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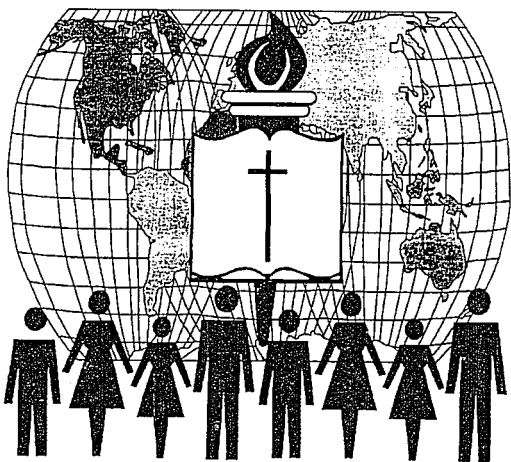
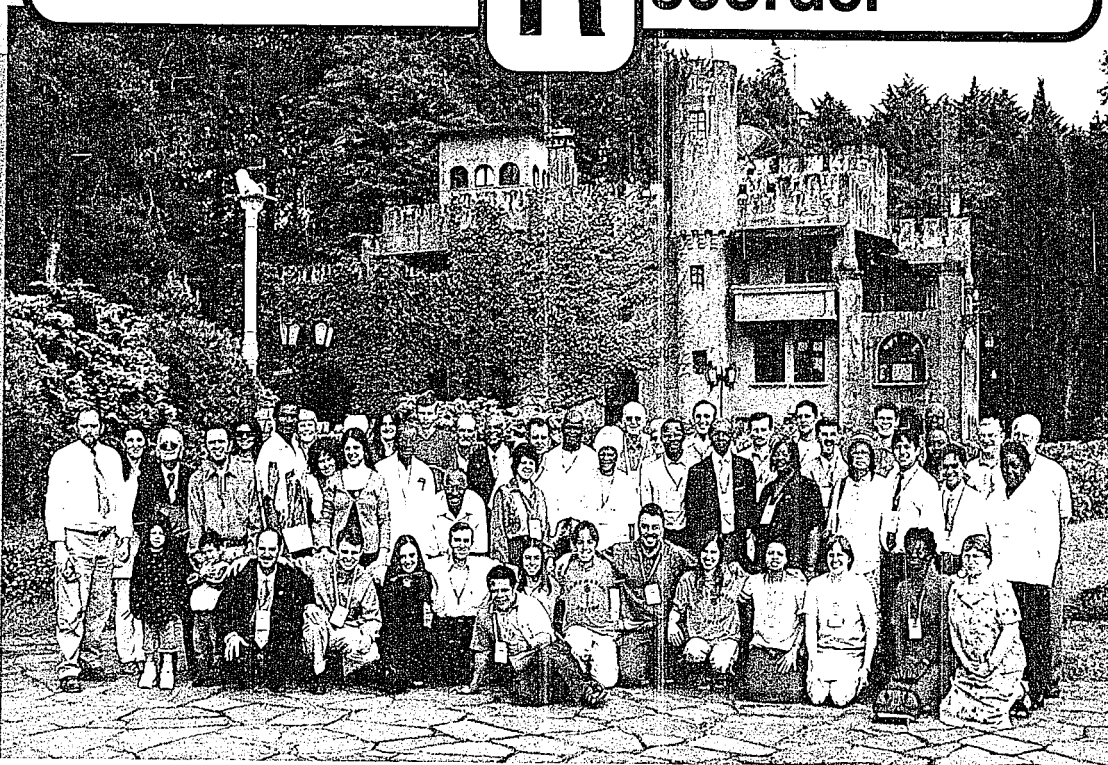
abbath

News for and about
Seventh Day Baptists

April 2003

R

ecorder



*"Christ Has
Set Us Free"*

The 2003 Sessions
of the
SDB World
Federation



Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, we believe in:

- salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every church member has the right to participate in the decision-making process of the church.

The seventh day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience—not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs just a little bit different.

If you would like more information, write: The Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711; E-mail: sdbgen@inwave.com and the SDB Web site: www.seventhdaybaptist.org

Summer Institute on Sabbath Theology

June 9-20, 2003

Seventh Day Baptist Center, Janesville, Wis.

Taught by Rev. Gabriel Bejjani, Dean Council on Ministry

Please contact Rev. Bejjani for more information: (909) 682-2002

General Conference is August 3-9 at George Fox University, Newberg, Ore.

Transportation pick-up service for Conference begins at 6:00 a.m. on Sunday, August 3. If arriving earlier, there are local motels available for individuals to arrange until the 6:00 a.m. time.

Transportation will be arranged to George Fox University from:

- The Portland, Ore., International Airport
- The Portland Amtrak Station
- The Portland Greyhound Station

There is no Greyhound service into Newberg on Sunday or Wednesday. Bus service is available all other days, if needed.

There will be an SDB contact person in the airport baggage area throughout the day on Sunday. When you arrive, see this person for travel arrangements.

Please contact Ruth Burdick by e-mail (ruthburd@yahoo.com) or phone her at (253) 333-1195 to verify transportation plans *not* on the registration form.

Display tables

There will be 15 tables available for Conference displays (each table is 6 feet x 30 inches, some with electrical hookup). First-come, first-serve basis. To secure your table, e-mail: sdbconftables@juno.com

Or call (360) 736-3023

Or write: *Pastor Tom Mitchell*

3120 Cooks Hill Rd.

Centralia WA 98531-9009

Speaking of Conference tables, we understand that many of you will be flying, and it might be hard to carry your goodies for the SCSC Craft Table. You may ship/mail your handiwork ahead of time (deadline July 25) to:

Pastor Justin Camenga

4225 SE Morrison St.

Portland OR 97215-1637

Sabbath Renewal Day 2003

Celebrated on May 17



Worship packets and bulletins will be sent to each church. Watch your mail!

The Sabbath Recorder

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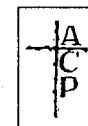


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Freedom for our world

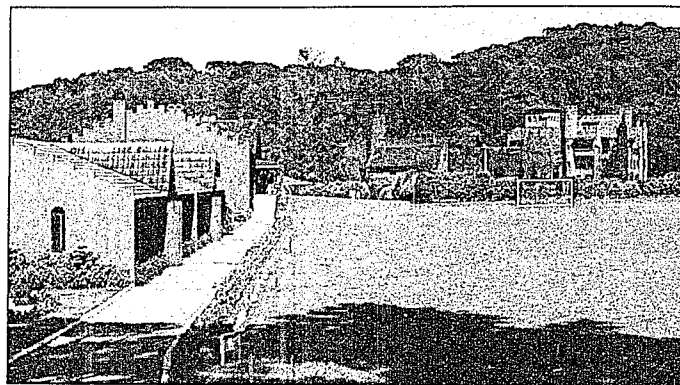
**World Federation Sessions
February 10-16, 2003**

by Janet Thorngate

As a space shuttle exploded into earth's atmosphere and threats of war shot round the globe, Seventh Day Baptists from nine nations flew to Brazil to celebrate freedom.

"Christ Set Us Free" the week's theme declared. Preachers uncovered many types of freedom and many forms of slavery. Some Bible study leaders—and some participants—were accused of preaching when study and discussion were the order of the day.

"Do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery," proved a heavy theme to ponder. The morning studies and evening sermons posed hard questions and provoked intense discussion. But the opening verse from Galatians 5 continued to ring out loud and clear: "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then..."



The beautiful campus of "Blessings Ranch." Dorms and dining hall to the left, castle to the right.

In the end, celebration won out. Hope won over fears, laughter over tears. From each morning's praise to the final communion circle at the close of Sabbath, it was not the knowledge of our freedom in Christ that united us. It was the experience of Christ's spirit alive among us.

Linguistic challenge

A typical morning began with a sleepy American or African, or Australian or Jamaican, greeting a group of Brazilians with a practiced, "Bom Dia!" [pronounced something like *bone geeá*].

The Brazilians, disappointed that the one conversation they were ready to field in English had begun in Por-

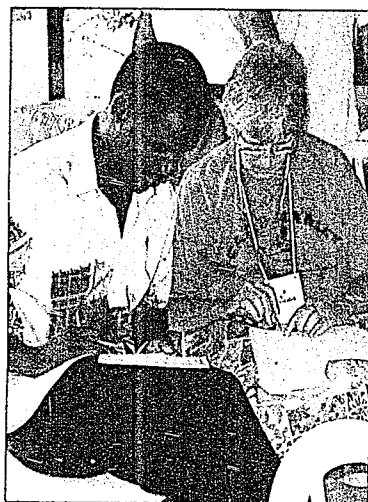
tuguese, would reply with a not-too-confident but clearly recognizable, "Good Morning!"

It wasn't long before both sides discovered that such phrases were about the limit of their linguistic skills. A few more stabs at words or phrases from both groups produced blank looks, embarrassed smiles, and finally a call for "Lelia!" or "Ismael!" or "Luciano!" or one of the other translators.

For the first time in its 38-year history, the SDB World Federation met in a country where English is not the national language. Sessions were conducted in English with continuous translation into Portuguese.

For the formal presentations, a

**Translation takes time.
Understanding was never
complete, which reminded us
of the curse of the Tower of Babel.**



Two continents meeting in the middle: Canaan Phiri from Malawi, Africa, and Dorothy d'Alpuget from Australia.



Children from Brazil processed with flags of the many nations represented in the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation.



Don't let the shirt fool you—they're Brazilian. (Children of our musician Reginaldo Freitas.)

translator stood beside the presenter and translated a few sentences at a time, giving the speaker time to formulate what he would say next. Or time to forget what it was he was going to say next because the translator had stolen the show!

For less structured times—like business session discussions and committee meetings—translators would sit close to individuals or small groups and act as listeners or spokesmen as needed. They were constantly called upon during meals and between sessions to help with personal exchanges.



Luciano de Moura (left), one of the busier—and more animated—translators, waits for the "punch line" from Pastor Joe Samuels, newly-elected Federation President.

