



The  
**Sabbath**  
**RECORDER**

Annual  
Youth  
Issue

June 2011

*News for and about Seventh Day Baptists*

*Looking  
for help?*

A photograph of three young people sitting in a church pew. They are all wearing white shirts. The woman in the foreground has her hands clasped in prayer and a serious expression. The woman in the middle is also praying with her hands clasped. The man in the background is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression.

**Reconnect**  
with your YF



## 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 Christ Jesus.
- 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 our Lord. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs a people with a difference.

For 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@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:sdbgen@seventhdaybaptist.org) and the SDB Web site: [www.seventhdaybaptist.org](http://www.seventhdaybaptist.org)

## Missionary Society Opening

The Board of Managers is accepting resumés for the position of Executive Director of the Missionary Society. If you are interested in applying, send your resumé to Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society, 19 Hillside Ave, Ashaway RI 02804.

## Nursery at Conference

We are excited for this year's nursery! We plan to have a more structured program that follows the Conference theme about the Fruit of the Spirit (specifically during the mornings). We hope that many will join us!

As in past years, we ask that each family or parent participating in the nursery please volunteer to help for one shift during the week. Thanks!

If you have any questions, contact Tabatha Pethtel at [montessorisuccess@gmail.com](mailto:montessorisuccess@gmail.com)

## 2011 General Conference

*"Living in the Fruit of the Spirit"*

Registration forms in the May SR and on-line at [seventhdaybaptist.org](http://seventhdaybaptist.org)

**July 31 – August 6**

Hope College, Holland, Michigan

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Also on the Hope College campus: basketball, swimming, tennis, soccer, skate-board park, and trees!

Nearby: Lake Michigan and beautiful downtown Holland, **"America's Cutest Place!"**



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# So much to do!!

*Break it down  
before it  
Breaks you down*

by Timothy Lawton  
Ashaway, R.I.

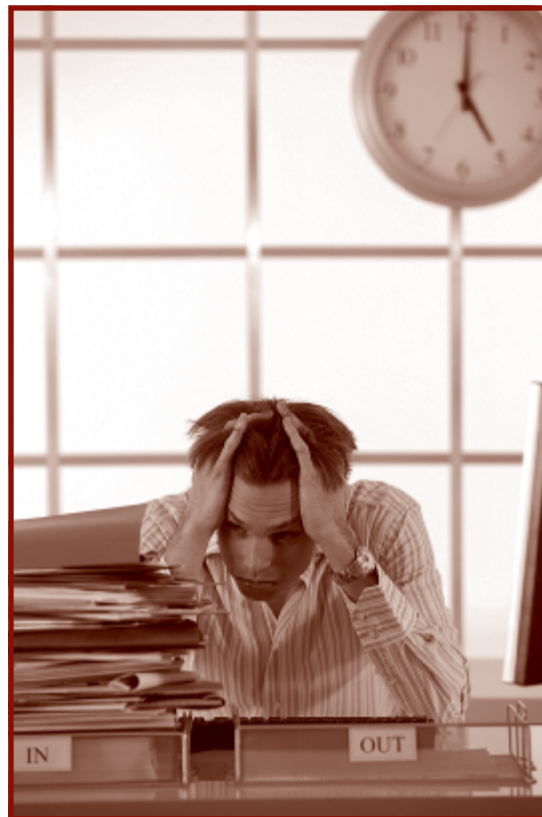
By the time you read this, the fourth quarter of the school year will soon be over. As a senior in high school, these last few months have been filled with excitement and anticipation as graduation day approaches.

Unfortunately, a large quantity of work is still required for graduation. A seemingly endless pile of work with scholarships, college applications, required and non-required volunteer hours, and whatever homework the teachers feel like giving out towers overhead, waiting to crush anyone who tries to tackle it.

This mountain of work is not restricted to just seniors. Any age group at any point in time can experience intense amounts of work. The problem of taking down this pile of work can be compounded by worry.

Describing worry as pointless in Matthew 6:27 and Luke 12:25, Jesus reminds us that our Father will provide all that is necessary for each day. The catch is, the Kingdom of God has to be placed as the top priority: "But seek His Kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well" (Luke 12:31, NIV).

Paul tells the church in Philippi, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Phil. 4:6). Peter then commands to give all worries to God, not because worries are a thing to be bragged about, but because God cares about us—"Cast all your anxiety on




Him because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

No one can ever claim to be perfectly content while they worry. Give God your worries; He will take care of you. As for that monstrous pile of work, break it down into categories: what needs immediate attention, what can wait until the immediate stuff is done, and what does not have to be done at all.

Then sit down and do it, starting with the immediate category. Find a good radio station for background music without the distraction of changing CDs or mp3 files. When you start to feel overwhelmed, pray, take a short

break, and get right back at it.

When something is completed, cross it off the list and start the next thing while you still have momentum from the last project. Recognize that the human body does need sleep, so get some.

Don't give up. Don't worry. But above all, trust God. "Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!" (Luke 12:24). 

*Tim Lawton is a member of the First SDB Church of Hopkinton in Ashaway, Rhode Island. He plays timpani in his school's concert band and plays snare in the marching band. He was also recently awarded the rank of Eagle Scout!*

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# Reflections of a Winter Retreat

by Annie Snyder  
Milton, Wis.

Crisp snow crunches under my feet as I walk around Camp Wakonda. It's a still night and the sky is aglow with Christmas lights from the city. I suddenly stop and stare, entranced in the beauty of the world surrounding me, while trees glisten with a soft light and the earth sleeps under a white blanket.

Soon there is music and singing in the distance, and laughter fills the air, praising God. Camp might be for summer, but fellowship lasts all year round!

Here in Milton, we have started a new tradition for our youth. It began in 2008, my sophomore year, when there were already so many new things changing in my life.

For the past two years, I've been going to these five-day Winter Retreats, being revived and seeing what God has done through others' lives. We all need to be encouraged, re-filled, and develop a better relationship with our Father in heaven.

While we huddle close together and hide under warm clothes and thick blankets, we hear lessons from our leaders—guiding us through the Word and helping us understand what is taught. This goes farther than merely memorizing Scripture and saying "This is true," but knowing for sure where we are and strengthening our faith.

As we fellowship and enjoy our company with one another, we also bring our sorrows and our pain.

Some of us are "quiet soldiers," not letting a single soul know our struggles. Some have found comfort in telling at least one person the things that have hindered us from doing what is right.

Young believers continue to grow toward our Savior. Everyone moves at a different pace, but we are all spurred on by love.

I'm so thankful for all the volunteer counselors. These are adults who want to help us in any way they can. As they share about the struggles they have gone through, it shows me that they care for us deeply. Seeing where they have come from, I can understand the things that they do or say, and I respect them more than I already did.

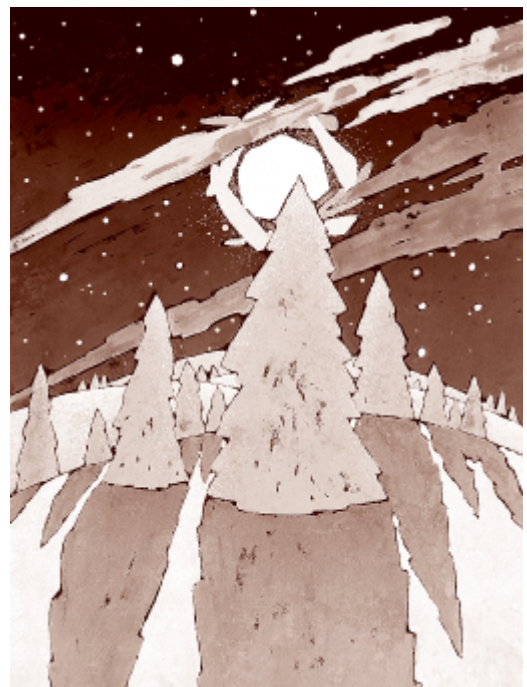
Meal times are just as important as everything else that goes on here. Many people are in the kitchen all day to give us three meals and a snack! They are not there because they have to be, but like many of our counselors, because they want to be.

They put in love as much as any other ingredient, and I am grateful for every meal they create. Last year, my best friend and I made a rap song for the cooks. It was amazing!

The days go quickly, so

more than anything at the end of the day, we need sleep. Most are excited for this special activity, and realize more than ever how early the morning comes out at camp. And while we are surrounded by trees and strange creatures, we still like to be clean, no matter how cold the showers are. The girls tend to look fantastic... whether we try or not. The boys climb out of sleeping bags with "bed head" and are ready for the day.

