florida Pathfinder Events—

<http://www.floridapathfinders.com/>

## Singles' Ministries Events—Melody West,

(407) 869-0275 or [mwest@ahss.org](mailto:mwest@ahss.org)

**Singles' Ministries Spiritual Study Group.** Every Friday evening. Forest Lake church, classroom #4. 7:30 p.m. Details: Melody West, (407) 869-0275 or [mwest@ahss.org](mailto:mwest@ahss.org)

**Florida Outdoor Club.** Camping, rest and Christian fellowship. Held the second weekend of every month through May 9 at Florida Baptist Youth Camp on County Road 33, three miles north of Mascotte. Details: (407) 774-8945.

## JANUARY

**Singles' Ministries Prayer Breakfasts—Waffles at Stan's.** Jan. 25, Feb. 29, Mar. 23, Apr. 25. Stan Shave's home, 3619 Palm Ave., Apopka. Details: (407) 774-2589.

**Florida Adventist Book Center.** Winter Park, (800) 765-6955. Miami, (305) 805-9900. High Springs, (386) 454-7956. Shop online: <http://www.adventist-fl.com/abc/> or order by e-mail: [FloridaABC@southernunion.com](mailto:FloridaABC@southernunion.com)

## Florida Adventist Bookmobile Schedule.

Maps to churches: [www.adventist-fl.com/churchmaps/](http://www.adventist-fl.com/churchmaps/)

Jan. 31: St. Petersburg.

Feb. 1: Clearwater, New Port Richey, Spring Hill, Brooksville, East Pasco in Zephyrhills, Plant City.  
Feb. 7: Naples. Feb. 8: Ft. Myers, Ft. Myers Shores, Arcadia, Lakeland, Lake View, Winter Haven.  
Feb. 28: North Miami. Feb. 29: Ft. Lauderdale, Lauderdale.

## Singles' Ministries Fellowship Dinners.

Jan. 31. Deltona.

Feb. 7. Stan Shave's home, 3619 Palm Ave., Apopka.  
Directions: (407) 774-2589

Feb. 14. Forest Lake.

Feb. 21. Kress Memorial.

Feb. 28. Apopka.

Mar. 6. Lake Lotus Park. Directions:  
(407) 292-1421, or [mwest@ahss.org](mailto:mwest@ahss.org)

Mar. 13. Forest Lake.

Mar. 20. Kress Memorial.

Mar. 27. Magnolia Park. Directions:  
(407) 292-1421, or [mwest@ahss.org](mailto:mwest@ahss.org)

## FEBRUARY

### North American and Inter-American Division

**Health Certification Week.** Feb. 1-7. Hilton Orlando, Altamonte Springs. Learn cutting-edge methods for preventative health education, discuss health strategies with nationally recognized experts in their fields, and update your classes. If you want to be effective in health education, you'll want to be at this Health Summit. 30 seminars, limited enrollment, register early. Cost: \$265. Rates also available for students and CEUs. Registration: <http://www.plusline.org/> or (800) 732-7587. Hotel reservations: (800) 445-8667.

**Women's Ministries Retreats.** Cost: \$94-\$196, depending on accommodations. Details: (407) 644-5000 x188.

Feb. 6-8. English-language. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Speaker: Barbara McCoy, associate pastor, Forest Lake church, Apopka.

Feb. 13-15. English-language. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Speaker: Barbara McCoy, associate pastor, Forest Lake church, Apopka.

Feb. 20-22. Spanish-language. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Speaker: Lourdes Morales-Gudmundsson, chair of modern languages and professor of Spanish, La Sierra University, Riverside, California.

Feb. 27-29. English-language. Renaissance Hotel, Orlando. Speaker: Richard Neil, M.D., president, Rilenco Associates, Redlands, California.

## Estate Services Clinics and Seminars.

Feb. 7. Shiloh in Miami.

Feb. 14. Lake Placid.

**Shalom Learning Center Grand Opening.** Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m. and Feb. 21, 9 a.m.-sunset. 9250 Sterling Road, Hollywood. Guest speakers: Richard Elofer, president, Israel Field, Jerusalem; and Jacques Doukhan, professor, Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis, and director, Institute of Jewish-Christian Studies, Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Details: (954) 432-5681 or (754) 244-5400.

## MARCH

**North Florida Camp Meeting.** Mar. 5-7. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Guest speaker: Mike Cauley, president, Florida Conference. Music: Larry Ford. Details/registration: (386) 454-1351.