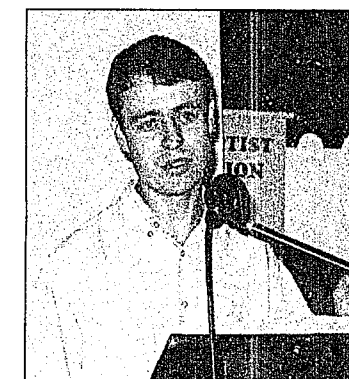
The curse of Babel

Even English has many accents, and it is only the second or third language for several delegates. Translation takes time. It slows the work process, and frustration levels rose during impassioned appeals or emotional issues. Understanding was never complete,

which reminded us of the curse of the Tower of Babel.

More often, however, we experienced the grace of Pentecost. We realized that, beyond the din of so many tongues, we are still one—

More often, we experienced the grace of Pentecost. We realized that we are still one in the Spirit, which overcomes all barriers.



Seminarian Jonas Sommer, our Brazilian contact person, travel and tour coordinator, and new "Fan Man" of Brazil.



one in the Spirit, which overcomes all barriers.

Those who spoke English learned to say, "A paz do Senhor" (may the peace of God be with you). And those speaking Portuguese learned to say, "God bless you" (*Deus te bençoe*).

Our translators worked hard, becoming everyone's closest friend. One of them, a Baptist who was not a Sabbathkeeper, said he would soon become a Seventh Day Baptist. A person cannot translate from one language or culture to another without being changed.

Worship Brazilian style

As always when Christians gather, the inspiration of shared worship



How important is SDB history? Muito! (very!) according to Janet Thorngate.



Delegates enjoyed the poolside setting of Janet's class.



The English-speaking men circled up for Sabbath School in the large chapel.

creates unforgettable mountaintop experiences. And, as always when Seventh Day Baptists gather, the music lifts them beyond the bonds of earth.

We enjoyed the support of a gifted SDB musician, Reginaldo Freitas. Standing at the keyboard through two weeks of worship services, he was able within three measures to pick up any key, tempo, or musical style to create the perfect accompaniment. He also raised our spirits and inspired our hearts with his own original songs or arrangements, leading us in making a joyful noise to our Creator.

For most delegates and observers coming to Brazil, their experience

Down to business (in the castle)

The World Federation's main functions have always been to foster increased communication and fellowship among Seventh Day Baptists across national and cultural boundaries, and to promote projects of mutual interest that will benefit from international cooperation. Its committees worked toward those ends in Brazil.

When in session, the Federation assigns delegates to committees. These, in turn, bring forth recommendations for the whole body to

consider. Perhaps the busiest during this session was the Restructuring Committee.

Its main concern was to strengthen the Executive Committee, which carries out the work of the organization between its every-five-year sessions. They again gave special attention to the role of regional vice presidents, with a goal of broader participation. They recommended movement toward salaries for the executive secretary and president so that officers could devote more time

to the Federation's work and generate more resources for its support. (Currently all work of the Federation is done by volunteers.)

Other recommendations included moving toward more frequent sessions, perhaps every three years with meetings of the full Executive Committee—including the seven regional vice presidents—between sessions.

Most of the reorganization proposals would require Constitution or Bylaw changes, thus were rec-



Finance Committee



Restructuring Committee

ommended to the Executive Committee to draft such changes before referral to the member Conferences for approval.

The Projects Committee listened to proposals from the various member groups for "projects which could benefit from international cooperation" and brought these to the whole body with sug-

gestions for their implementation or funding. Since the Federation's financial support comes solely from voluntary contributions of its member groups and other interested individuals, the Executive Committee is encouraged to find new ways to communicate the needs to all potential donors and participants.

Several projects call for short-term service of individuals from one country to another, and particularly for teachers of English and of Seventh Day Baptist distinctives (beliefs, history, and polity). Projects range from education and publishing, to buildings and equipment for expanded outreach.

The Nominating Committee, which had been appointed and began its work before the session, nominated a slate of officers. The Finance Committee prepared a five-year budget and suggested means of expanding the Federation's income base.

New officers elected and installed on Sabbath evening are: Joe A. Samuels, President; James Siwani,

Vice President—Africa; Al Paypa, Vice President—Asia; Ewart Caesar, Vice President—Caribbean; Jan Lek, Vice President—Europe; Gabriel Bejjani, Interim Vice President—Pacific; Andrew Samuels, Vice President—North America; Luciano de Moura, Vice President—South America; Frits Nieuwstraten, General Secretary; Andrea Davis, Recording Secretary; Luan Ellis, Treasurer. **SR**



Projects Committee



Newly-named (with new title) General Secretary Frits Nieuwstraten (left) with James Siwani.



began during the Brazil Conference to which they were all invited before the World Federation sessions started. That week ended with a special Sabbath where the Women's Congress, Youth Congress, and Children's Congress ran concurrently.

Sabbath morning worship began with a parade of miniature flags from all the World Federation nations. A procession of Brazilian children carried the flags and placed them in a colorful display across the front of the temple.

Worship included a variety of choral selections from the different churches, and congregational hymns sung in Portuguese but to tunes familiar to most international guests who could sing along in their native language.

By the end of this "high Sabbath," all the guests felt lovingly enveloped in Brazilian hospitality and said sad good-byes to the over 200 people who could not stay for the Federation sessions themselves.

A special place

Meanwhile, the last of the Federation delegates arrived at the airport in Curitiba, greeted by young people in yellow T-shirts emblazoned with the new World Federation logo (see cover).

First came the 25-mile drive to Bocaiúva do Sul, reminiscent of

Jamaican hill country. Yes, February is summertime in Brazil! Then came the delight of entering "Blessings Ranch" (*Chácara de Bênção*), a peaceful retreat built around a European-style castle but surrounded by ancient araucaria trees that grow only in southern Brazil.

A small stream runs through the valley ringed by lush green hills. As delegates walked from dorms to the main building for meals, or from committee meetings in the castle to the temple at the other end of the campus, they could smell the grapes in the garden and hear the unfamiliar calls and songs of tropical birds.

Chairs on the veranda, benches on the spacious lawn, and paths around the pond always beckoned. Blessings, indeed, awaited every participant—delegate, observer, and host alike.

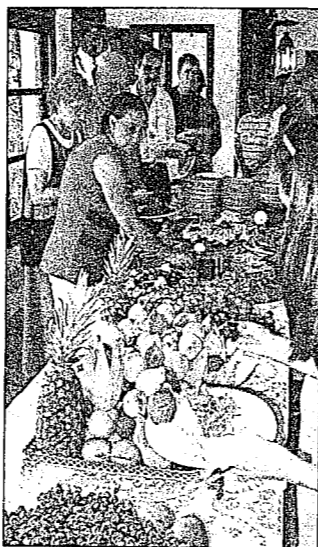
Conferencing—conferring

Federation President Gabriel Bejjani and Sessions Pastor Salvador Caetano da Silva packed a full schedule between each day's breakfast and evening snack. Most delegates had opportunity to lead in morning praise or evening worship experiences, and others preached or led a Bible study or workshop. These were interspersed between the committee and business sessions.

Everyone looked forward to hearing full reports on the work of each delegation's Conference over the past

five years. Those, along with the displays of publications and photos led to sharing of helpful information and resources between groups.

A broad range of workshop topics stimulated more sharing. Dr. Lewis "Pete" May, Executive Secretary of the USA & Canada Conference (and a medical doctor), gave a presentation on health issues, impressing everyone by reading it in Portuguese while the Portuguese translator gave the English version.



The week ended with a sumptuous banquet provided by the host.



Inez gives Mauva Smith her first chimarrão lesson.



Cramming into a Joinville shop to buy chimarrão supplies—a green tea brewed in a gourd and passed around like a peace pipe.



Nancy and Pete May shared some delicious cake to celebrate her 70th birthday.



Gabe Bejjani (left) presented interpreter Ismael Neto with a study Bible for his seminary work.

G. Kirk Looper's workshop reviewed Seventh Day Baptist missions around the world. Nathanael Lawton, one of the youngest delegates, drew from his own experience to suggest ways we can support Christian young people and their parents who must deal with the pressures of our modern world, particularly in secular university settings.

I challenged the churches and Conferences to preserve their history

(caring for the records and papers that document it) by giving examples from the rich 350-year heritage which all Seventh Day Baptists share.

Feliz Sábado!

Following an all-day tour Friday (see page 10), it was Sabbath day, "back at the ranch"—special blessings sprinkled through the familiar pattern of Sabbath School, worship, and free time for naps and visiting.

Memorable moments included musical selections by a 20-member disciplined choir from the São Paulo church; a solo-turned-congregational-anthem led by Cnaan Phiri of Malawi; a duet sung in Philippine Cebuano; a prayer in South African Xhosa; a special formal meal prepared and served by the ranch owner and her husband (nearly 100 people seated at round tables for four or five); and a huge fellowship circle singing "We Are One in the Bond of Love." Portuguese and English all mixed together with clasped hands and tears of joy. This is Sabbath.

These people were there

Official delegates: Andrew Goulding and Marlo Siolo from Australia; Leonildo Lebkuchen, Salvador Caetano da Silva, Luciano Barreto Nogueira de Moura, João Teles dos Santos from Brazil; Ewart Caesar and Kharlyn Henry from Guyana; Allan Chambers, Naval Harley, and Prudence Robinson from Jamaica; Cnaan Phiri from Malawi; Frits Nieuwstraten from the Netherlands; Al Paypa and Bernardo Agudera from the Philippines; James and Mirriam Siwani from South Africa; Andrea Davis, Luan Ellis, Nathanael Lawton, Joe Samuels, and Dale Thorngate from the USA and

Canada; Gabriel Bejjani, President, and G. Kirk Looper (Executive Committee).

Observers were Aileen Chambers from Jamaica, Dorothy d'Alpuget from Australia, Manola Nieuwstraten from the Netherlands, and those from the United States: Elie Bejjani, Kevin and Janet Butler, Kelvin Campbell, Ronald Ellis, Lewis H.V. and Nancy May, Vivian Looper, Mauva Smith, Andrew Samuels, and Janet Thorngate.

There were 30 registered observers from Brazil, plus the 20-member São Paulo choir. In all, over 100 people. (Excerpts from Conf. reports, p. 15.)