I have seen the efforts of those who truly seek God with all their hearts. They shine out, giving each other wisdom and causing lives to change. *SR*



# “I abstain!”

(Have a plan, not just a program)

by Bethany Manning and  
Josh Michaels, Berlin, N.Y.

On February 5, 2011 the Berlin, N.Y., Seventh Day Baptist Church teens started out their Sabbath afternoon enjoying pizza and riddles. Seven were in attendance for a teen abstinence program.

The five young ladies—Emily Olson, Rebecca Olson, Casey Greene, Jeshua Galusha, and Onnah Bink—were led by Bethany Manning, Pauline Morstad and Dianne Gentner. Two young men, Wyatt Greene and Matt Harrelson were led by Pastor Josh Michaels and Kevin Bonesteel.

It was a fun afternoon for the girls. Amidst the laughter, the many topics touched on included God’s will for our lives, how that affects our dating relationships, and how we may be perceived by the clothes we wear or the piercings and tattoos we display.

We finished up our session by creating a list of qualities the girls want in their future spouse. They

also made “keys to our heart” necklaces. (God holds the key to our heart until we give it away on our wedding day.)

For most boys, talking about staying close to God by fulfilling this call for purity can be awkward. The room was quiet as we began to talk through the game plan. Like playing football, you need to understand your opponents, the rules, your part, and have a strategy to win. Kevin and Pastor Josh took the role of the “coaching staff” to speak to the two young men about the importance of their calling: Be the man God has called you to be as responsible leaders and protectors.


The discussion started at the beginning (Genesis 1) to take a look at how God intended His children to act. God saw that Adam was alone and it was not good. Adam needed a helpmate that would fulfill him and his role as a child of God.

As we know, things did not re-

main this way and sin entered the picture—including sexual immorality. We then went through a barrage of Scriptures on immorality, speaking on each passage and its implication for our challenge.

How then could we gain control and get back to how things were in the Garden of Eden? The first step is to have a close relationship with our Savior, Jesus Christ. The second step is to learn how to resist the temptations we face on a daily basis. In order to stay away from going into temptation, have a plan!

We finished the day talking about creating such a plan to keep the youth pure until marriage. “Bounce your Eyes” and “Starve the Sumo” are two major plays to the game plan as taught by “Every Young Man’s Battle.”

Both the girls and the boys were left with a challenge to take up this cross daily and proclaim their commitment through an abstinence plan. 

## Hell is real

by Rachel King, Candler, N.C.

I know some people who think that hell isn’t real. But how can they say that hell doesn’t exist when the Bible plainly says that it does?

Revelation 1:18 says, “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” Jesus was the one born to die for our

sins on the cross at Calvary.

When God created man in His own image, He made us out of dust and with a snap of His fingers. God can take us out of this world. He controls who lives and who dies—it’s not the devil; Satan only runs the place because he was put in charge of hell.

Even if you’re angry at someone, you’re in danger of spending eternity in hell fire. You can be angry and sin to the point of it taking you there. The Bible reads in Ephesians 4:26-27, “Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down

# Public school -or- Christian school?

An interview with **Rebecca Olson** and **Casey Greene**, members of the Berlin, N.Y., Seventh Day Baptist Church.

This year, Casey transferred from our public school here in Berlin to the Grace Christian School in Bennington, Vermont. We answered some questions to give you an idea of the differences in daily life at the two types of schools.

## How long have you been a Christian?

**Rebecca:** Since I was 4.

**Casey:** Since I was 4 or 5.

## How long have you been going to the type of school you're in?

**Rebecca:** Eleven years (since I was 3).

**Casey:** One year.

## How difficult is it to be a Christian there?

**Rebecca:** Very hard.

**Casey:** Not very difficult; not difficult at all actually.

## What are some positives and negatives of your type of school?

**Rebecca:** Positives— Having non-Christian friends, being challenged, academic opportunities, extracurriculars, and exposure to other views or moral subjects.

Negatives— Very few share my faith, people don't respect your opinion, and many are perverted.

**Casey:** Positives— You learn more about God, and it helps you with your walk and your faith.

Negatives— You don't get to live out your walk as much around non-Christians.

## Has school made your faith stronger, weaker, or has it stayed the same?


**Rebecca:** Stronger. Surprisingly I have a lot of people in my class who want to talk about it. They question my faith and sometimes I don't have an answer. Being challenged helps me grow because I have to question myself and find an answer.

**Casey:** I think it's made it stronger. Since it's a Christian

school, and other people have the same values as you, they hold you to them. I have a Bible class and I've been reading the Bible more than I have in my entire life.

## Would you recommend your school to the average Christian teenager? Why?

**Rebecca:** Yes, because the exposure and challenges I receive help me grow stronger in my faith.

**Casey:** Yes, because it helped me a lot, and I think it could help a lot of other teenagers, too. 

*Rebecca Olson attends Berlin Central School and grew up as a pastor's kid. She's in the drama club and also runs cross country. She plays oboe in her school band and in an orchestra outside of school.*

*Casey Greene grew up on a family-owned dairy farm and often helps with some of the work. She plays basketball for Grace Christian and also plays fute in their concert band. She currently sings in the praise teams at her school and church.*


upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.”

Matthew 5:22 confirms this truth—“*But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*”

We should all know that hell is real because it is in God's Word and God's Word *never* lies! God is the author of the Bible and whatever is written in that book is the truth coming from the Lord.

I praise God for His Word because without it I wouldn't be able to do anything. Without God we can't do anything because we need His help.

If you think that hell isn't real, just look through your Bible and you will see differently. People who reject God go to hell. People who have sin and haven't dealt with it before they die go to hell as well.

Please realize that God is real and He isn't playing any kind of games with our lives. He is our Heavenly Father and our protector over all. Amen! 

# *It bugs me when...*

by Emily Olson  
Berlin, N.Y.

For senior camp last year at Camp Harley Sutton, our theme was apologetics. One of the things we talked about was staying consistent with God.

For an activity, each camper and staff member wrote down some things other people do that bug them. We then had to counteract with something that *we* do that bugs God.

Here are a few of the things written on those papers:



***It bugs me when I ask people to do things, and then they don't.***

I don't always do the things that God asks me to do.

***It bugs me when someone says something harsh or mean, and then says, "No offense."***

I sometimes say things God doesn't want me to.

***It bugs me when people say they'll go to the movies, and they don't show up until the end.***

I don't always show up for God.

***It bugs me when people tease me.***

Sometimes I'm not always nice to others.

***It bugs me when people stop traffic to pick up trash on the side of the road.***

I throw trash on the side of the road.

***It bugs me when movies don't match the plot of the books they're based on.***

I don't always follow God's plan.

***It bugs me when people don't think about what's coming out of their mouth before it does.***

Sometimes I use God's name in vain without thinking about it.

***It bugs me when my friends don't think about how I feel.***

I don't always think about how my actions make God feel.

***It bugs me when someone lies to my face.***

I tell God I will do things, and then don't do them.

***It bugs me when someone ignores logic and common sense.***

I ignore the truth of God and His creation.

***It bugs me when someone insists that I don't know how to spell my own name.***

Sometimes I think I'm smarter than God.

***It bugs me when people insist that their way of doing something is the only way.***

I think I know how I should live my life.

***It bugs me when people say, "Sorry, but..."***

I tell God I'm sorry, but I'm really just excusing my behavior.

***Beach tourists bug me.***

Sometimes I only care about myself (just like those tourists).

***People who think they know everything bug me.***

I think I can do things without God.

***It bugs me when people cheat.***

I cheat God for sports.

***It bugs me when people pick on others.***

I let my friends pick on God.

***It bugs me when people are racist.***

It bugs God when people don't respect each other when He made everyone equal.

***It bugs me when people are controlling.***

Sometimes I try to control God.

*cont. bottom next page*



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# The Fifties are still nifty

by Sherry Bowman-Kluck  
Berlin, N.Y.

On the evening of Friday, February 11, the Berlin SDB Church fellowship hall was reminiscent of the 1950s. The atmosphere was created by turning the hall into a black-and-white checkered diner complemented with red high-top tables and swivel stools. The windows glowed with dancing paper silhouettes and nostalgic items highlighting the jukebox and checked dance floor. Various adult and teen staff members dressed in poodle skirts and saddle shoes, letter sweaters, pedal pushers with scarves and leather jackets.

At the counter, kitchen staff dressed in white overcoats and white paper hats were conspicuous, much like you'd see at a Johnny Rockets Diner today. Popular selections included flame-broiled burgers, hot dogs and chicken from the "fired up" hot rod menu with "screamin' fries" or onion rings and a side of slaw.

