



FLORIDA FOCUS

A Bi-monthly Publication of the
Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
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FLORIDA LIVING RETIREMENT COMMUNITY CELEBRATES 35 YEARS



PHOTOS: MARTIN BUTLER

Florida Living Retirement Community celebrates its 35th anniversary this year. This Florida Conference entity is located in the midst of 13.5 acres of rolling hills at 3425 E. Semoran Blvd. (SR 436), near Forest Lake Academy in Forest City.

Founded through a land donation from Kenneth and Clara Wright and the extensive efforts of

Arthur and Lenna Guenther, Florida Living Retirement Community had its grand opening September 12, 1965. "It has provided a

safe, happy, and affordable home for many independent retired people during these 35 years," says Ron

—continued on page 2



Florida Living Retirement Community residents Anne Kimball, right, and Polly Smith.

FLORIDA FOCUS CELEBRATES 15TH ANNIVERSARY



April-May 1985



June-October 1991



A. LEE BENNETT, JR.



Sept.-Dec. 1999

Florida Focus is designed to be a quick-read with interesting, informative, and inspiring stories which covers the geography, cultures, ages, and gender of Florida Conference members.

It's the 15th Anniversary of *Florida Focus*, the Conference's newsletter for its

45,000+ members. *Florida Focus* has come a long way since its first edition, April—continued on page 7



PHOTOS: MARTIN BUTLER

The neatly groomed grounds at Florida Living Retirement Community provide a picture-postcard-setting for residents to enjoy.

tor and nurse on Pitcairn Island in the South Pacific. “We received supplies and mail only three or four times a year when ships would stop at Pitcairn, so we are enjoying the comforts and conveniences provided here in our home at

Florida Living.”

The Stimpsons’ two-bedroom apartment is located on a quiet street on the north side of the property. Their’s is one of a variety of different types of housing constructed over the past 35 years. Currently, the Retirement Community offers 52 two-bedroom and six one-bedroom apartments, one efficiency apartment, 31 rental suites, and four complete homes.

The most recent construction project at Florida Living Retirement Community was the spacious dining room. It was completed

Rodgers, administrator.

Guenther, a retired dentist with seven years experience

as a nursing home administrator, and Lenna, his wife, were co-directors until Dr. Guenther’s death in 1972. Lenna continued to direct operations until 1978.

Shortly after Florida Living was built, an article in *Southern Tidings* pictured this community as a setting “in the heart of a large orange grove, with an open view to neighbor-

ing pastures, and within walking distance of the new Forest Lake church.”

Today, the short walk east to the Forest Lake church remains the same. A short walk to the west, however, now finds a Publix shopping center—a convenience appreciated by Retirement Community residents Ollie and Von Stimpson, former pas-



Ollie and Von Stimpson enjoy their rose garden.

in 1996 and features a Victorian theme and vegetarian cuisine.

“We’re grateful that our Community has been a blessing to Adventist members for the past 35 years,” says Rodgers. “Residents especially appreciate a setting where they can enjoy their retirement years around friends and live in a place that coincides with their beliefs and lifestyle.”

Lifestyle features at Florida Living Retirement Community include:

- An Adventist church
- Cable television with Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN)
- Get-away trips
- The Out-to-Lunch Bunch
- Housekeeping services available
- Transportation available
- Walking trail with

gazebos and rest points

- Wholesome entertainment programs
- Heated swimming pool with aqua-robics
- Art, Spanish, crafts, and exercise classes

Inquiries about the Community may be sent to: Florida Living Retirement Community, % Sharon Schlipp, 3425 E. Semoran Blvd., Apopka, FL 32703.

E-mail address: shaschlipp@aol.com

—Martin Butler



FILE PHOTO

John Alexander, center, cut the ribbon at the 1965 open house. Also, participating in the ceremony, from left: A. C. McKee, Harold Schmidt, Harold Roll, Robert Cushman, Frank McMillan, Kenneth Wright, and Arthur Guenther.

NURSING CARE SERVICES ALSO AVAILABLE

Adjacent to the Retirement Community is Florida Living Nursing Center, a separate entity owned and operated by Florida Conference, which opened in 1970 with 104 beds. Two new wings were completed in 1994, adding another 120 beds. The 224-bed facility includes a 52-bed dementia unit, 20 subacute beds, and 40 assisted living/extended care congregate beds.