Gracious hosts

We know there is no way to repay the gracious hospitality of our Brazilian hosts: Pastor Leonildo Lebkuchen, chairman of the Host Committee; Pastor Silva and all the others, from Jonas Sommer in the office to Deacon Alceu Garcia in his truck; the yellow T-shirted young people who met us, greeted us, and entertained us; Sisters Marlene and Edilene always there helping; Deacons Felício and Silvano; translators Luciano, Liane, Cleber, Leila, Inez, Magda, and Ismael; and our Brazilian brothers and sisters in the churches—*muito obrigado!* (thank you very much!)



A small bit of a big country

by Janet Thorngate

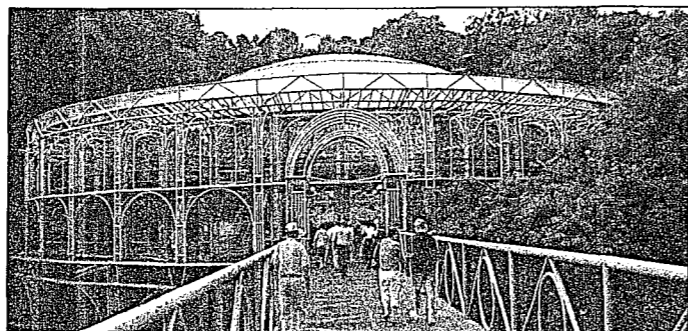
Long Conference days get tiring, so a highlight for all international guests were the two special tours planned by Jonas Sommer. A seminary student who works in the Brazil Conference office, Jonas was responsible for all delegate transportation and also for communication between the Host Committee in Brazil and the Executive Committee in the USA.

The big tour bus rolled into Blessings Ranch in time for a full Wednesday afternoon tour of Curitiba and a Friday tour to several Seventh Day Baptist churches in the area.

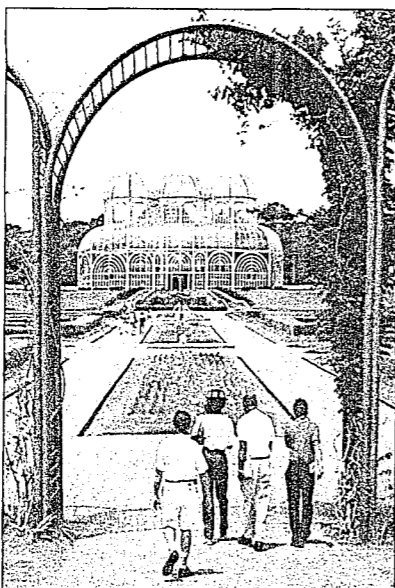
Curitiba, capital of the State of Paraná, is a city of 1.5 million people. It claims "the best mass transportation system in the country," the green parks of "Brazil's ecological capital," and a quality of life enriched by immigrants from many nations.

World Federation visitors enjoyed stops at the famous Botanical Garden, Ópera de Arame, New Museum, and Tanguá Park. Those who didn't brave the rain showers still enjoyed views from the bus of the Civic Center, Guaira Theater, the historic district, and several notable squares.

Friday's all-day tour first took the group on a picturesque drive across the coastal mountain range into the neighboring state of Santa Catarina. There we were warmly welcomed first at the Garuva Seventh Day Baptist Church. Members of the congregation had gifts for everyone: small crocheted pieces and banana candy made in their town. Our next stop was the City Hall in Joinville for an audience with the mayor and a for-



Crossing a grated bridge high above water, the international tourists reached the glass Opera House in Curitiba.



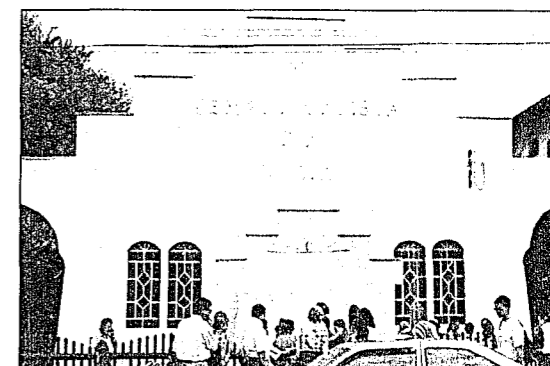
Above: Admiring the city crest in Joinville's City Hall. Left: Walking toward the beautiful Botanical Garden in Curitiba.



Meeting with the mayor (holding microphone) of Joinville. Delegates received welcome gifts.



A warm welcome in beautiful Garuva.



The large SDB church in Joinville.

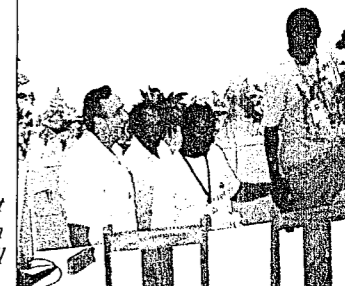
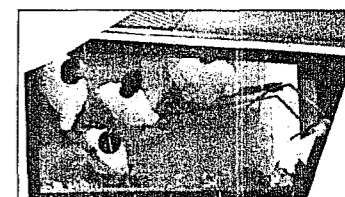
mal picture (great publicity for the local SDBs!).

We ate lunch in a churrascaria (a restaurant specializing in Brazilian barbecue), followed by shopping and a visit to the Joinville church, one of the largest in the Conference.

Although our tour group arrived back in Curitiba behind schedule, people in three local congregations were still at their temples, waiting to welcome us warmly. We first stopped at the small church of São José dos Pinhais. Then we visited Boqueirão,

where we ate a sumptuous snack and got to see the new church building taking shape outside the walls of the old.

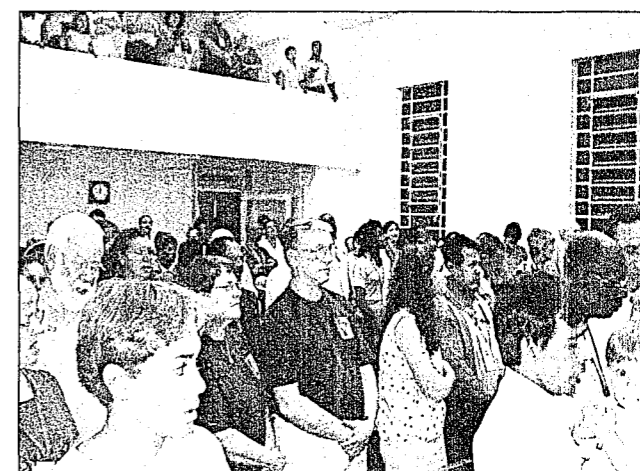
Finally, our group reached the First SDB Church of Curitiba, oldest in the Conference (established in 1913). Here we joined the local congregation for a Sabbath welcoming service, complete with lots of special music and a rousing sermon by outgoing President Bejjani. **SR**



Baptisms are important at São José dos Pinhais. An angled mirror on the wall shows each blessed event.



Top: The church in Boqueirão is building new walls outside the old. Above: Inside, worship and snacks.



Ending our day (and welcoming the Sabbath) at the First SDB Church of Curitiba.



Two wonderful decades

by Dale D. Thorngate



Dale D. Thorngate

It is hard to believe that it has been 22 years since I accepted the responsibility to be executive secretary of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation. I must admit that I am having withdrawal symptoms since I am no longer in that leadership role.

These last two decades have been both a challenge and an honor. It has been an honor to serve God and His "peculiar people" called Seventh Day Baptists. The greatest joy would be the many friends made during this time.

It has been a real privilege to travel and represent our denomination in so many different countries. Janet and I visited our Conferences and churches in Brazil, England, Jamaica, the Netherlands, Finland, Poland, South Africa, and New Zealand. And gathering every five years, we also had opportunity to meet and make friends with people from Australia, Germany, Guyana, Haiti, India, Malawi, Mexico, Myanmar, Nigeria, and the Philippines.

As the third Federation executive secretary in 38 years, I was honored to come after two of my personal mentors: Rev. Alton L. Wheeler, who had been my pastor when I was baptized, and Dr. K. Duane Hurley, the President-emeritus of Salem College.

To follow in the footsteps of these two Christian giants is indeed a humbling experience.

I am especially pleased to remember that during these past 22 years we have grown as a Federation. We received Poland, Nigeria, Kerala (India), South Africa, and—this year—Australia into membership during this time. We also held three of the four Federation sessions outside the United States: in New Zealand, Jamaica, and this year in Brazil. (The previous three gatherings—plus the founding meeting—had been hosted in the United States.)

This year, we took another giant step forward by electing an executive secretary from outside the United States. With Internet technology, communication around the world can now be done so much more quickly and efficiently. A person with English language skills and international experience could function very well in this position.

I am pleased that the Federation selected a long-time friend from the Netherlands, Rev. Fritz Nieuwstraten, to serve in this position. It helps that he comes to the U.S. at least twice a year on other business, and thus can meet with others on the Executive Committee face-to-face.

The Restructuring Committee that met during the sessions also made some significant recommendations to our Executive Committee. If implemented, the changes can move the Federation into the 21st century with the intention of growth for Seventh Day Baptists around the world.

At our sessions in February, we honored two of the three living signers of the original document that established the World Federation back in 1964. Rev. Joe Samuels and Naval

Harley, both representing Jamaica at that time, were recognized at the Sabbath service along with Rev. Jacob Tyrell of Guyana, who was unable to attend.

One of the most exciting developments in the Federation's work is the involvement of a new generation of young people. Of those listed as official delegates, four were in their 20s, five in their 30s, seven in their 40s, seven in their 50s, and six in their 60s. Having many other young people involved as observers and participants brings energy and excitement to our common mission—a hopeful vision for our work in the world.

As we gathered in Curitiba, Brazil, we once again brought together a group of people with very different cultures and backgrounds. Yet our common understanding of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord brought us together under the power of the Holy Spirit in such a way that we all were assured that God is at work among us, challenging us to share the Sabbath truth around the world.

Yes, I will miss the work of the Federation. But I am thankful for its growth during these years and the many international friendships it has nurtured.

I look forward to new opportunities in the future. Janet and I hope to visit SDB churches in other countries and to teach about our beliefs, history, and distinctives as a people of God.

I am excited about the potential for the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation as we continue to share as sister Conferences, reaching out around our world to bring God's love and Sabbath freedom through Christ. May God bless us all! **SR**



Women's Society page by Laura Price
www.sdbwboard.org

Women at Conference 2002

Perhaps you might have wondered what happened with women's interests at the 2002 General Conference in Houghton, N.Y.