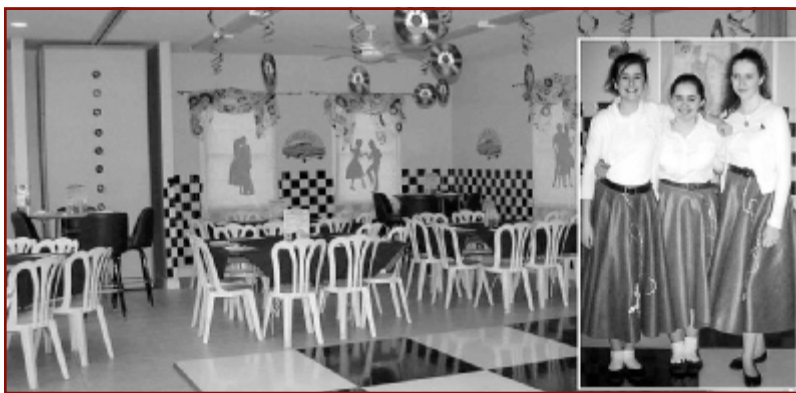
While waiting for their meal, couples gave an ear to all the "oldies but goodies" music of the generation, as they amorously sipped handmade milkshakes or root beer floats from the same glass. Following a call over

the loudspeaker when their order was up—similar to the diners of yesteryear—guests received their spread in a basket to take back to their table. Old-time bottles of Coke and root beer were served to top off everyone's palate.

Many guests came dressed for the event as "letters" or "greasers," parroting the fun times shown in the classic musical *Grease*. Fabulous dance moves like the jitterbug, the cha-cha, the Lindy Hop and the

stroll brought back the vitality of rock and roll in the Fifties.

This nifty evening celebrated the importance of God-centered relationships and was sponsored by the Berlin Seventh Day Baptist Church. Held every year around Valentine's Day, couples have the opportunity to enjoy various "themed evenings" for free. The word has spread, so be sure to sign up early for next year's event since there is almost always a waiting list! **SR**



February's 1950s "diner" at the Berlin church. Dining attendants included (l. to r.) Jeshua Galusha, Casey Greene and Aileen May.

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## It bugs me

...Cont. from page 8

### **It bugs me when people treat others like they are stupid or slow, based on stereotypes.**

It bugs God when I talk down to people and pretend that I am better than them.

### **It bugs me when people misspell their graffiti, especially curse words.**

It bugs God when I do things half-heartedly.

### **It bugs me when my friends leave me out.**

Sometimes I leave God out of the things I do.

### **It bugs me when people look at me but aren't really listening.**

I may look like I'm into God's stuff, but I'm not really "there" in the moment.

*"If the way you live isn't consistent with what you believe, then it's wrong." (Romans 14:23 in The Message)* **SR**

## **Q & A from the Ad Hoc Committee for Restructuring**



**Q:** *If all the boards and agencies move to Janesville as recommended, will there be enough room in the current facilities?*

**A:** Yes. The facilities in Janesville have enough office space for all the additional executives. Consideration has already been given to the possible reallocation of space. Separate storage space for materials may need to be considered, but much of the mailing and handling for the remaining boards and agencies is already done at the Janesville office.

**Q:** *What if one or more of the boards and agencies decides not to merge with the recommended Conference structure?*

**A:** None of the boards and agencies will be forced to merge with the recommended structure. The Ad Hoc Committee has researched the merger process and identified options that the boards and agencies may choose to take, but it is entirely up to them when and how to proceed.

Should the boards and agencies choose not to merge, they can still cooperate in other ways and consolidate savings. For example, although the Memorial Fund will not merge for liability reasons and will retain their own treasurer, they have recently voted to contract with the General Conference for financial and administrative support services. They will no longer separately employ a Financial Manager. Thus, there are many ways to cooperate even if there is not a merger.

**Q:** *What actions are expected to be taken at Conference sessions this year?*

**A:** The by-law amendments required to implement the recommended changes (approved by General Conference in July 2010) will be presented and discussed. The amendments can be modified and approved or voted down. Any by-law changes approved will be presented again the following year (2012) for a second reading and final vote for approval.



**Q:** *What are the next steps after actions are taken at Conference ?*

**A:** Any by-law changes approved at Conference this year will be brought forward next year (2012) at General Conference for a final reading. The by-law changes will be voted on for approval or rejection.

**Q:** *Why are changes to the Nominations Committee included in the Ad Hoc Committee recommendations?*

**A:** Because the responsibilities of elected members to General Council are changing significantly, and because significant questions have been raised about the current manner of choosing members of the Nominating Committee, we are recommending what we hope are improvements to the nomination process filling these positions based on input we received from Seventh Day Baptists.



**Q:** *Under the proposed new structure, can the Memorial Board change the purposes of previously allocated funds managed as part of the shared investment resources?*

**A:** No. The agency granting the custodianship would still establish the investment objectives and determine the use of specific funds being managed by the Memorial Board.

**Q:** *Why are the changes recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee for Restructuring even necessary? Aren't things working well today?*

**A:** The main areas we've recommended make it easier, faster, and more direct for churches and individuals to engage and use the denominational services. We believe these improvements will facilitate separate boards and agencies to work together on common projects even more effectively than they do today. There are also some areas of overlap where we believe combining services would demonstrate better stewardship of our funds.



**Q:** *How does the accountability and decision-making authority at the denomination level change under the recommended structure?*


**A:** Currently the individual board and agency executives are accountable to their individual boards and that is where final decisions are made. Board and agency executives are autonomous for their day-to-day activities. General Council meets two or three times per year (plus conference calls) to provide coordination and advice on common interests.

Under the recommended structure, all board and agency executives will be accountable to General Council which will meet six or more times per year to make decisions. Individual boards and agencies will still exist but perform advisory and implementation roles supporting the executive. Under the proposed by-law language, boards and agencies would still have to "advise" [i.e., "recommend"] and "consent" [i.e., "agree with"] the employment of executives under that board or agency's purview. All executives would be accountable to the Executive Director for their day-to-day activities.

**Q:** *How is the position of Conference Treasurer different from the new recommended position of Financial Officer?*

**A:** The reason for the current position of Conference Treasurer is because many of the independent boards have their own treasurer, and these positions do not communicate with each other or even use the same format for budgets and record keeping. The newly formed position of Financial Officer would eliminate this confusion, provide a common integrated financial view, and eliminate areas where there is currently duplication.

**Q:** *Where can we get additional information about the restructuring recommendations?*

**A:** An information package was sent to the pastors and moderator/president of each church in January. It is also available to view or download from the SDB website at [seventhdaybaptist.org](http://seventhdaybaptist.org) (lower right hand "Resources" box). 





## Enjoying the sun safely

by Barb Green, Parish Nurse  
Milton, Wis.

It's nice to see and feel the sun after a long winter. But did you know that unprotected sun exposure is the biggest risk factor for skin cancer?

Two million Americans currently have one of the three types, and the number is rising rapidly. Although it is typically diagnosed in older people, the incidence in young adults is increasing.

The three types of skin cancer are squamous cell, basal cell and melanoma. The first two affect the epidermis (top layer) of the skin. Basal cells line the deepest layer of the epidermis while squamous cells make up most of the rest of this layer.

**Basal cell** is the most common skin cancer and is easily treated in its early stage. It occurs on parts of the body excessively exposed to the sun. On rare occasions it can develop on unexposed areas as a complication of burns, scars or tattoos. Although it seldom spreads to vital organs it can damage surrounding tissue causing disfigurement and destruction.

**Squamous cell** carcinoma, the second most common form, also occurs in areas frequently exposed to the sun. Skin in these areas may reveal telltale signs of sun damage such as wrinkling, changes in pig-

mentation and loss of elasticity. Use of tanning beds multiplies the risk 2.5 times.

This cancer can sometimes develop in burns, scars, long-standing sores, and sites previously exposed to x-rays or certain chemicals such as arsenic and petroleum byproducts. Squamous cell can also be easily treated.

**Melanoma** is the most serious form of skin cancer. It is almost always curable—if treated early—but it can spread to other parts of the body where it is hard to treat and can be fatal. It originates in the melanocytes, the cells that produce pigments that color our skin, hair and eyes. Risk factors include sun exposure, number of moles on the skin, skin type and genetics.

Prevention includes limiting exposure to the sun. Guidelines established by the Skin Cancer Foundation include:


- Seek the shade, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Don't burn. Blistering sunburns especially in young children increase the risk of skin cancer
- Cover up with clothing including a broad-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses
- Use one ounce (2 tablespoons) of a broad spectrum UVA/UVB sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher every day. Apply to your entire body 30 minutes before

going outside and reapply every two hours. For extended outdoor activity use a water-resistant broad spectrum with an SPF of 30 or higher. Sunscreen should not be used on babies younger than 6 months old. When used as directed, sunscreens are safe and effective.