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CHURCHES TOUCHING THE COMMUNITY



COOKING SCHOOLS BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

A cooking school conducted by Winter Haven and Lake Wales church members turned out to be just the right recipe for building relationships with people in their communities. Last year's standing-room only crowd made it necessary to move this year's event from Lake Wales to Winter Haven.

"New recipes, new techniques, and a new location all add up to a new experience for this popular seminar," reported the *East Polk County News Chief* in their Sunday, March 5, edition. This year's "Vegetarian Cooking for New Millennium Health" series attracted nearly 100 participants nightly, making this two-week, six-session seminar their most

successful yet.

One attendee, who edits a national recreational vehicle newsletter, plans to include an article about the cooking school in an upcoming issue. Readers will also be told how to locate Adventist churches across North America that are hosting cooking schools.

Nightly seminars included instruction on preparing healthy American, Asian, Italian, and French foods. Great attention was given ahead of time to every recipe, making certain it met the quality standards set by the instructors and expected by class participants.

One evening, a new recipe for Bread-in-a-Bag was being critiqued by the instruc-

tors. One loaf at a time, with step-by-step alteration to the ingredient list, an all-night breadmaking marathon brought the

group to the morning light when the tastest finally met the "judges" approval. Breadmaking, by the entire group, was featured on the final night of the seminar and nearly 80 loaves were taken home.

Participants also learned that "personal fitness can be a source of joy and is affected by the choices you make daily," said Dr. Paul Corbier, Lake Wales member and internist with the Watson Clinic in Lakeland. His timely health lectures each evening com-

plemented the cooking instruction which followed.

At the conclusion of the seminars, nearly a dozen class members accepted the invitation to attend Sabbath morning services at the Winter Haven and Lake Wales churches. Those who attended were also invited to members' homes for Sabbath dinner.

Jerry and LaDene Snowden, snowbird Winter Haven members, invited a couple to dinner who sat next to them at each seminar. The Snowdens are back home for the summer in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, yet they continue cultivating the friendship with their cooking school friends by e-mail.

—Walter Maier,
Martin Butler



MABEL MAIER

Walter Maier, Winter Haven pastor, demonstrates how to make black beans and corn enchiladas. Most of the recipes used in the seminars originate or are adjusted so they meet Maier's criteria of taste, texture, and appearance.

FRIENDSHIP DAY—EVANGELISM AND NURTURING

Friendship Day at the First Seventh-day Adventist Church of St. Petersburg is an evangelistic event that makes new friends and reaches nonattending members. The church has hosted five of these special days in the past two years.

"Lilles Hooi, our Sabbath school superintendent, is head of the committee that has worked diligently to reach our nonattending members and new interests," says Letty Hett, church communication director.

"With careful planning, wide-spread publicity, and a strong follow-up program, Friendship Day is a tool that will bring people into the Church and provide an opportunity for missing members to come back," says Hooi.

The most recent Friendship Day, May 6, was memorable for the congregation as they welcomed back two former members who had not attended church in several years. These former members came again the following Sabbath and plan

to continue attending.

January 1, 2000, was another opportunity for St. Petersburg members to make new friends and welcome old ones back home. The New Millennial Sabbath Friendship Day, as it was called, focused on the "certain hope for Christ's return." Nearly 60 guests attended. The majority of them were first-time visitors.

The spirit of friendship continued into the evening at a church social. The group of 133 people met at a Chinese restaurant

reserved exclusively for members and their Friendship Day guests. Approximately 40% of the group were guests and visitors from other churches in the area.

Hooi and her committee also coordinated the churches highest attended Friendship Day on May 1, 1999, which attracted more than 100 visitors. More than two-thirds of those were first-time attendees.

Hooi suggests that spring events seem to attract more guests than those which are close to year-end holi-

days. She also emphasizes that it is very important to promote heavily in the community to assure the success of Friendship Day.

Each guest who visits the St. Petersburg church also receives a 23-page, spiral-bound welcome booklet with a variety of information about the church and church school. Adventist beliefs, Church mission, as well as local ministries and activities, are described in the material.