The Conference **Committee on Women's Interests** thanked Pastor John and Linda Camenga for traveling to Australia to assist our sister churches there in making plans to implement their own Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC) Program.

Thanks also went to Missionary Society Executive Director Kirk Looper for sharing his knowledge of needs around the world where a Love Gift support would benefit; to J.P. Flint for his work in setting up and maintaining the Women's Board web site (www.sdbwboard.org); and to Kerith Camenga for chairing the 2002 Interest Committee, and Nadine Lawton for serving as secretary.

The SCSC **Craft Table** was very successful again in 2002. Many thanks to the ladies and gentlemen for making and bringing/sending crafts to Conference and to those who manned the craft tables. Sales and donations came to a grand total of \$1,930.50. We also thank all who gave support in any way to arrive at this figure.

Included in the total was a donation of \$300 received from Calvin Babcock in the silent auction for an "Old Testament Quilt" made and donated by the Ladies Aid Society of the Dodge Center (Minn.) SDB Church. These ladies made this a project of love, with the group doing the embroidery work and Marilyn Neher doing the piecework.

A Women's Board **Special Committee** went to work and lined up some wonderful talent to perform during meal times in the Houghton cafeteria. Their purpose was to "earn" money to help send two of our veteran SCSCers to Australia in January 2003 to start an SCSC program. This entertainment brought in a little over \$700 to launch the fund that will require about \$5,000.

What do you think the women at Conference will do this year in Oregon? Why not see for yourself and be a part of it?

Thanks to all of you who helped raise this money while you were so wonderfully entertaining us, and to all who enjoyed their fine talent and contributed to this worthy mission. (The total raised was \$6,289.95, and the excess will carry over for next year's Australian SCSC project.)

Eight-four women attended the annual **Business Luncheon**. The nominated officers/committees were duly elected, and the president and Ad Hoc Committee reports were given.

The Church Aid reports, materials from the Baptist World Alliance Department, and a "just off the press" booklet, *Seventh Day Baptist Women's Society By Laws and Board Procedures*, were distributed to those in attendance. The past year's officers

were recognized and thanked for their service to the Women's Board and to our Lord.

Women's Banquet—227 ladies enjoyed a delicious buffet and a wonderful evening of fellowship. We thank the ladies of the Nortonville (Kan.) SDB Church for the little jars of "colorful rocks" (delicious rock candy) for our table favors. Irene Saunders related the story of the "rocks," which were chosen because they went along with the Conference theme, "What Do These Stones Mean?"

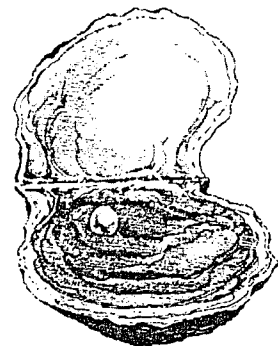
SCSCers Amy Goodrich and Maureen Siolo shared their testimonies and some of their summer experiences with the ladies. To the delight of all, Women's Board Banquet Committee member Gail Price shared a story, "Does God Dance on Your Potato Chips?"

While we were in the buffet lines and during our meal, we had the pleasure of listening to "dinner music" with SCSCer Brett Greene at the piano, accompanied by his sister, Aubrey Greene, playing the flute.

We were enthralled by our speaker/entertainer for the evening, Dr. Ralph Mackintosh, who held us in awe while performing his one-man illusions show. We extend our gratitude to all taking part in the program.

The **Love Gift** collection came to \$4,573. The total Love Gift amount at the close of September was \$5,558.

So, what do you think the women at Conference will do this year in Oregon? Why not see for yourself and be a part of it? Please come and fellowship with us. **SR**



Pearls from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian

Christian stewardship: The old, the new, and the biblical

The old

In perusing the *Sabbath Recorder* for January 17, 1861, an article on stewardship caught my attention. "Pew-Renting in a Popular Church" gave an account of the rental of pews in the Plymouth church in Brooklyn, N.Y., better known as the Henry Ward Beecher church.

"Each pew has a fixed valuation, which is marked on a printed diagram of the house, and the choice of pews is sold at auction to the highest bidder. For example, a certain pew is marked at \$120. Half a dozen people in the congregation want it, and bid a premium for it; the competition runs up the premium to \$130, making the price of the pew \$250 for the coming year.

"Such was the demand for sittings that every pew in the house was taken, not only at its marked valuation, but at a premium for the choice. Also, about fifty chairs in the aisles were sold at a premium. More chairs in the aisles would have been taken except for a rule of the church which reserves one-half of them free to strangers."

The report further showed that rentals for 1861 brought in \$29,050, with \$12,050 above the fixed value and \$16,660 paid in premiums. The rented aisle chairs brought in over \$500.

As I read this, my mind took me back to some of the church records for the Milton (Wis.) Seventh Day Baptist Church.

In 1852, when the first SDB church building was erected in Milton, the congregation apparently sold the pews to raise money for the building fund. In 1863, they appointed a committee "to see how many of the slip owners will be willing to donate their slips for the benefit of the church per year, provided three-fourths of the membership will do the same."

Two months later, the church minutes read, "Voted that each pew be allotted to the highest bidder, and that the present owner, if present, be allotted the first chance to bid." J.M. Greenman was the auctioneer and sold 32 of the pews, amounting to \$334.

When the Milton Junction (Wis.) SDB Church was established, one of the four reasons given for their withdrawal from the Milton church was that some felt that its pew or slip rentals were too high.

I could not find any mention in the minutes of renting stalls in the church's horse shed, but this was not an uncommon practice during those days. Today, I am aware that one of our churches has meters in their parking lot, but these are not operated on Sabbath day. (They do provide additional spaces where public parking stalls are at a premium during the week.)

The new

My eye also caught an article in the January 2003 issue of *Baptists Today*, reporting on a new plan that many churches have already adopted to help with current finances. The piece was entitled, "Churches Now Taking Credit Cards to Fill Coffers." The opening paragraph stated:

"These days it seems almost every-

body takes credit cards. Even God. While you won't find credit card terminals in many churches and synagogues, a growing number are accepting donations by systematic billing to credit cards. This approach allows people to donate to religious groups in the same way they pay their utilities or other monthly bills."

I have had people order books from the Historical Society and then ask if they can pay by credit card. Others have inquired if they could pay Conference registration fees with their credit cards. The cost of Conference travel, housing, and meals—particularly if youngsters are going to Pre-Con—can strain the bank accounts of many families.

A group called "Parish Pay" has created a service which preserves confidentiality by allowing no one in a church to see a family's account number.

"If you have a credit card number lying around a church office," the group notes, "God knows what will happen!" Parish Pay gets one percent of each donation, plus a one dollar service fee.

Some churches which have gone to electronic withdrawals point out that donating by credit cards or checks allows people to be more intentional in their giving. *Does my giving reflect where I am in my spiritual life? Am I spending more money on cable television than I'm giving to the church?*

The article went on to say that churches are often wary of credit cards because they are concerned about the credit card debt people are piling up. On the other hand,

cont. on page 26

Conference reports from around the world

Updates and prayer concerns from the last five years

Brazil

Updates:

An increase in membership from 1,832 to 2,819. Sabbath School attendance grew from 2,300 to 3,300. There are 90 established churches and many home fellowships, with 9 new churches.

Pray for:

The need for more pastors, and for financial resources for training and education.

The Philippines

Updates:

The two groups of SDBs merged last year to become the Seventh Day Baptist Churches in the Philippines, Inc. (SDBCPI). Sixty-five people were baptized and two new churches organized. Five T.I.M.E. graduates, with 18 now enrolled.

Pray for:

Continued unification between the two SDB groups.

Guyana

Updates:

There are 10 churches and a number of outreach groups, with 600 members. Two young men are at the Guyana Bible College, while four are in T.I.M.E.

Pray for:

"Camp Glory" outreach program in Surinam, and a new telephone prayer and counseling ministry. Also for a caretaker to tend the coconut, citrus, and pine plants that the Lord has entrusted to them.

Australia

Updates:

This newly-received Association has learned that to be a church, you need to be a team. There are two churches in Brisbane, one in Melbourne, one in Sydney, and two in Argentina. They have sent young people to the U.S. to train in SCSC and plan to start their own summer program.

Pray for:

Upcoming seminars, a pastors' retreat in June, and camps in September and January. One goal is to plant a church in each capital city by 2005.

Jamaica

Updates:

Three new groups formed after mass crusades. Eight graduates from Jamaica Bible Institute, with 14 now

enrolled. The Conference is celebrating its 80th anniversary.

Pray for:

Completion of their Conference Centre and future evangelistic activities (modeled after Evangelism Explosion).

Netherlands

Updates:

Working jointly with other Sabbathkeepers, the Sabbath issue has been proclaimed via newspapers, TV, and radio. There is an active group called SIYO (young people keeping the Sabbath).

Pray for:

Outreach for the homeless that provides food and the Gospel.

Central Africa

Updates:

There are 200 churches, four clinics, six schools, and one secondary school. Their main objective is to evangelize.

Pray for:

Reconciliation from a church split; recovery from natural disasters; and the HIV/AIDs epidemic.

USA and Canada

Updates:

Overall membership seems to be in decline, yet there are new churches being started along with an exciting increase in activity among the young people.

Pray for:

Upcoming transitions in denominational leadership and possible realignment of executive tasks.

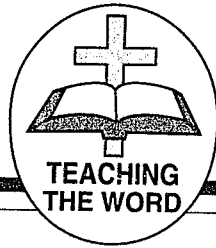
South Africa

Updates:

Work continues in translating material into the indigenous languages. Ten recent baptisms and seven currently in baptismal class.

Pray for:

A distance-learning program to train church leaders; the AIDs epidemic.



Christian Education

by Andrew J. Camenga

You can be a good teacher

Not only are you a teacher; you can be a good teacher. With God's love and equipping in your life, you can be used by Him to teach others.

Every Christian is, in some way, included in the commission that Jesus gave to the disciples. We are one body and called to help build one another toward the fullness of the maturity of Christ. While we are all teachers, some of us are called to that designated role and need help to become better instructors.