- Check your skin monthly for new spots or changes in moles. See your doctor yearly for a skin check.

Skin cancer has become a personal thing for me. Recently I saw a dermatologist for a checkup on a pre-cancerous lesion removed a year ago. While there I had her look at two spots on my arm that I was curious about. They were small (about the size of a freckle) and pink, like someone had picked a scab off and it hadn't healed yet. She immediately said they looked like basal cell carcinomas and biopsied them both. They came back positive and now I am being treated.

If I hadn't returned for my checkup and casually asked about these spots, the cancers might have spread, making treatment more difficult. This personal experience makes me want to educate everyone. For more info see [www.skincancer.org](http://www.skincancer.org).

The skin is a pretty remarkable organ that does many things for us. Keeping it in the best condition possible is another part of stewardship of our body. I'm glad I paid attention to my spots! 



Women's Society page by Kristin Camenga  
www.sdbwomen.org

## The road to Morocco

by Faith Green

[Note from Kristin: We continue a series where women around the Conference—and world!—share how they minister and serve God through their daily occupations, whether this work is paid or unpaid, out of the home or at home. I pray that you are encouraged to serve God in whatever circumstance He has placed you.]

*“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.” (Ecclesiastes 3:16)*

Anyone who knows me is aware of my strong aversion to change. I grew up with change being a constant in my life, and I hoped that as I matured I would be able to control the “change factor” a bit more.

Well, I married a wonderful, adventurous man and he has chosen careers that bring change pretty regularly. As I entered motherhood I was blessed to be able to stay at home (for the most part) with my boys. I enjoyed being a nurturing mom, a loving, supportive wife, and was good at keeping our house comfy and cozy. I always felt like God provided me with ways to minister in church activities and around my neighborhood.

Being a busy “stay-at-home” mom and wife was challenging and rewarding, and I found myself anxious as it became obvious that

that season was quickly coming to an end. As my youngest started kindergarten I found myself wondering what God had in store for me. I looked for jobs and explored going back to college. But nothing seemed to work out and my husband was regularly out of the country for work.

The things I planned somehow ended up falling apart, and I was left wondering what I was going to do. I found myself at a place where I was actually ready and anxious for change. I knew it was time for the next season of my life but I just wasn't sure what I was supposed to be doing.

*“Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.” (Proverbs 19:21)*

Well, in the fall of 2009 God showed me what He had planned for me and for our family. My husband found out that he was chosen for a position working at the U.S. Embassy in Rabat, Morocco. I knew that this was a possibility but I certainly hadn't expected it to really happen! God knew that it was coming and it became more clear why jobs hadn't opened up and why I hadn't started back to school.

A year and a half later, I look at where I am now and know that God provided for us. I am working part-time for the Embassy as editor of the weekly newsletter and I am finishing my degree in counseling

(which should be complete before we return to the States).

God continually puts women in my life who are looking for encouragement and friendship; because of my courses, I am better equipped to help them. I am living in a country where most of the people aren't Christians and many I work with are unsaved.

I have a new understanding of what it means to be salt and light in a dark world, and I am constantly thinking about what kind of a witness I am being for Christ. God continues to challenge me to look for those who are hurting and searching for deeper understanding.

Returning to the work force, there are times when I struggle to balance the responsibilities of my job, school, and being a mom and wife. On the days I wonder how things will all come together, God intervenes, grants me peace, and things calm down.

With those days in mind, I must continue to remember my first call as wife and mom. It is good to know that because I spent time nurturing and caring for my family before our move, we are more prepared to weather any storms that come along in this season.

I am so thankful that I am sharing this Moroccan adventure with Mark and the boys. We are all experiencing similar challenges and blessings and we are all growing because of them. *SR*



## Trusting in shadows

### *The dangers of legalism*

As many of you know, I am a seminary student. When I “change hats” between my school and work responsibilities, I am frequently surprised about repeating themes in these two areas of my life.

During the last school year, I was in the midst of a Greek class where I was required to translate the book of Colossians. At my job, I encountered Col. 2:16-17, which is often used as “Biblical proof” against Sabbath observance. Using this text and others, some suggest that keeping the Sabbath or other portions of the Law are no longer merited, and that any keeping of the Sabbath is a *de facto* return to justification by works.

Hopefully, our readers understand it is no such thing. But a survey of our history does demonstrate that SDBs have had hearty internal discussions about the merits of keeping other parts of the Law beyond the Sabbath.

Oscar Burdick’s research about the Seventh Day Baptist movement in England shows these discussions go back to the beginning of our earliest history.\* In 1650, James Ockford, author of the oldest known Sabbath Baptist book, wrote that he was not “...inclined to any Jewish opinions.” This sentiment was shared by several other prominent SDBs of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, including William Saller, pastor of what was later known as the Mill Yard SDB Church in London. John Spittlehouse, another London Sabbathkeeper, wrote that circumcision and the tabernacle are discontinued for Christians.

However, this was not the only opinion on the matter. Thomas Tillam, along with Christopher Pooley, Edmund Skipp and others, advocated “the practice [of] every part of the Law of God beginning [with]... circumcision.” After a time in eastern England, this group later migrated to the European continent to start a utopian colony.

Unfortunately, the observance of parts of the Jewish Law also led to a very dogmatic and fierce legalism. John Collinges, a priest in Norwich, wrote that he was concerned that keeping the Sabbath produced poor


Christians. John Bunyan, Baptist author of *Pilgrim’s Progress*, shared that many Sabbath observers “[brought] themselves into bondage” by observing Jewish rites.

John Cowell, pastor of the Tewkesbury Baptist Church (and a Sabbathkeeper himself from 1661-1668), commented in 1664 that Tillam’s group claimed to keep the Jewish law out of love, but the practical effect of keeping the “shadows and ceremonies that tend to darken the glory of the precious and blessed Gospel” was to promote legalism.

It is likely not an accident that Cowell refers to these practices as shadows—it is the same word that Paul uses in Colossians 2:17 before noting that the “substance [from a Greek word meaning body] is Christ.” The image Paul paints is of a person casting a shadow.

Without knowledge of who is casting the shadow (Jesus), the shadow (keeping the Law for salvation) might be the best a person could do. But when the person is known, there is no sense in trusting shadows—the *real* thing is standing right there! We know that salvation comes only through Christ, and we must guard against becoming legalistic about our Sabbath convictions.

On the other hand, we also know that the shadows of Jesus expressed in the Mosaic Law are not evil; they are simply ineffective to save us from our sins. Let us be clear about this distinction, so that we do not follow after Tillam. His utopian colony ultimately failed, becoming a footnote of history.

SDBs have various convictions about the value of keeping portions of the Law, but we must never trust in them to save us over Jesus Christ’s atoning work on the cross. As we go out, we must be known as “Jesus people,” not “shadow-people.” 

*\*I am deeply indebted to my correspondence with Oscar Burdick and his gracious instruction for the historical contents of this column. Thank you, Oscar!*



## Pastors go to camp

by Gordon Lawton, Dean  
Director of Pastoral Services



*Pastor Andy Samuels (left) led part of the discussion on Tuesday.*



A total of 29 pastors, 3 spouses and two other presenters met at Camp Wakonda in Milton, Wis., for the 2011 Pastors Conference, April 26-30. This every-two-year gathering is sponsored by the SDB Center on Ministry (COM) and is a time for our pastors to interact face-to-face as well as have some guided learning.

Devotions were led by Pastors John Pethtel, Bill Shobe, Shay Rankhorn and Ken Chroniger.

Pastors Andy Samuels and George Calhoun, and the Conference's Executive Director, Rob Appel, presented a seminar on the **ABCs of Christian Leadership**. "A" stood for Attitude, "B" was for Behavior, and "C" was Competency. At the end of the presentation each participant received a copy of the classic book *The Master Plan of Evangelism* by Robert Coleman.

Wednesday and Thursday we were instructed by Dr. Howard Bixby of ChristWay Ministries. His topic was **Leading Through Outreach Change**. He spoke of many things

(including the lifecycle of a church), and continued to point to the Great Commission as the marching order for individuals and churches.

We were challenged to pray for unsaved people we know, asking God to bring them to Himself. We are so thankful to the Cruzan family whose gift in memory of Pastor Earl and Mabel Cruzan provided funds for Dr. Bixby to be with us.

On Friday, I presented the seminar **Health, Harmony and Conflict**. The teaching notes that conflict is not bad; it's *what we do* with conflict that can be good or bad. We pointed out levels of conflict as well as strategies to use when conflict arises. We also spoke of reconciliation.