—Lilles Hooi,
Jan Miller

“EASTER PARADE” STOPS TRAFFIC IN EAST PASCO

With colorful streamers waving and horns honking, a parade of more than 150 cars stopped Easter-weekend traffic on US Highway 301 in Zephyrhills as local Seventh-day Adventists moved along a three-mile stretch of highway en-route to the new East Pasco church.

The procession, which took place during the regularly scheduled Sabbath services on April 22, symbolized church members bidding farewell to their former meeting place at the East Pasco Adventist Educational Center, and celebrating the opening of their new worship center

prominently located atop a hill on the north side of Zephyrhills.

The anticipated move was reflected in every detail of the program—from the moment members arrived and deacons directed them to park their cars in long lines for an orderly departure, to the Sabbath school superintendent's remarks about the 13 years of worshipping under the basketball hoops in the Educational Center, to the instruction to pick up a hymnal and carry

it to the new church for the remainder of the service.

With the final instruction to “stay close together and keep moving,” the parade commenced. The police-escorted, three-mile trip took approximately 10 minutes.

When all the cars were parked at the new church, about 500

members and guests gathered to participate in the historic occasion. Bob Dodd, chairperson of the Building Committee, led in the ribbon-cutting and ceremonial hand-over of the church key to senior pastor James Rodriguez.

“I've looked forward

to the day when we'd have a new church facility from which to serve our community,” says Dodd. “This day means more to me than the 12 years I was president of East Pasco Medical Center. Dodd, who is also an ordained Adventist minister, led the nearby Adventist hospital through major expansions during his administration from 1986 to 1997. “A hospital fixes people here in this life,” he says, “a church fixes them for eternal life.”

In addition to being a long-awaited sanctuary for Adventists of East Pasco County, the new church represents the union of two congregations that have served the community for about 60 years.

The Dade City and Zephyrhills churches each outgrew their former facilities. When faced with the high
—continued on page 6



PHOTOS: JERRY STERNER



The ribbon-cutting ceremony on Saturday, April 22, included participants, from left: Peggy Snow, administrator of Zephyr Haven Nursing Home and Building Committee member; Bob Dodd, Building Committee chairperson; Craig Ford, Zephyrhills First United Methodist church pastor and friend of

East Pasco Medical Center and the Adventist church; and James Rodriguez, Adventist church pastor. East Pasco church member Jerry Sterner was photographing aerial views of East Pasco Medical Center, where he is public relations/marketing director, when he said to his pilot friend, “Let’s fly over to the new church to get a photograph.”

TEN-YEAR WAIT ENDS WITH “BREAKING” NEWS

Groundbreaking for the new Palm Coast church was given nearly full-page coverage with four color photos in the January 12, 2000, *Flagler-Palm Coast Community Times*, circulation 25,000.

Kathleen Bishop, editor of the newspaper, wrote the article and took the photographs. Verna Goodridge,

church communication director, along with Pastor David Graham, invited Bishop to attend the event and provided her with background material for use in writing the story.

The congregation has met for the past 10 years at the Wickline Center in Flagler Beach, a community meeting hall on the same grounds with the

public library. Now, members anticipate ownership of their first church home at Burroughs Drive and Belle Terre Parkway in Palm Coast. According to Graham, building permits were issued in April, the foundation was poured May 5, and the walls erected on May 8. Completion is expected by September.

—Martin Butler



and Building...

APOPKA HIGHLAND CHURCH—GROUNDBREAKING, FIRE, AND RECOGNITION DAY

Groundbreaking for the new Apopka Highland church took place September 12, 1999, on their property off Votaw Road in Apopka.

A fire on January 8, 2000, at the church's present location, 305 South Highland Avenue, damaged the Pathfinder/youth room and children's divisions. Flames came within three feet of the

church sanctuary before firefighters saved it from catching fire.

A special Civil Servant Recognition Day was held May 6 to honor the Apopka fire and police departments who responded to the January 8th 911 call.

Repairs to the damage are now complete. At press time, Apopka members were waiting for the issuance of the building permit so construction can begin on their new church.