Maybe you knew the phone call was coming. This year the committee was having a hard time finding people who could commit to teaching a Sabbath School class. You had taught in the past and had let them know that you'd be willing to do it again.

Or maybe the call took you by surprise. You had never thought of yourself as a Bible Study leader and yet when asked to lead, the words, "Sure, I'll do it," slipped from your lips.

Or maybe, the last thing you really wanted to do was to give up a week to help teach Vacation Bible School and you knew that your help would significantly reduce the stress of others, so you agreed. In any case, you accepted an important role and can now change lives.

In the Christian life, teaching is important for a variety of reasons. One of the most significant is that God has given all Christians responsibility for teaching each other. Another reason is the simple reality that teaching brings about change in the lives of others. This change can be exciting. As a teacher, you have the



As a teacher, you have the firsthand opportunity to witness the "eureka" moments in others. You can watch students change in their perception of the world and their reactions to it.

firsthand opportunity to witness the "eureka" moments in others. You can watch students change in their perception of the world and their reactions to it.

As a teacher, you learn to see the world in new ways and are enlightened by the questions and insights of the people you teach. Christian teachers help learners grow, even as the teachers grow. Because your

teaching is important, improving your ability to teach is important. While improving your skills will require work on your part, there are resources that can make that work easier.

After the Bible, I have three books that are an immense help in thinking about and practicing Christian Education. They are: Ernest K. Bee's, *The Teaching Leader*; Israel Galindo's, *The Craft of Christian Teaching*, and from Elmer Towns, *What Every Sunday School Teacher Should Know*.

The subtitle of Towns' book, *24 Secrets That Can Help You Change Lives*, indicates both the thrust and the structure of his book. In 163 pages, he includes 24 chapters that share the wisdom he has gathered from more than 40 years of teaching.

Towns' gathered wisdom is valuable. Each short chapter focuses on the teacher, the student, or the act of teaching, and reveals or reinforces some of the best practices that Christian teachers can follow.

The book reminds us that we can make a difference, that we are equipped by God, and that prayer is crucial. It presents a good method for preparing a lesson every week and explains how to incorporate teaching methods that reach out to people who learn in different ways. It also challenges us to watch for moments when the Gospel can be presented and then to help people with those early steps in their Christian walk.

For those of you who are looking for a book that will help you become better at the teaching tasks assigned to you, consider this book. It is well worth the cost. **SR**



FOCUS Outreach on Missions in Brazil

by Kirk Looper

A leisurely trip to Paraná, Brazil, will place you at ease as you meet a group of Seventh Day Baptists who are active in their churches and excited about your visit. They will view you as a guest and treat you with special attention.

While attending the World Federation sessions in Paraná in February, their excitement for the work of God's Kingdom was also evident. They are eager to expand their ministry and move into difficult-to-reach regions. We were pleased to learn that they plan to send pastors into these areas to establish SDB churches in spite of the danger of traveling up the Amazon and its tributaries.

Speaking with those who minister in outlying areas, we learned that many tracts and study materials need to be translated into the local languages. These ministers can use the Conference office's computer, but they also need a photocopier

The Brazilians would like to participate in the International T.I.M.E. program, believing it can encourage new pastors.

that can reproduce the necessary materials to train leaders and educate new members. We pray that the Missionary Society receives enough funds to meet this need.

The materials they are translating can be used in other countries where the main language is also Portuguese. Presently, they translate the *Helping Hand* into Portuguese and share it with congregations in Mozambique, Africa. These copies could possibly be sent to their contacts in Portugal.



Kirk Looper (standing, second from right) met with these SDB pastors from Brazil. Magda, a seminarian from Curitiba (seated, right) served as translator.

They would like to participate in the International T.I.M.E. (Training In Ministry by Extension) program, believing it can encourage new pastors. We urged them to continue with the T.I.M.E. program, and will send them the materials that we use in other countries.

These books relate to the study topics. The materials provide answers faster than the older T.I.M.E. materials and can be located more easily. We had hoped that the study books could be purchased in Portuguese, but those translations are unavailable. So, they will have to study in English, which is a slower process but still effective.

In our discussions with our Brazilian brethren, they indicated that they are interested in reaching out to bordering countries. They need help to train and instruct several of the "missionaries" who will implement this project. This will entail study at both the local level and some seminary classes.

I explained that there are those who are willing to donate funds to help in this outreach, but we need to be patient, waiting for the Holy Spirit to move the hearts of those searching for a worthy cause to support.

Our Brazilian friends would like to see some of their members "activated" in the United States. We received the addresses of several of these people and contacted them, asking if they would be interested in visiting a nearby SDB church or starting one in their own area.

We are open to anyone interested in this type of outreach. Just send your name and address to:

*SDB Missionary Society
119 Main St.
Westerly, RI 02891*

Or contact us by e-mail: sdbmissoc@mindspring.com.

We encourage Seventh Day Baptists from Brazil to contact us, also. We would enjoy helping you find fellowship with those who believe as you do. **SR**



the BEACON

Produced by the Youth Committee of the Board of Christian Education
For and by members of the SDB Youth Fellowship

April 2003

Neither angels nor demons

by Aubrey Appel

Few would guess that nestled in the sunshiny, mountainous beauty of California, a filthy, soot-black battle is ensuing.

When I first saw Rocky Peterson, I was definitely not thinking "rugged warrior." That is because, looking through my own eyes, I couldn't see what was and has been going on all around me, in every part of the world. But looking through God's eyes, our earth is the greatest battlefield ever designed.

The Annual SDB Young Adult Winter Retreat at Rancho Ybarra Christian Camp in Southern California was a rousing success. And we had fun, too!

Rocky is from the Foothill Community Church (SDB) in Montrose, Calif. Each day, he shared how the Lord uses him and can use us. He is a wonderful, down-to-earth, loving man who kicks demons out of people's lives.

Rocky must have shared a hundred stories with us, telling how he—with Christ's authority—commanded demons to leave people. He also told of using prayer to heal people who had chronic illnesses.

Rocky prayed with us and guided us to pray for each other.

On December 31, we each looked into our own lives for "garbage to clean out of our closets." We prayed alone or with a small

group, and then gathered to burn pieces of paper representing our garbage. We also celebrated Communion to bring in the new year. It was a time of cleansing, crying, and rejoicing. Praise the Lord for gathering us in His name, and for opening our eyes and hearts!

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). SR



Lower right: Crystal Butler and Peter Osborn enjoying the sunshine.
Above: Retreaters surprised the camp owner by cleaning the grounds. With tools at the ready (l. to r.): Brandon Parker, Anna Mackintosh, and Andre Mackintosh.



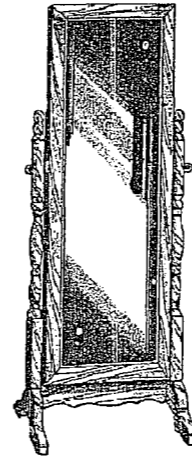
Bethany Thompson and Ginny Burdick blowing kisses.



Aubrey Appel and Brandon Parker take a break.



Lower right: Crystal Butler and Peter Osborn enjoying the sunshine.



Reflections by Leanne Lippincott

"Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face."—1 Cor. 13:12

Mom made faith real

colorful drawings and geared towards children. (And they certainly weren't stories on an audio or video tape!) I remember feeling special because Mom took the time to read to me, even at the end of a long, busy day.

My mother made certain that all three of her children said table grace and bedtime prayers. She wrote the

sleep..." Hopefully, God considered my tender age and figured "it's the thought that counts."

I'm grateful that my mother saw to it that I was baptized and confirmed, attended Sunday School, and took part in the annual Christmas Eve Children's Service. (My knees *still* shake every time I think about the verses I had to memorize and then recite in front of a packed congregation.)

Mom read devotions after supper and made it a priority that I was raised in a Christian home, which wasn't always easy. At the time, she didn't always have Dad's wholehearted support when it came to spiritual matters. Later, at my own behest, I taught Sunday School and sang in the church choir.

It's difficult to fathom that there are children in our country—even in our own hometowns—who have never heard the salvation message. Some of them wouldn't recognize a Christian home if it fell on their heads, à la the witch in the Wizard of Oz. But the story of Christ and his sacrifice is no fairy tale, and children everywhere should have it ingrained on their hearts at an early age. All of us can help do that.

I really miss Mom, but I wouldn't wish her back for even an instant. Instead of this "veil of tears," she now knows more joy, peace, and beauty than any of us can ever imagine.

Every time I try to "picture" Mom's voice in my mind, I hear God's voice instead. A smile mixes with my tears as those sweet words fill my head and heart: "Well done, good and faithful servant. ...Come and share your master's happiness" (Matt. 25:21, NIV). SR

On January 31st, my 85-year-old mother, Bernice Martinsen, went home to be with the Lord.

Mom's life was a frustrating mixture of good times and bad as she fought a lifelong battle with anxiety and clinical depression. Her last few years were especially difficult as her quality of life faded and her "earthly tent" shrunk to 70 pounds. As difficult as things were, she was able to live at home with my 90-year-old father until five days before her death. I'll always be grateful for that.

For as long as I can remember, I've had difficulty coping with Mom's illness and its far-reaching effects. But her affliction has also been a blessing to me over the years. It brought me closer to God, which helped me immensely when I later fought my own battles with anxiety and depression.

When I focus on my mother's "good days," I'm reminded of the many times when seemingly insignificant experiences later helped mold me into the person I am today—a blessed child of God.

Mom's maiden name was Kutz, not Bond, Burdick, or Green. With all of her relatives migrating to the United States from Germany, her religious heritage was Lutheran, not Seventh Day Baptist.

One of my earliest memories of Mom is sitting on her bed at night while she read from a devotional book. They weren't easy-to-listen-to Bible stories, illustrated with large,



1953
One of my earliest memories of Mom is sitting on her bed at night while she read from a devotional book.

following in my baby book: "Leanne kneels by the bed real cute while Jimmy says his prayers. She doesn't know what he's saying, but she folds her hands anyway."

I smile whenever I think of my favorite bedtime prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep..." For years, I thought I was praying for lost sheep. As in, "Now my lamby, down to

I am in Christ

The President's Page - April 2003

George Cruzan

How do you behave and think in your everyday activities?

When we are at church or engaged in activities with other Christians, we are expected to behave as Christ would. Therefore, it is relatively easy to keep a proper appearance, to "talk Christian," to look out for the needs of others.

