

April 2009

Please forward this newsletter and/or print out copies for your local church bulletin board and for distribution.

Congratulations are extended to two Chesapeake Pathfinder clubs for their participation in the Columbia Union Pathfinder Bible Achievement event hosted by the Pennsylvania Conference on March 21. The Baltimore White Marsh Cloudwalkers were awarded Second Place, and the New Hope Night Hawks earned Third Place in the competition. The Pathfinders were asked 90 questions, testing their knowledge of Chapters 10-36 of II Chronicles.

The Children's Ministries department won an AccuCut paper die-cutting machine and accessories valued at \$500 from the North American Division (NAD) for achieving 100% participation by Chesapeake churches in the NAD Children's Ministries Year-End reporting process. Montana was the only other conference in North America to have all their churches file a report by the deadline. Stacey Bondurant, conference Children's Ministries director, and the dedicated leaders in our Chesapeake churches deserve kudos for their efforts. The new AccuCut machine will be housed at the conference office and is available for use by Children's Ministries leaders and anyone needing to create easy and inexpensive craft projects or attractive bulletin boards. Bondurant says that if Chesapeake has 100% participation in the NAD Year-End report next January, the conference will receive \$500 worth of AccuCut accessories. Chesapeake churches reported that 39 Vacation Bible School (VBS) programs were held in the region during 2008. This is the highest number reported in North America.

About 50 teens will converge at Mount Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Maryland this weekend to learn how to improve their communication skills. The Teen Leadership Training (TLT) event is sponsored by the Youth Ministries department. The theme for the weekend is *Can You Hear Me Now?* and features Brad Durby as the keynote speaker. Durby serves on the Highland View Academy staff as a recruiter and as part of the Campus Ministries team.

Columbia Union College is having an Open House on Sunday, April 5, from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Prospective students will have an opportunity to meet with faculty advisers, financial aid counselors, admissions counselors, and athletic coaches. Also they may enjoy the *Tastes of Takoma*, a community festival on the CUC campus from noon- 6:00 p.m. To register for the open house, call (800) 835-4212 or email openhouse@cuc.edu.

There's still time to register for the Adventist Singles Spring Retreat planned for April 24-26. The event, sponsored by Chesapeake Adventist Single Adult Ministries, will be held at the Mount Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Maryland. You must register by April 14 to attend. Contact Fred Thomas at (410) 992-9731 or email fmthomas1950@yahoo.com for additional details.

Chesapeake Conference is sponsoring a retreat for women, April 25-26, at the Bon Secours Spiritual Center located at 1525 Marriottsville Road, Marriottsville, Maryland. Located on 313 acres of pasture and woodlands, the center has 70 newly renovated guest rooms for those who wish to stay overnight. The theme for the weekend is *The Gentle Whisper—hearing God's voice in a noisy world* with presenter Shirley Benton, Women's Ministries director for the Columbia Union, as keynote speaker. Registration is required through PlusLine at www.PlusLine.org or (800) 732-7587 by Tuesday, April 21. For more information check www.PlusLine.org or contact Samantha Young at (410) 995-1910 or email syoung@ccosda.org.

The 2009 NAD Adult Sabbath School Summit, which will convene at the Seventh-day Adventist World Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, April 24-25, will be streamed live on www.nadadultministries.org. Viewers may participate by email in real time at sabbathsschoolsummit@nad.adventist.org. The Summit begins at 7 p.m. on April 24, and continues at 8:45 A.M. on April 25 under the theme, "Sabbath School: One Mission, Many Methods." The goal of the Summit is to "brainstorm" creative means of implementing the Four Goals of Sabbath School (Bible Study, Fellowship, Outreach, World Mission) in the local church setting. For additional information please call the NAD Adult Ministries Department at (301) 680-6430.

Pastors and church leaders are invited to attend the Reveal Worship Conference sponsored by the North American Division, the Columbia Union Conference, the Chesapeake Conference and the New Hope church. A stellar line-up of speakers will share ways to create meaningful worship services. Seminar tracks are offered for pastors, musicians, children and youth leaders, worship leaders, and those who manage media and technology. The event takes place May 13-15 at the New Hope church, 12350 Hall Shop Road, Fulton, Maryland. Registration is required; fees apply. Discounts are offered to students and groups (five or more registering together with one payment). To register and to obtain speaker and workshop information, contact PlusLine at www.PlusLine.org or (800) 732-7587.