Updates came from COM, the SDB World Federation with Dale Thorngate, and the SDB Historical Society (with Nick Kersten) about care and preservation of church records.

There was an opportunity for participants to join in a Missions

Conference held at the Milton SDB Church on Sabbath afternoon and Sunday morning. So as not to conflict with this, the traditional pastors' talent show was not held. Some were sad and others were glad! Pastors attended the Albion, Madison, Milton and Portage SDB Churches on Sabbath morning.

Several BIG THANKS go to: the Milton SDB Church for the invitation and the use of Camp Wakonda; Janet Butler, who coordinated travel and housing; Rob Appel and his minions for cooking and clean-up; and the Women's Society for the use of pillows and linens.

Scheduling the calendar (and weather) is always a challenge, so some may remember this as the cold, wet Pastors Conference. Others will recall the warmth of the fellowship and the challenging presentations. That was noted in comments on the evaluation forms: "Definitely worth coming to." "It has been a good experience." "Very enjoyable and most helpful for me at this time in my ministry." "Very beneficial. Thanks!"

To God be the glory. 



*Guest speaker  
Howard  
Bixby*



## Answering some age-old questions

### A guide to Conference activity age/grade categories

“So, which group does my child belong to?”

“Mom, where do I fit?”

Before you can know where to go at Conference, you must know to which group you belong. Two questions determine where you participate in the programs organized and run by the Board of Christian Education for the week of General Conference.

Question One:

#### How old am I?

If you are—

**3 years** or younger, you participate in Pre-school

**19 years** or older, you are an adult. (You can sort out who is young and who is not.)

**4–18 years**, answer the next question

Question Two:

#### What is the last grade that I completed?

If you have completed—

**K–6<sup>th</sup>**, participate in Children activities

**7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>**, participate in Junior High activities

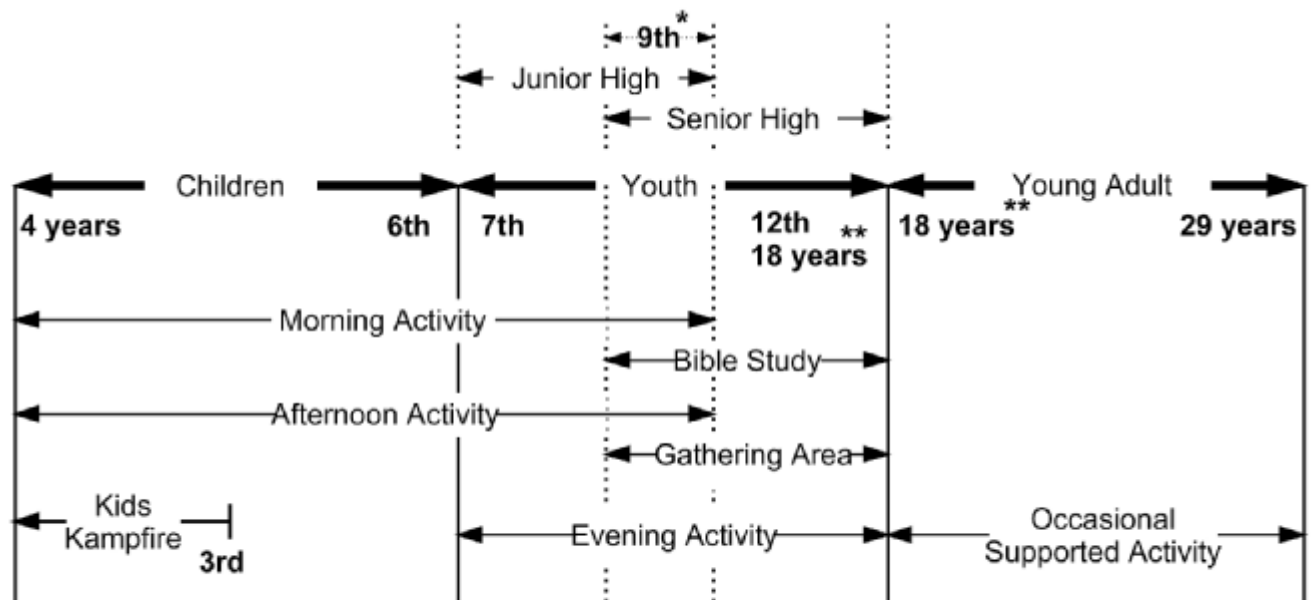
**9<sup>th</sup>**, choose to participate in either Jr. High or Sr. High activities (one choice; no switching)

**10<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup>** and not yet 18 years old are Senior High

Those who are **18 years old** may choose to participate in either Senior High and Youth or Young Adult activities.

**Please note:** 18-year-olds who attend Young Adult Pre-Con have chosen to be counted as adults and are *not* eligible to participate in official Youth activities. *SR*

### Here is a Visual Expression of the Age/Grade Breakdowns



All grades represent grade level completed.

\* 9th Grader elects to be either in Junior High for all activities or Senior High for all activities.

\*\* 18 year olds who choose to attend Young Adult Pre-Con are not eligible for Youth activities.





## FOCUS on Missions

# Tribute to a long-time friend

by Kirk Looper

The SDB Missionary Society is saying "Thank You" to a long-time friend and employee, Rev. Ronald J. Elston. Ron presented his letter of resignation to the Executive Committee at our April meeting. He will be retiring at the end of June after more than 26 years of faithful service to SDB churches.

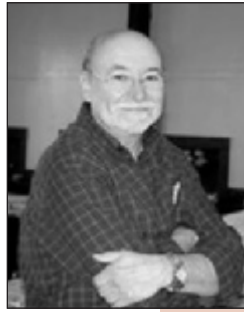
The Executive Committee debated for a long time before deciding to recommend the acceptance of his letter. There were many things that needed to be finalized before deciding how the work was going to be done without a National Director of Extension. It was finally concluded that the position would not be filled.

With this in mind it was further decided that we would not need to have Ron stay on to help train a new employee. We are pleased that Ron will not have the stress of the job to contend with during his recuperation period following surgery on his esophagus and other upcoming procedures.

Over the years he has held many titles. Among them include National Field Director and National Director of Extension. While the title changed numerous times, the work never changed dramatically. Contacts were made. Churches were planted. Seminars were held.

The goal—to establish the church and help people decide if Seventh Day Baptists were for them—was clearly seen in his work. Ron's time and effort toward his calling was important to him and he worked to complete each assignment to the best of his abilities.

Under his guidance the National Field Development Team (NFDT) was led and utilized. Lay people were trained to help plant new churches. They came from all over the denomination to help Pastor Ron.



*The many faces  
of Ron Elston.  
Thank you, Pastor Ron,  
for your many years of  
faithful service!*

The training material for this program was developed in conjunction with Rev. Rod Henry who served as the Director of Pastoral Services for the Conference. Seminars were held in several regions to accommodate those wanting to be trained. These training seminars continue to be offered periodically, mostly held at the Missionary Society office in Ashaway, Rhode Island. The NFDT may play an important role in the work left behind by Ron's retirement.

We appreciate the amount of travel that Ron has done. He traveled the length and breadth of the Conference many times over the past 26 years. He would often travel by car to enable visits to potential SDB groups as he went to one of the established groups or churches.

He spent an inordinate amount of time visiting the new groups as well as the established ones. For those who requested help he was able to give them advice on growth and development as well

as solutions to their church problems. He was always available to those who requested help.

Pastor Elston's work has not been restricted to just this continent. Thanks to his background in other denominations (prior to becoming a Seventh Day Baptist), he also went overseas for the Missionary Society. Traveling with the Executive Director he helped in several African countries by diffusing situations where another Sabbathkeeping denomination was trying to take over the churches involved. These countries included Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia. He also traveled to Lebanon when we were trying to establish churches there.

And so we can say, "Well done, good and faithful servant of the Lord. We know that He will bless for the service you have given to Him all these years." *SR*



# *the* BEACON

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

June 2011

## Mercy and honor(s)

by Emily Olson

As most of you know, I am graduating from high school in June. One of the big things I have been concentrating on lately is college.

I was accepted to a community college back in November. (This school does an "instant admit" day, so I filled out the application and was automatically accepted.)

But I was not accepted to the program I wanted to be in. I wanted to be in the Honors Humanities and Social Sciences Liberal Arts program. Yet in order for the "Honors" to be tacked on the front, I needed to raise my GPA (grade point average) two points in about five months.

The woman who signed my certificate of acceptance laughed at me and said, "Don't bother." Basically, it was impossible. Why I was even considered for the Honors program was thanks to my SAT scores, but those weren't good enough to make up for the two points.

I was always ambitious in my classes at school, so I was frustrated that I didn't make it. It felt like I was being penalized for taking accelerated math classes, like pre-calculus. Discouraged, I had given up and accepted the fact that I was going to be in those regular, huge classes just like everyone else.