But what happens when we are "out in the world," where no one knows we are Christian? No one expects us to behave in a certain way, or talk in a certain way. We can blend in with those around us and no one cares. Except God.

Shortly after I started working for one company, I met with several "higher-up" managers. The meeting was tense. I don't remember what the crisis was, but one of the managers uttered a curse word, which I had grown used to hearing and ignoring.

What I do remember is that manager turned to me and apologized for his utterance; not to the group in general, but specifically to me. Why? I had never "preached" to people on the job about Christianity. I don't think that I had ever complained to anyone at

this worksite about the language. But for some reason, I stood out to him.

Another incident occurred when I had been there about six months. The secretary in our group and I were talking (I don't recall what about) when she shocked me. Out of the blue she said, "George, you will never advance very far in this organization because you are too nice."

Her comment got me thinking. *Which is more important? To behave as Christ would want, or advance to the top at work?* The decision was not difficult.

An area that has often been a problem for me is "idiot drivers." It is easy to get upset when someone pulls out in front of you and then immediately stops traffic to make a left turn, especially when there is no one behind you. (Of course, I would never do anything like that.) My reactions have not always been "in Christ."

When people interact with you in the "real" world, do they think of Christ?

Conference will meet at George Fox University, Newberg, Ore., August 3-9, 2003. Come for spiritual growth. The worship and study activities will be centered on living in Christ. **SR**

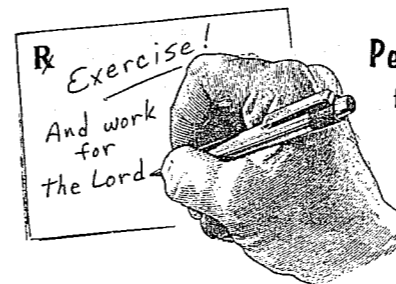
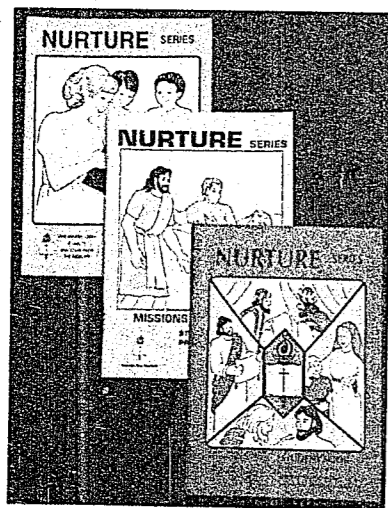
Nurture Series re-do

The *Nurture Series* helps children and youth grow in their Christian experience by understanding God's Sabbath Day and our mission and history as a covenant people.

After more than 10 years of use, the series needs to be recreated, which will take several years. We need monetary gifts to help us write, prepare, and print this new edition.

Please send your check (memo: "Nurture Series Support") to:

SDB Board of Christian Education
P.O. Box 115
Alfred Station, NY 14803



Pete's Prescriptions

from Dr. Pete May,
Executive Secretary

Keep in touch

*"Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud.
And He shall hear my voice" (Psalm 55:17).*

Jake, the rancher, went one day to fix a distant fence. The wind was cold and gusty, and the clouds rolled gray and dense. As he pounded the last staples in and gathered tools to go, the temperature had fallen, wind and snow began to blow. When he finally reached his pickup, he felt a heavy heart; from the sound of that ignition, he knew it wouldn't start. So Jake did what most would do if we had been there. He humbly bowed his balding head and sent aloft a prayer. As he turned the key for one last time, he softly cursed his luck. They found him three days later, frozen stiff in that old truck.

Now Jake had been around in life and done his share of roaming, but when he saw Heaven, he was shocked—looked just like Wyoming! Of all the saints in Heaven, his favorite was St. Peter. (Now, this here line ain't needed but it helps with rhyme and meter.) So they set and talked a minute or two, or maybe it was three. Nobody was keeping score; in Heaven, time is free. "I've always heard," Jake said to Pete, "that God will answer prayer. But one time I asked for help, well, He just plain wasn't there. "Does God answer prayers of some and ignore the prayers of others? That don't seem exactly square—I know all men are brothers. Or does he randomly reply, without good rhyme or reason? Maybe it's the time of day, the weather, or the season...

"Now I ain't trying to act smart, it's just the way I feel. And I was wondering, could you tell me, what the heck's the deal?"

Peter listened very patiently and when ol' Jake was done, there were smiles of recognition, when he said, "So, you're the one!!

"That day your truck, it wouldn't start, and you sent your prayer a flying, you gave us all a real bad time, with hundreds of us trying.

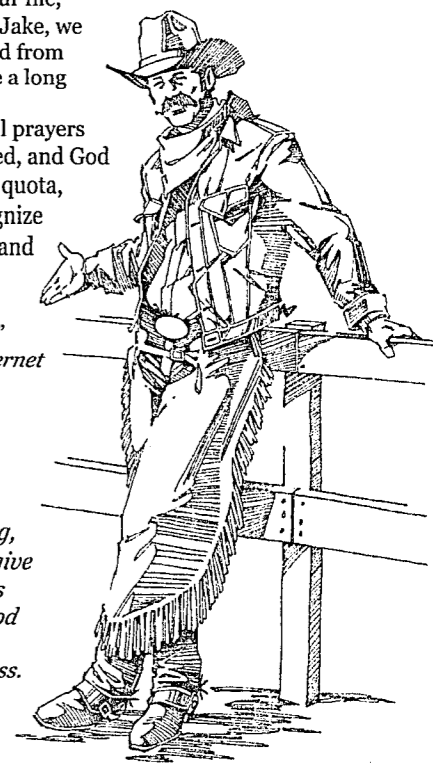
A thousand angels rushed to check the status of your file, but you know, Jake, we hadn't heard from you in quite a long while.

"And though all prayers are answered, and God ain't got no quota, He didn't recognize your voice, and started a truck in Minnesota."

—from the Internet

Better keep in touch

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:16-18). SR



Marlboro's wonderful news!

Here at the Marlboro SDB Church (near Bridgeton, N.J.) we were without a pastor for almost three years. During that time, we were able to maintain the activities of our church.

We met each Sabbath morning for worship, our choir practiced on Thursday nights, the Ladies Aid did service projects, we printed our church newsletter from time to time, and we held fellowship dinners. The "usual" business of the church continued as everyone pitched in to keep things going. This resulted in us becoming a stronger, closer-knit group.

Guest ministers filled the pulpit most Sabbath mornings, and we planned and led the services quite often ourselves. Thankfully, along with keeping the business of the church going, we were able to keep ourselves fed spiritually. But that's not all a church is for. The church is here to reach others, to grow, to make a difference. We were able to "maintain," but we needed someone to lead us to more.

On October 19, 2002, our new pastor gave his first sermon as shepherd of the Marlboro SDB Church. In his sermon, he noted that it was time for the Marlboro church to set some goals and to start moving forward. When Rev. Robert Babcock gave that sermon, we knew that our prayerful search for a pastor had been successful.

Since then, we have gotten better acquainted with Pastor Bob, his wife, Nelta, and their granddaughter, Lorian. We have been blessed by having their family become part of our church family.

Pastor Bob's sermons are inspiring and thought-provoking. He gives us much to think on and to pray about. In February, we began a series of discussion meetings to help us discover where God wants to lead our church.

The Marlboro congregation is praising the Lord! We are thankful for the minister He has sent us, and we are excited about our future. **SR**

The Central SDB Church of Mitchellville, Md., held a special installation service on March 1, 2003, to welcome their new pastor, Justin Ryan Hibbard. Rev. Gabriel Bejjani represented the SDB Council on Ministry.

As a 1999 graduate of Annapolis (Md.) Area Christian School, Justin continued his education at Houghton (N.Y.) College, graduating last December. On February 15, 2003, he married Karlene Neher in the Dodge Center (Minn.) SDB Church.

Pastor Justin served with the Summer Christian Service Corps in White Cloud, Mich. The following year, he toured the country with the SDB music ministry group, Stained Glass.

We are humbled and encouraged to have such a vibrant young adult ministering in our church.

Church dedicates new elevator

With 18.5 percent of our county 60 or older, with a growing population of persons who are physically impaired, and with our outdoor lift having served both its purpose and its time, the Alfred Station (N.Y.) SDB church made a faith decision to install an indoor elevator.

Amid the fears and concerns about costs, the leadership of our Heavenly Father took over during a church business meeting, and we made an indoor elevator a priority of ministry.

The apostle James tells us, "Faith without works is dead being alone." We needed financial resources, so individuals gave sacrificial gifts to make all this happen, for which we say "thank you!"

The SDB Memorial Fund bestowed a major blessing by giving us a

grant to help accomplish this work. The members of the Richburg, N.Y., SDB Church continued their ministry by giving us a monetary blessing, for which we praise the Lord.

We also needed human resources. Men and women of our congregation gave of their time, energy, and skills for months in order to install the elevator. This was yet another way our church proclaimed, "There are no second-class worshippers."

On Sabbath afternoon, January 19, 2003, we held a simple service in the vestibule to dedicate the new elevator. As a gathered community, we recognized the work of God by singing "Amazing Grace." We then acknowledged our blessings by sharing in the Lord's Prayer.

The co-chairpersons of our Trust-

ees honored those who had worked so diligently on the installation. They presented a certificate—framed by actual pieces of the old steps—to Lyle Sutton for being the foreman and ramrod, and to John Wood as the chief architect and engineer.

Pastor Patricia Bancroft of the First SDB Church of Alfred, N.Y., offered a prayer of blessing. Church President Rod Noel then cut the ribbon and, with clasped hands, we declared our commitment to ministry by singing "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love."