Sabbath School Growth Awards for local churches are being sponsored by LEAD Magazine, a Sabbath School leadership publication of the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Contact Marjorie Chambers at mchambers@rhpa.org or (301) 393-3000 for additional information, and to obtain a registration form and a PowerPoint presentation.

Drivers who carry a license to drive commercial vehicles are needed to drive buses for local church and school ministries. The Youth Ministries department sponsored the first of two Commercial Drivers License (CDL) Workshops on March 22, and six pastors and 25 church members participated in the training. The next class will be offered Sunday, September 13, from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at the Highland View church in Hagerstown, Maryland. Class size is limited to 12 participants. Email Carl Rodriguez, youth director, at crodriguez@ccosda.org to reserve your place or call (410) 995-1910.

Hope Channel, the Seventh-day Adventist Church's official television network, is slated to join the basic DIRECTV lineup on April 29. As Channel 368 within DIRECTV's basic home service package, the Hope Channel will appear among several leading news and education channels, the satellite network's press statement said. Launched in 1994, DIRECTV boasts a subscription base of more than 17 million homes. The service also reaches many hospitals and institutions, and Hope Channel expects to co-market the service to Adventist health care outlets and universities.

The Executive Committee at its March 17 meeting conducted the annual Financial and Statistical Review. Here are a few points of interest.

~ The impact of the struggling economy resulted in a tithe gain of only 0.32% which is the lowest annual gain we have experienced in the past 30 years. The average gain across the North American Division was only 0.40% with a good number of conferences showing a loss. The average tithe gain for Chesapeake was 4.9% over the last 5 years.

~ Nearly 11% of our tithe remittance was returned via the eGiving option provided by the NAD for local churches. Chesapeake bore 1% of the cost of the electronic giving (\$15,088) and the division covered the remaining expense. The Executive Committee is requesting clarification from the NAD on the expenses related to the eGiving program. Churches interested in participating in the eGiving plan should contact the conference treasury department for more information.

~ The Chesapeake Advance Plan (CAP) received 3.77% less in 2008 than in 2007 with a total income of \$173,465. Those funds were distributed according to the established percentages:

40%	Evangelism	\$69,386
20%	HVA Capital	\$34,693
15%	Mt Aetna Camp Capital	\$26,019
10%	Church Planting	\$17,346
15%	Church/School Capital Projects	\$26,019

~ Our percentage of required working capital stands at 82.04%. Our current ratio is 3.73 : 1 and our percentage of liquid assets is 92.72%.

~ In reviewing the relationship of the budget and actual expenditures as related to our income for each of the last five years the trend was apparent that Chesapeake is conservative in its spending habits. And every effort is being made to control expenses during these uncertain economic times.

~ The committee also approved the loan requests from CURF of the Spencerville Church, the Washington Spencerville Korean church and the Dundalk church. The 5% assistance the conference is committing toward just these three church/school projects will run nearly a million dollars. The funding of this capital assistance comes primarily from CAP giving and unrestricted maturities. The Conference Association Board of Trustees (the corporation which manages all properties) feels confident that we will be able to meet this commitment and has already outlined a possible strategy for doing so.

~ During 2008 Chesapeake churches received 364 new members through baptism and profession of faith. Our annual average is 365.

~ Unfortunately one-third of our congregations did not experience the joy of welcoming a new member during 2008. And 47% of our congregations welcomed one or less. In fact only 21% of our congregations had baptisms/POF's of 10 or more. The committee made note that this is an area of critical need and trusts that the strong commitment to evangelism in 2009 will see a dramatic turn-around in these statistics.

~ An interesting comparison of statistics from the three regions within Chesapeake was shared:

<u>Region</u>	<u>Congregations</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Bap/POF</u>	<u>Tithe</u>	<u>FTE Pastor Budgets</u>	<u>Budgets to Members</u>
Western	15	3,164	82	\$3,806,793	15	1 : 211
Central	31	7,436	209	\$9,050,903	31	1 : 239
Eastern	24	2,340	73	\$1,837,631	11	1 : 212

~ A copy of some of the statistical data has been attached to this issue of Currents sent to the pastors in an Excel spreadsheet. If you would like a copy of the report, please ask your pastor to forward a copy of the file to your email address.

April Sunset Calendar and Offering Schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sunset</u>	<u>Offering</u>
April 4	7:31	Local Church Budget
April 11	7:38	Christian Record Services for the Blind
April 18	7:45	Local Church Budget
April 25	7:52	Chesapeake Advance

Note: Sunset times published above are for Baltimore, Maryland. For Delaware and the Eastern Shore, subtract two minutes. For West Virginia and Western Maryland, add three minutes.