After making an appointment

with the head of my program to schedule classes, imagine my surprise when I got a letter from the Honors program advisor saying that he wanted to meet with me. At our meeting, he told me that he had seen all my grades from high school and noticed my GPA had taken a "hit" from my math classes.

He said that he thought I would be able to raise it enough to get in, so he switched my scheduling appointment from my previous advisor to him. He told me exactly what the Honors program entailed, and what I needed to do to stay in it.

Fast-forward a month. It was time for my scheduling meeting, and by then I knew the two points just weren't happening. Physics class was killing me and my GPA.

When I got to his office, he welcomed me in and I told him exactly what was going on. He looked at me, nodded, and said, "That's okay. I think we can still do this." He put me in the Honors program.

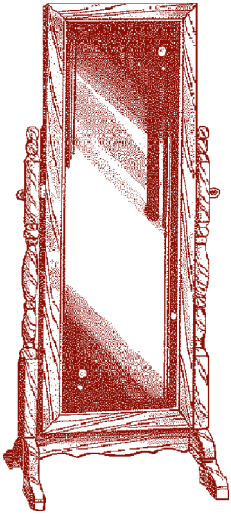
After all the worrying and frustration, this advisor showed me



mercy. Now, I realize it's just a trial run—if I can maintain a 3.7 GPA first semester, I will be transferred completely into the program. If I can't, I'll return to normal classes.

The point is that my advisor, who had met me only once before, cared enough to see that I could handle the program, and that "honors" for me wasn't just something that sounded good, but that I really wanted it.

I didn't deserve the mercy, but he gave it to me anyway. It reminds me of the mercy that God shows to us. He didn't have to send His Son. He didn't have to let him die on the cross—but He did. *"The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love"* (Psalm 103:8, NLT). *SR*



# Reflections

by Leanne Lippincott-Wuerthele

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

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## A cheerful heart and another body part

Since I fancy myself a humor writer, one of my favorite verses is, "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones" (Proverbs 17:22). Even in situations that are serious or semi-serious, there can be opportunities for humor—planned and unplanned.

In my March "Reflections," I talked about how laughter and a positive attitude, combined with prayer, got me through my battle with breast cancer years ago.

Earlier this year I once again used prayer and a "cheerful heart" to deal with life.

In March, I had a second mastectomy—a "simple mastectomy" that didn't remove any lymph nodes or chest muscles this time. I had been contemplating this elective surgery for years, for several reasons:

—First off, I knew too many breast cancer survivors who had cancer reoccur in their remaining breast, sometimes 20 years or later after their initial surgery.

—Secondly, I was tired of having twice-yearly oncology checkups and multiple mammograms and sonograms. Plus I had lost faith in mammograms since they sometimes fail to detect even large cancerous tumors because of dense breast tissue (as was in my case).

—Thirdly, my "weapons" to fight a possible relapse had dwindled. The two different anti-cancer drugs

I took after my initial mastectomy—for five years each—haven't been proven effective beyond that timeframe. So, last summer, I stopped taking any cancer drugs.

During my annual physical in January, I once again brought up the possibility of a second mastectomy. My decision to have the surgery was cemented when my doctor observed, "You won't be unbalanced anymore." (At least not *physically* unbalanced...)



***Faith, humor and a positive spirit can help smooth out even the roughest spots.***



A double mastectomy isn't for everyone, but it was the right decision for me, especially considering my stage in life. I'm close to being an "old geezerette."

So where's the humor in all of this?

Immediately following my surgery, friends and church members brought meals to our house, including chicken enchiladas, hot dishes, desserts and chocolate chip cookies. One of my running jokes was, "It's too bad I can't have a *third* mastectomy and get all this great food again!"

Before that, on the day of my surgery, I prepared a brief but very personal note. While waiting to enter the operating room, that note entertained several nurses, eliciting smiles and laughter. Even my shy surgeon, Dr. William Squires, seemed amused.

And what vitally important message did my meticulously typed medical communication convey? It simply read, "*Farewell and good luck, Big Boob! (I don't mean you, Dr. Squires. I'm talking to my breast.)*"

Later that evening my daughter and her family popped into my hospital room for a visit, but they didn't stay long. I was dizzy and nauseated, among other things.

As they left, my 2-year-old granddaughter turned to her mother and exclaimed, "Noni not dead yet!"

Although I felt miserable, I smiled at Jacy's words. They reassured me I was definitely still alive.

I have to confess that some of my attempts at humor were duds. When one smiling, empathetic nurse tried to give me a Vicodin tablet for pain, I lamely quipped, "Save it and give it to Brett Favre." Unbelievably, the nurse replied, "Who?"

My joke had landed on deaf ears.

Life is full of good times and bad, joy and sorrow, laughter and tears. As in Ecclesiastes, there are seasons of health and wellness, and seasons of illness and trials. But faith, humor and a positive spirit can help smooth out even the roughest spots on the highway of life. ✍



*The President's Page*  
by Stephen Rogers

Holland, Michigan July 31–Aug. 6, 2011

## Living the Fruit of the Spirit of Self-Control

None of us can live in total control of our lives. We are born to parents we did not choose, live lives that are influenced by thousands of outside factors, and die at a time over which we have little control.

However, one key to living is to not let others usurp our authority over things that we can control. That doesn't mean that we do not ask for help, or seek another's wisdom. But often the ultimate choice is ours, and we must accept responsibility for it.

Self-control is not just stopping yourself from doing something. More positively, it is helping yourself to replace that one thing by doing something better.

For some, the idea of self-control means submitting oneself to an imposed discipline, and discipline is often thought of as conduct governed by various rules and regulations. Sometimes it is viewed as a particular way of life that is prescribed by the church and imposed on the membership. Following a particular creed or code or statement of beliefs can be a part of this discipline.

When we think of all the other Fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace,

patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness—these are all positive and healthy values. This is also true of self-control. It points out a simple fact of life: We cannot have everything, do everything, or experience everything.

Paul wrote to Timothy, *“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, love and of self-discipline”* (2 Tim. 1:7). In this verse, Paul is referring to a reasoned, well-ordered life. Discipline, self-discipline, and self-control are all similar concepts in the New Testament. None refers to a life lived in isolation from Christ, but they all put the responsibility for how we live squarely on our own shoulders. Ultimately we have to take responsibility for our own lives.

Freedom comes from self-control. It may seem strange, but when we intentionally limit ourselves in some matters, we can then find the freedom we crave.

Self-discipline, then, is to *“No Thyself.”* We can discipline ourselves to say “No” to some things and “Yes” to other things. For Christians, we need to learn to say “Yes” to love.

Who is “behind the wheel” driving your life? Are you in the car alone, or do you—as some popular bumper stickers I have seen—also have “God as your co-pilot”?

To develop self-control we need to find willpower. We must have a desire for this aspect of living and a willingness to work with determination and sacrifice to achieve this goal.

We may find inspiration in the lives of others. Consider the story of Glen Cunningham.

Years ago, while helping his brother build a fire in their school room, the stove suddenly exploded. Gasoline was mistaken for kerosene and the explosion badly burned both Glen and his brother, Floyd.

Floyd would eventually die as a result of his injuries, while Glen spent the next few months in bed. With the help of many dedicated family members, he was able to walk again.

But walking wasn't enough for Glen. He pushed himself. After many torturous months of hard work, he competed in a footrace at the age of 12 and won—even though he was competing against boys much older than he. Glen went on to win gold at the Olympics. He would later establish Cunningham Youth Ranch in Kansas, where for more than 30 years he helped troubled youths.

The message here is clear: Never give up! Never take “No” for your answer! Self-control means being master over yourself to the point of not allowing disappointments and tragedies to deter you from your ultimate goals and dreams.

To “live” in the Fruit of the Spirit of self-control means that each day we should strive to live in, trust in, and act on what we believe as the truth of God. In fact, developing our self-control will make it easier for us to achieve the goal of Living in ALL the Fruit of the Spirit. **SR**



by Executive Director  
Rob Appel

## “For where two or three are gathered in My Name...”

*[Note from Rob: We continue our series of “Churches on the Move.” This one truly did, several times. The article was provided by Tiffani London.]*

The roots of the Toronto SDB Church began after three members from the Kingston, Jamaica church—Elon and Isolyn Sinclair and Herlitz Condison—had immigrated to Toronto in Ontario, Canada. They met in the summer of 1972 and decided to start “something.”