—Martin Butler, Trish Turner

AVON PARK SPANISH CHURCH PLACES FIRST STONE

Eddy Romero, pastor of the Avon Park Spanish church, shows members and guests

cultural placing-the-first-stone ceremony dates back to the building of castles in Spain. The 13,200-

square-foot facility will be located at the corner of Stryker and Oleander roads in Avon Park. Thomas Sendros, church treasurer

and a construction supervisor, was instrumental in the design and plans for the church.

—Martin Butler



MITZY EVENS

the cornerstone block for their new sanctuary during a May 7, 2000, groundbreaking/placing-the-first-stone ceremony. The



MARTIN BUTLER

Participants in the groundbreaking were, from left, Bob Sindler, Orange County commissioner; John Land, Apopka mayor; John Appel, Apopka Highland church senior pastor; Gordon Retzer; Florida Conference president, and Cynthia Duncanson, Florida Conference church property development director.



TRISH TURNER

Fire Chief Richard Anderson, at podium; Apopka mayor John Land; 15 firefighters; four police officers; and Shadow, the arson dog, attended the special service held in their honor.

FLEC CLEARS REVOLVING FUND LOAN

Forest Lake Education Center (FLEC), at 2801 Sand Lake Road in Longwood, paid off its Southern Union Conference Revolving Fund loan on June 28, 1999—five years ahead of schedule. The funds were used to construct the school's gymnasium which houses the physical education and music departments and the food service



MARTIN BUTLER

Forest Lake Education Center

area. Nearly 500 pre-K through 8th grade students attend FLEC which serves five Florida Conference constituent churches:

Altamonte Springs, Apopka Highland, Forest Lake, Markham Woods, and Winter Springs.

—Martin Butler

FILIPINO-AMERICAN CHURCH BURNS MORTGAGE

The Filipino-American church at 1415 Davidson Street in Orlando burned its mortgage on December 18, 1999.

The congregation celebrated an early payoff of their loan—by more than two years—from the Southern Union Conference Revolving Fund. Pictured burning the mortgage, fore-



BOB FULGHUM

ground from left: Evan Valencia, Florida Conference secretary; Peter Pacamalan, church treasurer; and Angelina Antolin, church communication director.

—Jasmin Loriezo

“When a Southern Union Revolving Fund loan is paid off early, it shows a real commitment on the part of a church or school. This frees up funds for the church or school to carry out other local ministry needs. It also means funds are available for other Florida church and school building projects.”

—Randee Reynolds, Treasurer, Florida Conference

and Growing and Building...

ORLANDO JUNIOR ACADEMY MAKES A 180 DEGREE TURNAROUND

Eight years ago, enrollment at Orlando Junior Academy (OJA) was 170 and the campus was in need of a facelift. Today, 315 students fill the classrooms, a new wing is complete, and the landscaping is catching attention.

"I truly believe that accomplishments here at OJA can be attributed to a united effort by teachers, administration, and school board members to bring quality, Christian education into the classroom on a daily basis," says David Mathi, principal.

"We want others to see Jesus in us," adds Mathi. And that's exactly what architect Robert Miller sensed last summer as he worked on OJA's new classroom wing. "I'm so impressed with you folks and your Church," he said. "I want my granddaughters here in school."

Ansley Miller just



PHOTOS: MARTIN BUTLER

Springtime bloomed with new landscaping at Orlando Junior Academy.

completed her kindergarten year in a new classroom designed by her grandfather. Ansley's class, and three others, moved into the new 7,800-square-foot wing on March 20, nine months after groundbreaking.

As the new structure was being completed, springtime and professional landscaping came to OJA and gave its grounds a facelift. A couple living in the neighborhood saw the changes and stopped by the school office one morning.

"We hadn't taken

much notice in the school until the new palm trees and the beautiful landscaping went in," they said. "We'd like to consider sending our children here this fall. Could you tell us more about the school?"

With this request, they learned about quality education; Christian teachers; the new classroom wing; plans to add second story classrooms and to increase parking; a

computer lab with 25 internet-accessible units; and an emphasis in curriculum that is preparing



Elizabeth McMillen was baptized during a school assembly on April 21 by Stan Dobias, youth pastor at Florida Hospital church, while David Mathi, principal, held the microphone.

students for service in their communities as well as making a spiritual impact on their lives.