As with most traditional SDB celebrations, there was food. A reception followed where we ministered God's grace in fellowship with one another. **SR**

—From the "Quest" newsletter

Beautiful music together

by Julie Perine

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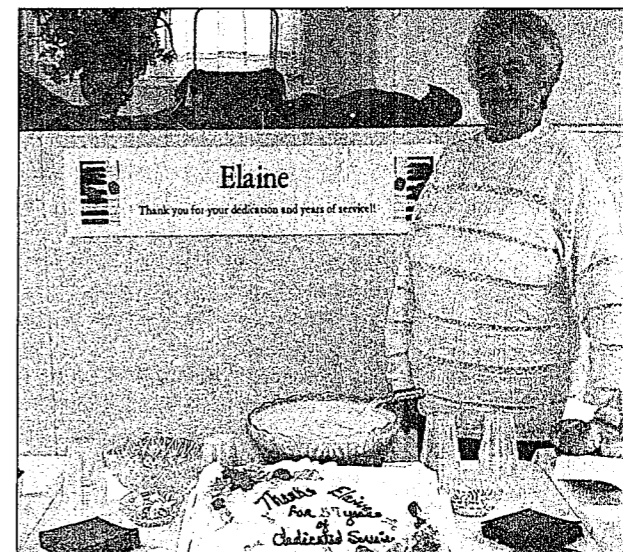
With dedication in her heart, Elaine Kennedy served as organist for the Lost Creek (W.Va.) Seventh Day Baptist Church for 57 years. With tears in her eyes, she accepted a plaque of recognition at the church's service and fellowship dinner on January 4.

"I had no idea anything was going on," said Kennedy. "It was a very pleasant surprise."

Kennedy, 80, who recently decided it was time to step down as the church's organist, has been part of a musical family since she was a little girl. Known then as Lola Elaine Sands, she said she took piano lessons weekly.

"My dad was quite a singer," said Kennedy. "He sang a lot at the McWhorter Methodist Church."

As a young woman, Elaine served as pianist for that church. Once mar-



Organist Elaine Kennedy was honored for 57 years of musical service to the Lost Creek, W. Va., SDB Church.

Photo by Virginia Harding

ried, however, she joined the Lost Creek SDB Church. "One day they asked me to fill in as organist, and I have done it since!" she said.

**"I feel that this is a talent
God has given me and that I should
use it for His service."**

ried, however, she joined the Lost Creek SDB Church.

"One day they asked me to fill in as organist, and I have done it since!" she said.

She does not seem to have minded at all. "I feel that this is a talent God has given me and that I should use it for His service," said Kennedy.

Retired from the Harrison County Board of Education, Kennedy served 32 years as a school secretary. She worked most recently at South Harrison High School and previously at Lost Creek High School, where she played piano for the school choir.

on an oyster dinner, a fund-raiser for the community's Christmas luminaries.

According to neighbor and friend Virginia Harding, Kennedy also organizes a block party each year and hosts it right in her own back yard.

"She is just a good neighbor—she is like family," said Harding. "If somebody is sick or in the hospital, she will call and find out what she can do to help."

Pastor Don Shackelford and his wife, Pat, have been with the church just slightly more than one year.

"I have been impressed by Elaine's

leadership and commitment to serving in the church and community," said Shackelford. "I'm glad we were able to commend her for 57 years of faithfulness at the organ."

Cindy Lawrence said in the more than 40 years that she has attended the church, Kennedy has missed very few services.

"Unless she is ill or there is a family situation, she is there," said Lawrence.

She said it is obvious how much Kennedy enjoys playing organ music for her church.

"She sits up there very proud," Lawrence said. "I have always loved to watch and hear her play."

Elaine has been lifelong friends with Lawrence's mother, who has leukemia. [*Cindy's mom, Mary Susan Bond, passed away on January 13. Her obituary is on page 25.*]

"She has been an awesome friend to my mom," said Lawrence. "Mrs. K. is the kind of person who is concerned about another's needs and problems."

According to Lawrence, Kennedy's

cont. on next page

Beautiful music, *cont. from page 23*

musical contributions to the church are many.

"When the church had a choir, she played piano for them" said Lawrence. "She also served for years as an officer of the church's Music Committee."

Pat Shackelford said Kennedy's commitment is typical of what she has seen since she has been with the nearly 200-year-old church.

"They are very dedicated people," she said. "They tell us some pretty phenomenal stories."

At least for the present, Shackelford will assume Kennedy's duties as organist.

"We're not considering this a retirement," said Shackelford. "She just won't have the ongoing responsibility."

She said Kennedy has been asked to continue to play for the church's closing numbers.

At the January 4 service, Elaine did just that. After receiving a plaque and flowers for her faithful service, she once again played for the church's Communion service.

"I plan to do what I can as long as I can," said Kennedy. "As age creeps up on you, you have to give up a lot."

Elaine said although her church is small, it produces many good works. She is involved in its monthly outreach efforts, which she plans to continue.

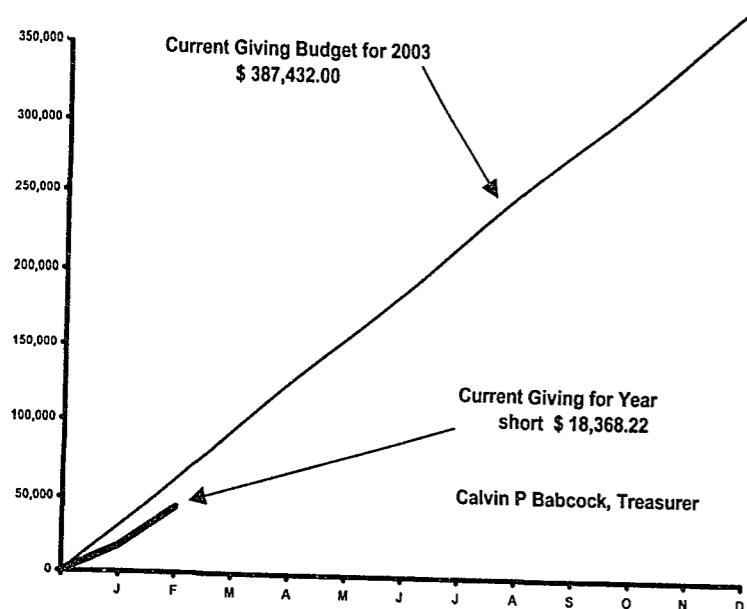
"My church family is very important," said Kennedy. "I feel like we are here to help others and when you can't, there's no use to be here."

Kennedy said she has always loved playing the hymn, "Let's Just Praise the Lord."

Lawrence said she will forever think of Elaine when she hears that song. **SR**

Note: Elaine Kennedy's husband, Gene, passed away in 1979 at the age of 57. Her son, Gene, lives with her in Lost Creek; and her daughter, Judy Hartzell, lives in the Clarksburg area. Her daughter, Jane Reinhold, lives in South Bend, Ind. Kennedy also has four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Current Giving 2003



Births

Noyes.—A daughter, Johannah Cristine Vivace Noyes, was born to Charles and Melodie Noyes of Kent, WA, on August 17, 2000.

Uhlich.—A daughter, Rebecca Rose Uhlich, was born to Ronald and Karen Uhlich of Kent, WA, on September 1, 2002.

Dutcher.—A daughter, Julia Leanne Dutcher, was born to Jamie and Jennifer (Lippincott) Dutcher of Janesville, WI, on January 17, 2003.

Pistulka.—A son, Zachary Michael Pistulka, was born to Troy and Joi (Rice) Pistulka of Grand Island, NE, on January 30, 2003.

Stall.—A daughter, Lexia Taylor Stall, was born to David and Jennifer Stall of Petersburg, NY, on February 8, 2003.

Marriage

Hemminger - Cairnes.—Gary Hemminger and Pamela Cairnes were united in marriage on June 2, 2002, at Flaming Geyser Park in Auburn, WA, with Pastor Ken Burdick officiating.

New members

Berlin, NY
Matthew Olson, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Erin Hogan
 Colby May
 Emmelia May
 Brittany Thomas

Obituaries

August.—Holly L. August, 41, of Atchison, Kan., died on December 13, 2002, at St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Mo.

She was born in Corpus Christi, Texas, on December 27, 1960, to Clarence and Anna Mary (Quick) Thornton. When Holly was 5 years old, her mother died. She attended school in Corpus Christi and later attained her General Education Diploma while living in Texas. She also took some college classes.

On July 21, 1991, she married David August in Atchison. The couple lived on the August farm where David had lived as a child.

Holly volunteered at her children's school in Cummings, Kan., and was a member of the Nortonville, Kan., Seventh Day Baptist Church. She was a happy person who shared herself with family and non-family members alike.

In addition to her husband, David, of Atchison, survivors include her parents—her father, Clarence, of Atchison, and Mrs. Reeves; her mother-in-law, Ruby August, and one son, E.J. Moore III, both of Atchison; two daughters, Kaleigh Rae and Haylea Mayann August, both at home; one brother, Dale Scott Jr. of Corpus Christi; two sisters, Mary Lee Stasney and Anna Marie Martin, both of Atchison; and two grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her mother, Anna; one son, Winston Lyndale Moore; and one brother, Larry Dewitt Thornton.

Services were held on December 18, 2002, at the Nortonville SDB Church, with Rev. Stephan Saunders officiating. Interment was in Mount Vernon Cemetery, Atchison.

Maxson.—Ruby Clace (Harbert) Maxson, 84, of Berlin, N.Y., died on December 31, 2002, at Hoosick Falls Health Center.

She was born on January 11, 1918, near Lumberport, W.Va., the young-

est child of Harold Alfred and Phoebe Jane (Heldreth) Harbert. She graduated from Lumberport's high school in 1934 and, at her elder sister's urging, enrolled at Salem (W.Va.) College. Ruby was the only one in her immediate family to go to college.

Since her family was quite poor, she had to finance her own education by taking on a variety of jobs. These ranged from working as a secretary for the college's president, to doing laundry for a local family.

While at college, Ruby met the man who was to become her husband, a ministerial student from Gentry, Ark., Paul Leland Maxson. On November 27, 1936, they were married in the Seventh Day Baptist parsonage in Lost Creek, W.Va.

After Ruby graduated from Salem in 1938, the couple moved to Alfred, N.Y., so that Paul could attend seminary there. Upon his graduation in 1940, they moved to Berlin, N.Y., and began their ministry at the Berlin SDB Church.

The years they spent in Berlin were busy ones. In addition to helping her husband fulfill the biblical mandates of ministry, Ruby raised two daughters and taught business classes at the local high school for 35 years. Attending summer schools, she earned her Master's degree from Albany University.