The first meeting was in the apartment rented by the Sinclairs. However, it did not take long for word to get out that there was a Seventh Day Baptist group meeting. Soon, other individuals who migrated from Jamaica to Toronto joined in the fellowship. By the end of that year they obtained space in a large Baptist church through the help of Rev. Leon R. Lawton.

In 1978, they had about 20 committed persons, with Herlitz Condison as the leader. The group called themselves the “SDB Fellowship of Toronto,” and dared to think about purchasing a building of their own.



*Toronto Church members at their old Fisher Street location.*

At the 1978 General Conference at Houghton (N.Y.) College, many Conference attendees did not think that we should attempt such a venture. But thanks to Albyn Mackintosh we got the “top-up” funds we needed for the down payment.

And as they say, “The rest is history!”

The Toronto church joined the Allegheny Association in 1980, and was accepted as a member church of the General Conference the next year. As a result of Conference mem-

bership, the Conference’s legal name was changed to the “SDB General Conference of USA and Canada, Ltd.”

Herlitz Condison became a deacon and Rev. Joe A. Samuels became the first pastor of the Toronto church. Shortly after, the official name of the church (registered with the Canada Revenue Agency) was changed to the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Toronto.

During this time retired Pastor Charles Lyons helped out in various

*cont. next page*

areas of the church ministry. Pastor Samuels served for three years. In 1984 Deacon Herlitz Condison was installed as pastor, a position he still occupies.

### Giving birth to a new fellowship

In 1989 two members, Peter and Sonya Richards, moved from Toronto to Cambridge, a town 60 miles west of Toronto. They started to meet on Sabbaths in their home and this gave birth to the Cambridge SDB Fellowship. Leadership is provided by Rev. David McLean and Sister Sonya Richards.

The group is well known in Cambridge and is very much involved in many community events. Quarterly activities include a Sing-along in spring and winter, and a Harvest and Thanksgiving program in the fall. Sister Richards has a growing women's ministry called WMFC (Women Ministering For Christ). She started this two years ago.

### Community involvement

The Toronto church became an

incorporated body in 1990. At the present time, leadership is provided by the pastor and a Diaconate of eight deacons. From the very beginning, the church has been involved in community projects:

–Prison ministry: twice per month visitation for Bible studies

–Retirement/Nursing Home visits: to sing, twice per month

–Food Distribution: in community outreach initiatives

–Project Warmth: Young adults distributing blankets and warm clothing to the homeless in cold months on the streets of Toronto

–"Streetlights": a basketball outreach program involving young men in the community around the church

### The times they are a-changing

When the Toronto church started in 1978, our location was about a mile west of the city center of downtown Toronto. Our main difficulty with this location was parking. We negotiated with the city parking authority to cease issuing parking tickets on Saturdays and Sundays

in order to have enough places to park on the street.

We worshiped at this location, 48 Fisher Street, for 27 years! Our new acquired space (at 49 Brydon Drive) is located in the northwest of the city, about 10 miles from our original location. Since we were converting an old warehouse space into a worship center, our new facility would not be ready for three years. So from 2005 to 2008 we worshiped in a rented facility while we worked on the new church building.

Several major problems arose before we could move in. We managed to resolve some of the issues with the city, and moved into the building in 2009. We continue to work with the city to resolve the other issues.

The Toronto church remains a vibrant and growing congregation. We are reaching out to others, especially those who are of an original Caribbean background, to give them a place of belonging. We look to the future and what God has in mind for Seventh Day Baptists in our city and the country of Canada. *SR*

## Pastors Conference met at Camp Wakonda in Wisconsin

Details of the 2011 SDB Pastors Conference may be found on page 15.



Seated (l. to r.): Tim Bancroft, Ken Chroniger, Dale Rood, Chuck Thomas, Norman Fearon, David Fox, Yvonne Stephan and Bill Shobe. Middle row: JoAnne Kandel, Ben Parrish, Don Chroniger, Liz Green, Andy Samuels, Wayne North, Andrew Camenga, Mel Stephan and Nick Kersten. Back row: Dr. Howard Bixby (guest speaker), George Calhoun, Jeanne Yurke, Dave Stall, John Pethtel, Shay Rankhorn, Nate Crandall, Bill Burks, Gordon Lawton and Dale Thorngate.



# Recession? Not with God

by Morgan Shepard

Recent articles from The Chronicle of Philanthropy ([philanthropy.com](http://philanthropy.com)) discussed how U.S. congregations are recovering from the recession, and how Americans gave less during the recession than was expected.

“Americans Gave a Lot Less in the Recession than Experts Predicted” showed IRS estimates of charitable giving in 2008 dropping 10.6% from the previous year. They then estimated a 14% drop for 2009. The blog “The Rising Tithe” (also at [philanthropy.com](http://philanthropy.com)) reviewed a study in which 40% of churches polled indicated that their income for 2010 had stabilized after taking those downturns in 2008 and 2009.

## How did Seventh Day Baptists do?

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Undesignated Giving	\$ 289,865	\$ 271,766	\$ 271,264	\$ 251,484
% Change from 2007	-	-6.24%	-6.42%	-13.24%
Designated Giving	\$ 129,161	\$ 185,051	\$ 132,579	\$ 240,862
% Change from 2007	-	43.27%	2.65%	86.48%
Total Giving	\$ 419,025	\$ 456,821	\$ 403,842	\$ 492,346
% Change from 2007	-	9.02%	-3.62%	17.50%

The chart above shows SDB giving trends from 2007 to 2010. Giving for 2008 and 2009 stayed about the same overall as compared to 2007, but there was a shift from Undesignated giving to Designated.

2010 shows a major increase from the 2007 levels. While undesignated giving dropped over 13%, Designated giving went up 85%! Overall giving has gone up over 17% for those three years. There is no recession with God!

## Why the change? Where are you sending your giving?


	Designated Giving			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Bd. of Christian Ed.	\$ 5,673	\$ 4,589	\$ 3,448	\$ 18,718
Bldg. Op. Fund	450	600	1,100	680
Council on Ministry	15,089	18,362	15,999	61,309
Christ. Social Action	2,527	1,949	3,921	19,044
Ecu. Affairs Fund	361	793	460	2,110
Conference Services	6,250	80,615	21,382	38,185
Historical Society	4,037	2,750	7,729	8,053
Missionary Society	41,072	34,353	35,150	36,018
Tract and Comm.	37,881	24,948	27,380	35,692
Women's Society	15,820	12,787	14,791	19,483
Memorial Fund	-	3,308	1,220	1,570
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 129,161</b>	<b>\$ 185,054</b>	<b>\$ 132,579</b>	<b>\$ 240,862</b>

As you can see, the Council on Ministry has the biggest increase, with Conference Services and Board of Christian Education following. With 13 seminary students, COM had a big need in 2010 and that need continues. Christian Social Action also saw a significant increase in response to various needs last year.

Have you seen this same giving trend within your church?

## What does it mean?

While giving to the General Conference and all the boards and agencies has been impacted by the recession—in a good way—we rely on the promise that God’s abundance is not affected by this world’s economic situation. You have proven that.

We appreciate your faith and support of the ministries of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference. See you in Holland, Michigan! 

# Our Purim Festival

by Nancy Makuch

Earlier this year at the Battle Creek, Mich., SDB Church, Pastor Kory Geske opened a new sermon series from the book of Esther with a “high-flying” message. He stirred up our expectations by using a radio-controlled toy helicopter.

After negotiating several circles high in the sanctuary Pastor Kory landed the helicopter safely, capturing everyone’s attention and interest. We learned that Purim Festivals are joyous and celebratory, and the toy chopper certainly prepared our expectations for this.

The festival of Purim is a celebration like no other Jewish holiday, with a story like those found in Hollywood movies. We read of the treachery and malicious intent of Haman, and the loyalty of Mordecai. We marvel at the inner struggle of Esther, her eventual acts of bravery and faithfulness, and the sparing of the Jewish people.

There are cheers whenever Mordecai and Esther’s names are read from the Bible, while boos and feet-stomping occur when Haman is mentioned. At a Purim Festival, costumes are worn and special treats are eaten. People give each other presents. (Hanukkah was not originally a gift-giving holiday.)




*A sight seldom seen in an SDB Church: Celebrating the Festival of Purim in Battle Creek.*

So, true to the spirit of Purim, the cheers and boos were encouraged through the nine-week sermon series. Chapters 9 and 10 were combined in the last message which “just happened” to end on the day of Purim, March 19.

A number of our congregation participated in the festival by wearing costumes. We had several King Xerxes, Esthers, and Hamans, at least one Vashti, and one of Esther’s handmaidens.