This spiritual impact comes from teachers whose goal it is to make their lives a witness on a daily basis

in the school setting. Students who indicate an interest in giving their hearts to Jesus are invited to attend a weekend baptismal retreat held each semester at Pine Lake Retreat, 45 minutes from Orlando. One student who made a decision for baptism was Elizabeth McMillen, a 4th grader. Whereas most students are baptized in their home church, she requested baptism at OJA so all of her friends could attend.

Her baptism, held during assembly on April 21, made such an impression on Andrew Aldridge, a 4th grade classmate, that he was baptized at OJA on the last day of school with all his friends in attendance. He was baptized by his father, Rick, a chaplain at Florida Hospital Altamonte.

This baptismal service was a special ending to the school year and to the David Mathi era at OJA. After serving as principal for the past eight years, he has accepted an invitation to become the new principal at A.W. Spalding Elementary School in Collegedale, Tennessee.

—Martin Butler

"EASTER PARADE" STOPS TRAFFIC IN EAST PASCO

continued from page 4 costs of replacing two separate buildings, the congregations merged in the mid-1990s and combined their resources to build the new church.

"This church building wouldn't be possible without the significant support of both the Florida Conference and

the East Pasco Medical Center administrations," said Rodriguez. "The Conference bent over backwards to ensure we could complete this project and the hospital generously donated office furniture plus a \$100,000 gift towards the cost of the building."

It seemed only appropriate that the East Pasco congrega-

tion would move into its new home on Easter weekend, considering other significant events in this church's history that have occurred at the Easter season. For example, groundbreaking for the new church took place on Easter Sunday, April 12, 1998. Also, the former Dade City congregation outgrew its church home

and began meeting at the Educational Center at Easter time in 1987.

Now, at Easter time 2000, members of the East Pasco congregation had reason to celebrate as they rejoiced in the blessed hope and promise of new life in Christ and began a new era for the Adventist church in their community.

—Jane Marie Allen

May 1985. The *Florida Focus* newsletter concept was brought to Florida by then president, Malcolm Gordon. From a 1-color, 12-page, bi-monthly publication, it's now an award-winning, 2- and 5-color publication.

"*Florida Focus* is about you and how God is journeying with you, the members of Florida Conference," says Conference President Gordon Retzer. "For 15 years *Focus* has been documenting miracles and mission as we make our way to Heaven."

Its purpose was then, and still is, to carry news

to members about what is going on around the Conference—congregations, members, schools, hospitals, Conference departmental ministries, and administrators.

"It's been a team effort," says Cindy Kurtzhals, Conference communication director, who has written and/or edited *Florida Focus* since its inception. "It wouldn't happen without our members, pastors,

teachers, and administrators sharing, submitting articles, being interviewed, taking photographs, or being photographed. We also depend on the expertise of each multi-talented member of the communication department team for this detailed and complex job; the "eagle-eyed" proofreaders throughout our building and beyond; and each professional within the printing companies we

have used over the years.

"We love what we do and we purpose to do excellent work for God."

—Cindy Kurtzhals

INTERNATIONAL ANGEL AWARDS

Excellence in Media, Hollywood, California:

- 5 Awards of Excellence: 1991, 1994, 1996, 1997, 2000.
- 4 Silver Angels: 1994, 1996, 1997, 2000.

CENTRAL FLORIDA PRESS CLUB AWARDS

- First place: 3- to 4-color newsletter, 1996.
- Merit Award: 3- to 4-color newsletter, 1997.

Update: The Search For A Radio Station

A flagship FM radio station is being sought by the Florida Lay Electronic Media Board, and interested laity, to broadcast the Gospel in Florida. There is a saturation of frequencies in metropolitan areas and, even if one becomes available, prices range from \$2 million-\$22 million.

Recently, the Federal Communications Commission opened new frequencies for Low Power Frequency FM stations which a few rural areas may be eligible to obtain. Unfortunately, Congress even more recently eliminated 80% of these frequencies and reduced power from 1,000 to 100 watts—enough power for about a five-mile radius.

So, the search is still on for a flagship station and appropriate funding.

No, the kids didn't paint houses on Sabbath!