Survivors include her two daughters, Eunice Barber of Petersburg, N.Y., and Maryann Bullinger of Berlin; five grandsons, one granddaughter, and two great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband; two sisters, Ninnie and Thelma; and one brother, Lankford.

A memorial service was held on January 4, 2003, at the Berlin SDB Church. Interment was private.

Bond.—Mary Susan (Stutler) Bond, 71, of Lost Creek, W.Va., died peacefully at home on January 13, 2003.

She was born on May 26, 1931, in Jarvisville, W.Va., the daughter of Loren "Happy" and Wilma "Billie" (Post) Stutler.

Mary was a member of the Lost Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church, participating in its Ladies Aid and on various church boards. She was also active in Lost Creek Senior Citizens, Bi Nutrition, and the Walk for St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

Over the years, Mary's pride in and love for her family kept her involved in everything from band and athletic boosters in the 1970s-1990s, to following her grandchildren to Florida for athletic events.

She was a warm, generous soul who always put the needs of others ahead of her own.

Survivors include four daughters, Debra Novotny, Denise Fenstermacher, Cindy Lawrence, and Lori Moreno, all of Lost Creek; two sons, Michael and Mark, both of Lost Creek; 13 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas C. Bond, in 1986; one brother, Robert Stutler; and one sister, Ellen Losh.

Funeral services were held on January 16, 2003, at the Lost Creek SDB Church, with Pastors Don Shackelford and Richard Wilson officiating. Interment followed at the Lost Creek SDB Cemetery.

Brock.—Ruth S. Brock, 93, of Coudersport, Pa., died on February 6, 2003, at the Lakeview Senior Care and Living Center in Smethport, Pa.

She was born on February 11, 1909, in Hebron Township, the daughter of Will and Mabel (Clark) Scott. On May 4, 1929, she married Ronald C. Brock. He died in 1976.

Ruth graduated from Coudersport High School and attended Mansfield (Pa.) State Teachers College. She

cont. on next page

taught at the former Hydorn School in Hebron Township.

She was a faithful member of the First SDB Church of Hebron for 44 years, serving many years as a Sabbath School and Vacation Bible School teacher. She was active in the Women's Study and Serve Society, and had worked as assistant cook at Camp Harley Sutton. She was also a member of the former Hebron Grange #1251.

Survivors include two sons, Robert of Port Allegany, Pa., and William of Coudersport; two daughters, Joan Hagan of Saint Marys, Pa., and Betty "Dee" Hardey of Port Allegany; two sisters, Florence Metzger and Lucille Barnett, both of Coudersport; 20 grandchildren, 40 great-grandchildren, eight great-great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by one daughter, Barbara Duell; two brothers, John and Kenneth Scott; and one grandson, Jeffrey Alan Brock.

Funeral and committal services were held on February 11, 2003, at the First SDB Church of Hebron, with T. Lee Bennett, interim pastor, officiating. Burial was in the Woodland Cemetery, Hebron.

Todd.—M. Lucile Todd, 91, of Milton, Wis., died on February

14, 2003, at Mercy Hospital in Janesville, Wis.

She was born on May 9, 1911, in Elba, Neb., the daughter of Asa Leigh and Delia Miriam (Monroe) Prentice, the third of four children. In the early 1920s, the Prentice family moved to Kansas.

She attended Nortonville, Kan., public schools and graduated from Nortonville High School. She attended Milton College from 1930-32, then returned to Kansas to attend Pittsburg State College. She trained as a teacher and taught in rural schools throughout Kansas, including the Lane School just outside of Nortonville, and a school in Whiting, Kan.

On June 12, 1935, she married R. Loyal Todd in Milton.

Lucile was raised a Seventh Day Baptist and continued to worship with SDBs until her death. She was an active member of the Milton SDB Church, especially involved with its annual Turkey Supper.

She held numerous offices as a longtime member of the Milton Grange, and worked at Milton College and the historic Milton House for many years. Although she never joined the Mayflower Society, she was descended from five of that ship's passengers.

In addition to her husband of 67 years, survivors include two

children, James Todd of LeCenter, Minn., and Patricia Todd of Redmond, Ore.; one brother, William Prentice of Leavenworth, Kan.; one grandson, five nieces and nephews, five great-nieces and nephews, and three great-great-nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by two sisters, and one niece and nephew.

A memorial service was held on February 22, 2003, at Edgerton (Wis.) Memorial Community Hospital, with Pastor George Calhoun officiating. Burial will be in Milton Cemetery.

Death Notices

R. Wendell Burdick, 81, of Albuquerque, N.M., died on January 22, 2003.

Thelma (Pierce) Hurley Hall, 81, of Sherrill, N.Y., died on February 19, 2003.

Constance "Connie" Coon, 76, of Belmont, N.Y., died on February 28, 2003.

Etta North O'Connor, 91, of North Plainfield, N.J., died on March 9, 2003.

K E V I N ' S

O R N E R

It was probably the last thing most people would purchase on a wintry December day in Maine. I'm glad that I'm not "most people."

In two months, Janet and I would be in Brazil, and that weather would be a far cry from the *frigido* climate up north. February in Brazil would be like August in Miami, and I despise hot weather. (Now watch, the Lord will call me to Florida or Arizona...)

I found it in one of those personal gadget/travel specialty shops at the mall: a variable-speed, powerful yet whisper-quiet personal fan. This was not one of those whiny handheld models. This baby took four D-size batteries and really put out the rpms.

Do you know how much weight a dozen of those big batteries adds to your luggage?

After arriving in Brazil, my new toy went everywhere I went. Sure, people stared and pointed, but when the temperatures started soaring, I thought, *Look who's laughing now!!* (Insert maniacal laughter here: Bwah-Hah!)

Two of the local teenage boys seemed to be tickled the most. I soon found out why.

"They have given you a new name," an interpreter said.

"Oh?" I replied.

"Yes." Then he rattled off something in Portuguese.

"And that means?" I asked.

The teens started giggling. I expected the worst.

"Well," the interpreter continued, "Basically, it means 'Fan Man.'"

And that's how the legend began. (It was fun to hear the Brazilians yell "Fan Man" in English. It's one way to teach them our language.)

On the night before we were to leave for home, we had a little variety show and evening of fellowship. I felt that it was time to pass the mantle.

I asked the emcee, Luciano, if I could say a few words. Stepping up to the podium—with my fan, of course—I asked Jonas Sommer, the main worker from the Conference office, to come forward.

Jonas had done so much work for all of us, and he had become a special friend. Trying to sound as official as possible, I thanked Jonas for his successful work of the week. As Luciano translated, he looked painfully puzzled when I said, "And I hereby declare..."

"Okay," I continued, "I now say to you..."

Luciano "got" that, and translated.

"I say to you, Jonas Sommer," handing him my prized possession, "that you are now the

new 'Fan Man' of Brazil!"

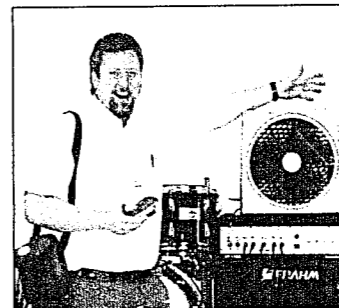
We hugged. The crowd went crazy. There was laughter, there were tears (mostly mine in giving up one of my biggest fans). After the applause died down (it didn't take *that long*), I said that I had one more request of Jonas.

"Could I borrow the fan for one more night?"

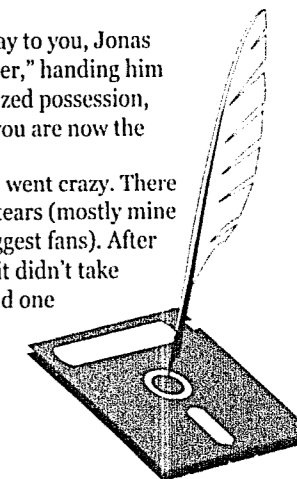
People laughed.

And Jonas said, "No."

I cried.



No, it's not the portable one I carried, but Andrea Davis had me pose next to this fan at a Brazilian church.



Christian stewardship, cont. from page 14

they argue that church credit card use is simply keeping up with the move to a "cashless" society. *We use debit cards everywhere else, so why not in the church?*

As a clincher, one proponent says, "I pay most of my bills by credit cards because of the convenience. I also do it for a more selfish reason: my credit card gives me frequent-flyer miles for every transaction. How I love those frequent flyer miles!"

The biblical method

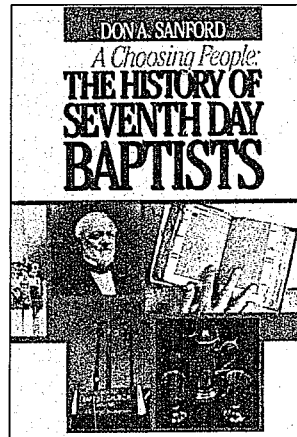
After reviewing the old and new

methods of church finances, I clicked on my Quick Verse computer concordance. I could not find either "pew rental" or "credit cards" mentioned in any biblical text. But I did discover 724 instances in the Bible where *offerings* were mentioned, 53 times *gifts* were listed, 14 times a *tithe* is called for, and three passages that mentioned *collection*.

Many Christians have taken Paul's instruction for giving out of context to justify Sunday as the day of worship, rather than viewing it as a plan of systematic giving.

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

This "plan of stewardship" meets the five "P's" of Christian stewardship: Personal, Periodic, Proportionate, Providential, and Purposeful. **SR**



The freedom and responsibility of choice is one of the basic tenets of Baptist beliefs. Seventh Day Baptists, as a part of this Baptist heritage for 350 years, have upheld and practiced that right. The decision to follow the Bible instead of ecclesiastical authority and tradition led them to accept the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath holy unto the Lord. This choice of the Sabbath sets them apart from other Baptists, but as Dr. Winthrop Hudson noted, "Seventh Day Baptists are separate but not sectarian."

A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists documents the history of this oldest Sabbathkeeping Christian denomination within the framework of both religious and secular history, from the Reformation in Europe to modern times in America.

From their origins in mid-17th century England and American colonial Rhode Island, the book traces their development of associational relationships during the 18th century; expansion with the Western frontier, the organization of General Conference and related societies in missionary and education outreach in the 19th century; and grappling with social, theological, and organizational issues in the 20th century. (448-page hardcover, published by Broadman)



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