

FLORIDA FOCUS

SPECIAL EDITION



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Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

WHILE WE “OCCUPY” TILL JESUS COMES... A MASTER PLAN FOR FOREST LAKE ACADEMY



TERRY DIETRICH

**Gordon Retzer, president,
Florida Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists**

DECEMBER 1, 1999

Dear Florida Family:

My favorite vision of the future is Revelation 21:1—“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth...” Then, John adds in Revelation 22:4—“[We] shall see His face...” As far as I’m concerned, the sooner the better!

As we “occupy till Jesus comes” (Luke 19:13), we need to study options for growth and facility improvement at Forest

Lake Academy. Why? John Wheaton, Forest Lake Academy principal, shares the following facts and concerns:

FAST FACTS ABOUT FOREST LAKE ACADEMY

- Forest Lake Academy in Forest City is the largest boarding academy in the North American Division.
- Enrollment has increased for five years.
- More than 530 students can enjoy the tremendous academic, spiritual, social, and physical program offered by the Academy.
- Students from outside Florida are attracted to the Academy because of its excellent program. There are 16 states and 12 countries represented this year.

CONCERNS ABOUT THE SCHOOL’S FACILITIES

- Aging buildings—the newest one was built in the mid 1960s.

- While campus buildings have been well-maintained, we still have aging buildings and inadequate classroom space.
- On-going repairs. The dormitories and other buildings have had a Band-Aid™ approach repeatedly to remedy physical plant needs.
- Limited space in the Administration building.
- It is difficult and costly to add state-of-the-art technology upgrades to an aging campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ACADEMY

The Florida Conference Administration, the Forest Lake Academy School Board, and the Master Plan Committee of Forest Lake Academy, presented recommendations to the Florida Conference Executive Committee on September 19, 1999. The Executive Committee voted to accept the recommendation to contract with local master planning consultants Glattig Jack-

son and Dix-Nance. Committees comprised of parents, students, Academy staff, and constituents are working on the Master Plan and research and projections are being studied. They will assist the planning consultants in the development of a Master Plan for the Academy and its property.

TOGETHER, LET’S PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Input is being sought to envision the finest Seventh-day Adventist boarding academy campus in the world. Cost and funding questions are being addressed, as well as studies made of how best to maximize total land use for the Academy property. Because both the Forest Lake church and the Forest Lake Education Center are adjacent to the Academy, representatives from these entities are also involved.

YOU’RE INVITED TO AN OPEN HOUSE— JANUARY 16, 2000

There will be an

Open House in the H.H. Schmidt Performing Arts Center at Forest Lake Academy on Sunday, January 16, 2000, from 1-2:30 p.m. This is to share further information about this Master Plan process and welcome your ideas and input. We pray that the Lord will guide us in this quest for the best possible academy facility for our youth.

TIME LINE FOR THE PROJECT

The time line calls for a final draft of the Master Plan to be submitted by June 30, 2000. Reports will be presented at Region Organizing Committees in August prior to the September 24, 2000 Constituency Meeting. If appropriate, the Plan will be voted upon at the Constituency Meeting.

Thank you for your prayers and your input.

In Christ,

—Gordon L. Retzer,
President

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Steering Committee Workshop (by invitation) December 8, 1999
- Open House, 1 p.m. January 16, 2000

MASTER PLANNING PROCESS KEEPS MEMBERS INVOLVED

The Forest Lake Academy Master Planning Team is proud to be working with you on the development of the Forest Lake Academy Master Plan. This is a very exciting project that includes the development of new and updated facilities for the Forest Lake Academy as well as an overall land use concept for the entire property owned by the Florida Conference.

The planning process for the site will include member input, data analysis and technical research, and the development of several design alternatives. The final Master Plan will provide recommendations for four critical components of development: Land Use and Circulation, Marketing, Finance, and Infrastructure. Our goal is to work with you in each step of the planning process to develop a vision for the land that meets everyone's

shared goals.

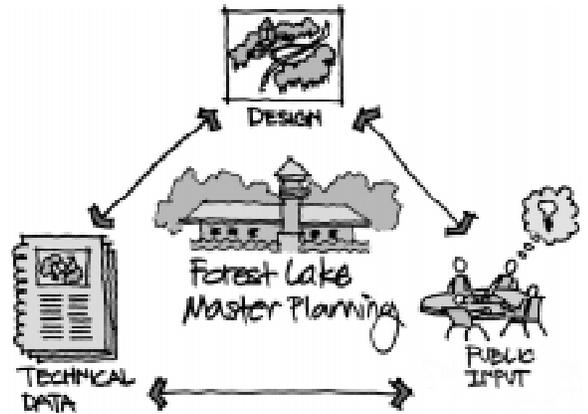
We have already begun the planning process by collecting information on the site's condition, including ecological communities, landscape features, soil profile, building evaluation, regional real estate issues, land use entitlements, traffic and educational needs projected by the Florida Conference. We have also reviewed the site with St. John's Water Management District. This information will be documented early in the process to provide everyone with a sound foundation of knowledge regarding all facets of the site.

As we proceed with our planning efforts over the next several months, we will be looking for input from you through several means to enhance our knowledge of the site and develop a vision for the project. A series of newsletters, public meetings, and Steering Committee workshops

will provide opportunities for communication and input. We invite you to attend the Open House scheduled for January 16 at 1:00 pm on site at the H.H. Schmidt Performing Arts Center at Forest Lake Academy, 3909 E. Semoran Blvd., Forest City, five miles west of Interstate 4 on State Road 436, to review our progress and share your thoughts.

The following pages include some photos and observations from some of our preliminary site visits and discussions. We will be adding to this information on our project website: <http://www.forestlakemp.com/> which will document our progress throughout the course of the project. We invite you to visit the website, fill out the response form on the back of this newsletter, and join us on January 16th.

—Pete Sechler,
Glatting Jackson



The shared goal is a sustainable future for all.



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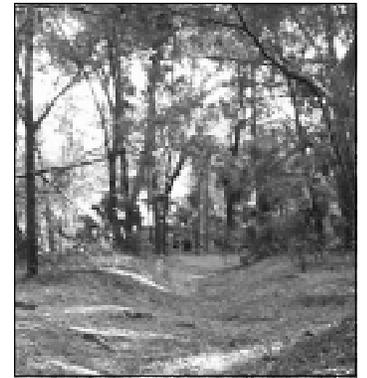
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In preliminary site visits, the master planning team has developed a general knowledge and appreciation for the opportunities and constraints of the property. We have also defined the jurisdictional wetlands on the property with the assistance of the St. John's Water Management District.



Forest Lake Academy Biologist Scott Kinsey, holding turtle, left, has been involved with the team in reviewing the site's existing conditions. Discussions have included opportunities for environmental restoration, education and management.



The existing property includes several natural communities and ecosystems in varied states of health. Environmental restoration could be a significant part of the Master Plan. Restoration efforts could provide education opportunities for the school's environmental curriculum.