Editor's note: our apologies that we didn't make the text more clear in the March-April 2000 *Florida Focus* cover story, "Just Do Something."

The youth/young adult ministries department would certainly not schedule painting houses on Sabbath. See our corrected text, right.



Students painted five houses for Seniors First, Inc. on Friday and passed out hundreds of pieces of literature during the prayer walk on Sabbath afternoon.

JULY

Singles' Ministries Picnics. Details: (407) 862-1331.

July 1. Meade Gardens, Winter Park.

July 4. Fireworks at Lake Eola, Orlando. Details: (407) 831-0908.

July 15. Lake Lotus Park, Altamonte Springs.

Pathfinder/CIT Island Navigator. July 7-9 and July 21-23. Details: (407) 644-5000 x127.

Evangelistic Series.

July 7-Aug. 5. Homestead. Ric and Dawn Swaningson.

July 14-Aug. 19. Jacksonville First. Lester Pratt and Roy and Amy Pauley.

July 15-Aug. 26. Jacksonville Orange Cove. Bill and Cora Waters.

Aug. 5-Sept. 16. Dunnellon. Art and Margo Swaningson.

Sept. 1-Oct. 7. Jensen Beach. Lester Pratt and Roy and Amy Pauley.

Sept. 15-Oct. 14. New Smyrna Beach. Ric and Dawn Swaningson.

Sept. 16-23. Temple of the Advent Hope. Ralph Ringer.

Sept. 30-Nov. 11. Miami Springs. Bill and Cora Waters.

Florida Adventist Bookmobile. Book Center orders accepted by e-mail: emontero@southernunion.com. Shop online: www.adventist-fl.com/abc/

July 8. West Palm Beach.

July 9. Jupiter-Tequesta, Jensen Beach, Fort Pierce, Melbourne, Cocoa, Titusville.

Aug. 19. Port Charlotte.

Aug. 20. North Port, Venice-Nokomis, Sarasota, Bradenton, Brandon, Tampa First.

Aug. 26. Maranatha in Miami.

Aug. 27. Plantation, Lauderhill, Pompano Beach, Boynton Beach.

Sept. 9. Tallahassee.

Sept. 10. Perry, Lake City, Gainesville, Ocala, Silver Spring Shores, Belleview.

Sept. 16. St. Petersburg.

Sept. 17. Clearwater, New Port Richey, Spring Hill, Brooksville, East Pasco in Dade City, Plant City.

Sept. 23. Naples.

Sept. 24. Ft. Myers, Ft. Myers Shores, Arcadia, Walker Memorial in Avon Park, Winter Haven, Lake View.

Sept. 30. West Palm Beach.

Singles' Ministries Breakfast Picnic. July 9. Rock Springs Park, Apopka. Details: (407) 774-2589.

Andrews University Master's Extension Program for Spanish-speaking Pastors. Pine Lake Retreat, Groveland, Florida. Instructor: Alfonso Valenzuela, assistant director of Hispanic ministry, Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Details: (407) 644-5000 x153. July 23-27, topic: Biblical Preaching; July 30-Aug. 3, topic: Preaching From the Old Testament.

Blind Camp. July 30-Aug. 6. Pine Lake Retreat, Groveland, Florida. \$35/person. Registration: Christian Record Services, (402) 488-0981.

Mexico Mission Trip—Youth/Young Adult Ministries. July 31-Aug. 8. Mission trip to Yucatan to build churches. Details: Miami Youth Ministries office, (305) 225-0528.

AUGUST

Pathfinder / CIT / Adventurer Leadership Convention. Aug. 18-20.

Camp Kulaqua, High Springs, Florida. Speaker: Luis Gracia, Florida Conference associate Pathfinder director. Music: Charles Haugabrooks. Details: (407) 644-5000 x127.

Young Adult Whitewater Rafting Retreat. Aug. 31-Sept. 4. New River, West Virginia. \$160/person includes transportation, seven meals, three nights lodging, and river run. Ages 18-30. \$75 nonrefundable deposit. Details: (407) 644-5000 x129.