**Seventh Annual West Coast Convocation—POSTPONED** until autumn 2004 or winter 2005. Details: Mark Schiefer, (727) 360-5826 x0.

**Lay Pastor Assistant Training.** Mar. 5-7. Florida Conference office, Winter Park. Details: (407) 644-5000 x153.

**Retired Denominational Workers' Retreat.** Mar. 12-14. Pine Lake Retreat, Groveland. Guest speaker: Dr. Jon Paulien, professor of New Testament Interpretation, Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Details/registration: (407) 331-8249.

**Men's Ministries Conventions.** Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. Cost: \$95.25-\$205.25, depending on accommodations. Details: (407) 644-5000 x137.

Mar. 19-21. Guest speakers: David Asscherick, director, ARISE (A Resource Institute for Soulwinning and Evangelism); and Burnett Robinson, pastor, Norland church, Miami.  
Mar. 26-28. Guest speakers: Donald King, president, Atlantic Union Conference, South Lancaster, Massachusetts; and Dane Griffin, associate communication director, Michigan Conference, Lansing, Michigan.

## APRIL

**Singles' Ministries Retreat** and training for local singles' ministries leaders. Apr. 16-18. Pine Lake Retreat, Groveland. Details: Melody West, (407) 869-0275 or [mwest@ahss.org](mailto:mwest@ahss.org)

—Lee Bennett



## WOMEN'S MINISTRIES RETREATS

Feb. 6-8 • Feb. 13-15  
Feb. 20-22 • Feb. 27-29

Details in calendar.



PHOTOS: CINDY KURTZHALS



## MEN'S MINISTRIES CONVENTIONS

Mar. 19-21 • Mar. 26-28

Details in calendar.



PHOTOS: LEE BENNETT

# IT'S A FAMILY THING— THE YOUNG AT HEART CAMP

**F**or many in the 50+ crowd, Young at Heart Camp has become an annual family gathering in the serenity of Camp Kulaqua.

Even those who come without relatives to the fall event in High Springs, Florida, find themselves adopted into an extended family before week's end. Those who attended the October 19-23, 2003, camp found it to be no exception.

Five years ago, Ruth Dunbebin from Takoma Park, Maryland, who works in the Global Mission department at the General

Conference office, was invited to the Young at Heart Camp by a long-time friend. She hasn't missed a year since. "I'll always treasure the friendships I've made," says Dunbebin. "Each year is like a family reunion."

Jacquie Frimpter from Plant City, Florida, attends camp with other family members each year where she plays the organ for meetings. Her sister, Sharon Swofford from Altamonte Springs, Florida, joins her at the piano. Their mother, Berneva Richards, enjoys hearing them play.



"Dinner in Hawaii" was a delightful experience for Young at Heart Campers Arthur Jorgensen, left, and Henrietta and Hilda Middendorp.



Jack and Ginny Neto visited the Camp's zoo during an afternoon walk.



Guest speaker, George Brown and Carla, his wife, enjoyed their relaxing week with the 50+ group.



Long-time friends, Dorothy Hillier, left, and Berneva Richards teamed up on the shuffleboard court.



The piano and organ duets by sisters Sharon Swofford, left, and Jacquie Frimpter are always enjoyed by those who attend Young at Heart Camp.



PHOTOS: DOROTHY HILLIER

Richards, 89, also from Altamonte Springs, has attended the camp for senior citizens since 1984.

"As sisters, it is so special to have time on this mini-vacation to play music, shuffleboard, or putt-putt golf together—things we have difficulty including in real life," says Frimpter. "It's also special to spend quiet time with Mom."

Sisters Hilda and Henrietta Middendorp, along with their

brother and sister-in-law, Bill and Carol Middendorp, come from Hendersonville, North Carolina. They "love the beautiful surroundings, Christian association, very helpful staff, and the wonderful Sabbath school and worship services."

Two other sisters, Ruth Sparks from Crystal River, Florida, and Violet Perry from Sacramento, California, enjoy the friendliness and inspiration the retreat offers.

Dorothy Hillier comes from Visalia, California, every year to be with her sister-in-law Millie Hillier from Apopka, Florida, and the "many dear friends" she has met at camp. "Camp Kulaqua is one of the delightful, wonderful, and heavenly places on earth."

*The next Young at Heart Camp is October 3-7. Reservations: (386) 454-1351 or visit [www.campkulaqua.com](http://www.campkulaqua.com) —Carol Eldridge Filomena*



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