SEPTEMBER

Regional Women of Spirit Day. Sept. 9. For women in the Gulf and Ridge regions and beyond. Palmetto church. 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Guest speaker: Dr. Rhonda Ringer, Celebration Health, Celebration, Florida. Details: Patricia Bassett, (941) 747-8458.

—A. Lee Bennett, Jr.

CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

MAY 7, 2000

The devotional was given by Ethan Byrd, director of the Southern Outreach Leadership School (SOULS), and several of the students. SOULS is a two-year program, conducted at Pine Lake Retreat in Groveland, which trains students for literature evangelism, Bible work, and personal visitation.

As part of the presentation, students mentioned how the school integrates an understanding of the Gospel into every subject. Teams of students are involved with various churches in the Central Florida area to assist members in conducting Bible Studies, and training members as lay Bible workers.

There are 21 young adults enrolled and it's a thrill to see their enthusiasm for the Lord and for the mission of the Church.

EVANGELISM REPORT

Ralph Ringer, Conference evangelism coordinator, reported that 200-250 evangelistic meetings are planned for 2000. Fifteen of these meetings

are being conducted by youth and young adults. Also, the Spanish churches will be involved in the Alejandro Bullón meetings being uplinked via satellite from Peru. Several pastors are conducting meetings in Peru as well as in Honduras. Ringer also reported that pastors in South Florida are planning an area-wide evangelistic thrust which will begin March 24, 2001. The goal is to baptize 1,500 people.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Randee Reynolds reported a 22.82% gain in tithe through March and a \$48,085 gain in Florida Advance offerings. He mentioned that these gains are partially a result of [data] reporting problems in the first quarter of 1999 where a number of churches had changed computer software. Nevertheless, there is still a very good gain for the year—and we praise the Lord.

APPROVED the Palm Springs Spanish and the Hialeah Gardens Spanish churches, which will join into one church, to pur-

chase a church facility.

INVITED Fred Nigel, Adventist Book Center manager in Ohio, to be assistant manager of the Florida Adventist Book Center.

APPROVED the concept of a sabbatical for local church pastors who qualify.

“[The Committee recognizes] the benefits to congregations and to Florida Conference of having pastors who remain in the Conference and are healthy and excited about ministry and service. It is **VOTED** that we make available to full-time pastors of local congregations who have served as such for more than seven consecutive

years in Florida Conference, a three-month paid sabbatical for the purpose of study, prayer, rejuvenation, and spiritual, mental, and physical renewal.”

The Executive Committee **VOTED** that the Personnel Committee, along with Noel Shanko, establish the criteria, the strategy for implementation, as well as the parameters for implementing this concept.

We want to ensure that local churches are fully in support of this concept and that pastors are sensitive to the needs of the local churches as this concept is discussed. Therefore, while the

concept has been voted, the Executive Committee still needs to vote how it will be implemented.

It was also noted that study is being given to how to affirm other employees, such as teachers, and ensure all employees are fulfilled in their work.

APPROVED the organization of the White Springs company into a church.

VOTED the agenda for the upcoming Constituency Meeting.

Also, **VOTED** the list of delegates to represent the Conference church from the various companies in the Conference.

REGIONAL ORIENTATION/ORGANIZATION MEETINGS PRIOR TO THE SEPTEMBER 24 TRIENNIAL CONSTITUENCY MEETING

Each church is entitled to one delegate, plus one additional delegate for each 75 members or major fraction thereof. Delegates chosen for the Organizing Committee will meet at the Regional Orientation/Organization Meetings listed below. One Organizing Committee delegate from each church, plus one additional delegate, will be chosen for each full 500 members. All delegates are to attend their Regional Meeting as well as the Constituency Meeting. The Regional Orientation/Organization meetings are an official part of the triennial process.

Lower Gold	Miami Temple church	August 17	7:00 p.m.
Upper Gold	Boynton Beach church	August 20	1:00 p.m.
Ridge	Port Charlotte church	August 21	7:00 p.m.
Gulf	Tampa First church	August 22	7:00 p.m.
East Central	Kress Memorial church	August 24	7:00 p.m.
North Florida	Camp Kulaqua, King Chapel	August 27	1:00 p.m.
West Central	Forest City Spanish church	August 29	7:00 p.m.



FLORIDA CONFERENCE

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