For fellowship time we enjoyed eating “Hamantoshen” and “Haman’s Ears.” The former treat is a triangular-shaped folded cookie with fruit

preserves in the center. The second is a rectangular strip of dough folded to a 1 x 2 inch size, fried and sprinkled with confectioner’s sugar. Eating either of these is a defiant gesture aimed at Haman, celebrating God’s deliverance of His people.

Part of the observance was bringing gifts to the altar for a local ministry. “From the Ground Up” is a re-entry house for released prisoners, started in our neighborhood by Christians who are working with limited funds. We gave support with food, personal and household items. Lord willing, we will continue to support them regularly. 



## Long-time BCE Board member honored

Rev. Andrew Camenga (left), Executive Director of the SDB Board of Christian Education, recognized **Amanda Snyder** for her more than 40 years of service (39 as a director) to the Board of Christian Education. The presentation was made on March 19, 2011 at Amanda’s home church in Alfred Station, N.Y.



## Obituaries

**Crump.**—John Howard Crump, 73, of Mission Hills, Calif., died on May 25, 2010. After struggling three years with cancer, God said “Come,” and John followed. He was at home with his family.

He was born on October 4, 1936 in New York City. John joined the U.S. Army and was stationed in Germany for two years. He moved to Los Angeles in 1965 where he was employed with Litton Industries for 28 years as an electronic engineer.

John and Louise Hudlow were married on May 27, 1967. He joined the Los Angeles Seventh Day Baptist Church, and then the San Gabriel, Calif., SDB Church. He served as treasurer of both churches for several years.

John is survived by his wife Louise; their three children, Cynthia of Las Vegas, Nev., Lisa of Tampa, Fla., and Matthew of Rifle, Colo.; four grandchildren; one sister, and a large extended family.

A private service was held on June 1, 2010 at Oakwood Memorial Cemetery in Chatsworth, Calif., with Pastor Lambert Lynch officiating.

**Brannon.**—After a brief illness, Marion Ruth (Maxson) Brannon, 85, of Moravia, N.Y., left her earthly body at Upstate University Hospital in Syracuse and went on to sing with the heavenly choir on March 28, 2011.

She was born November 17, 1925 in North Loup, Neb., to George Stephen and Fern (Barber) Maxson. Her youth was spent serving others and striving to give the best she possibly could in every endeavor. Academic accomplishments included competing in state spelling bee championships and solo voice competitions.

Marion and Warren Brannon were married on June 5, 1946 and started homemaking in Nebraska. They later moved to Ithaca, N.Y.; Burns, Ore.;

Freeville, N.Y.; and finally settled in Moravia. She helped her family care for the sheep farm for 47 years.

Marion’s work career included a year of teaching in a one-room school in Nebraska; several years of part-time employment at Cornell University to help raise the family; and a full-time career as faithful companion, mother and family coach. She embedded in each of her children the importance of faith in God and a sense of personal accountability.

Marion hosted many school and church gatherings at the farm in Freeville for children of all ages. She worked tirelessly after retirement as a camp cook for several years. She loved accompanying congregational singing at church and playing keyboard duets with her dear friends. Marion continued to make new friends and corresponded with cousins, friends and grandchildren via her computer.

Proudly married to a WWII veteran, she wore her patriotic heart on her sleeve. But she will be remembered especially for her passionate faith in God and His Son Jesus Christ. In her honor, Marion’s family was at her side in her final hours singing hymns as though they were once again gathered around the family piano at the farm.

Survivors include her devoted husband of 65 years, Warren F. Brannon of Moravia, N.Y.; her children Nancy R. Norlander of Laguna Woods, Calif., Larry G. of Moravia, Dennis J. of Fayetteville, Ga., and Kenneth D. of Mesa, Ariz.; 11 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Her brother George S. Maxson preceded Marion in death.

A memorial service will be held in North Loup, Neb., on June 18, 2011 with Rev. Dale Thorngate officiating. Inurnment will follow at the North Loup Cemetery.

## New members

**Boulder, CO**  
*Stephen Osborn, pastor*  
Joined after testimony

Mona Rampy  
Joined by letter  
Lee Warren

**Central MD**  
*David Taylor, pastor*  
Joined after testimony

Ruth Denby  
Terry Frazier  
Alfonza Watson

**Dodge Center, MN**  
*William Shobe, pastor*  
Joined after baptism

Marjo Greene  
Joined after testimony  
Joan Keener  
Daniel Greene  
Pastor William Shobe  
Joined by letter  
Jenni Osborn  
Stephanie Sholtz

**Miami, FL**  
*Andrew Samuels, pastor*  
Joined after testimony

Louise Biggs  
Derrick Estefan  
Linda Estime  
Mary Irvin

## Birth

**Gant.**—A daughter, Sadie Rose, was born to Robert and Amanda (Colvin) Gant in Dodge City, KS on April 10, 2011.

## Death Notice

**Evelyn Livingston Furman**, 97, of Leadville, CO died on February 16, 2011.

# Eating their way through seminary

by Ellen Olson

Recently, the Berlin, N.Y., SDB Ladies Aid sponsored a silent food auction to raise money for our three Berlin-raised men currently in seminary.

The Conference's Council on Ministry has asked that each seminary student work toward covering the cost of part of their education. We wanted to be able to do our part in helping them reach their goal. We raised a total of \$872.50!

The Ladies Aid asked people in the church what famous culinary creation they would be willing to donate to this worthy cause. Each of those items were then written on a piece of paper, and people were encouraged—over a three week period—to bid for the food.

Twenty-five items were donated. They ranged from one dozen local eggs a week (for a 10-week period) to Eggplant Parmesan to chocolate pie. Thirteen different people volunteered their culinary skills.

Those who had the highest bid, 16 in all, ended up taking home some food. Plus, several worked out "sweet deals" with the cooks in exchange for additional donations towards the cause.



People were encouraged to determine an amount they were willing to donate ahead of time. Then they were challenged to consider donating that amount regardless of the result of the auction. With that attitude, people were able to do crazy things—like pay \$30 for caramel popcorn and not worry about whether they were getting "value" for their money.

The real value is seeing Pastor Josh Michaels, Pastor Dave Stall, and soon-to-be Pastor Carl Greene continue their seminary education and do the work that God is calling them to do. Now if only we could come up with a creative way to keep them in Berlin! *SR*

# Thanks to Pastor Jo!

by Fay Hauber

The First SDB Church of Hebron in Coudersport, Pa., hosted a fond farewell and thank you for Rev. JoAnne Kandel on March 19, 2011. Pastor Jo is taking a sabbatical.

Many friends from local churches, area SDB churches, and the community were in attendance to wish her well.

Pastor Jo received many gifts and a plaque from the church in recognition of her six years of service to the church and community. All joined to wish God's blessings on her future endeavors. *SR*



## Conference Craft Table update

In an effort to more fully support our wonderful Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC) program, the Women's Board has decided to make a slight change in the operation of this year's Craft Table at General Conference.

Previously, buyers could purchase many of the items on the Craft Table for half price on Friday. Since we funnel 100% of the proceeds into the most worthy SCSC program, we have decided to discontinue the half-price policy. Consequently, supporters of SCSC will have the opportunity to more fully contribute financially by buying items at their full, reasonable prices all week long. Such a deal!!

Thank you in advance for all the donated craft items and for your continued support of our young adults.

*The SDB Women's Board*

# KEVIN'S

# ORNER

## What's the latest? Check the SDB Blog

Did you catch the latest news and entries on the SDB Exec Blog?

I realize that checking a blog (short for web log) may have been eclipsed by Twitter tweets and Facebook entries, but our blog carries a wealth of important info. You can access it on the front page of our website—[www.seventhdaybaptist.org](http://www.seventhdaybaptist.org). Located at the lower left, click on the line, "From the 7DB Blog."

Here's what's been mentioned in recent weeks:

New lower prices for some important Historical Society books. The remaining inventory of Don Sanford's large history book, *A Choosing People*, has been reduced to \$20 each, and the short book on our polity and organizational structure, *Greater Than Its Parts*, is now only \$3.

What churches are prayed for during our Wednesday morning chapel time at the Center. We've been praying for the "L's" through the "N's" on our alphabetical list.

The quarterly SDB Bible study, *The Helping Hand*, is now available for Amazon's Kindle e-book reader!

This year's Conference registrar's phone number was listed incorrectly in the May SR registration form! The correct number for Patti Wethington is **231-846-1756**.

Financial aid may be available for some pastors going to Conference.

Long-time treasurer for the Daytona Beach church and auditor for the Conference accounts, Clayton Pinder, is honored at his retirement.

What's the theme for Youth Pre-Con? "Survivor!" And yes, TV's Survivor Mike Skupin will make an appearance!

What physical improvements are slated for the SDB Center? (New underground electrical cables, new sidewalks, and new phone/internet providers.)

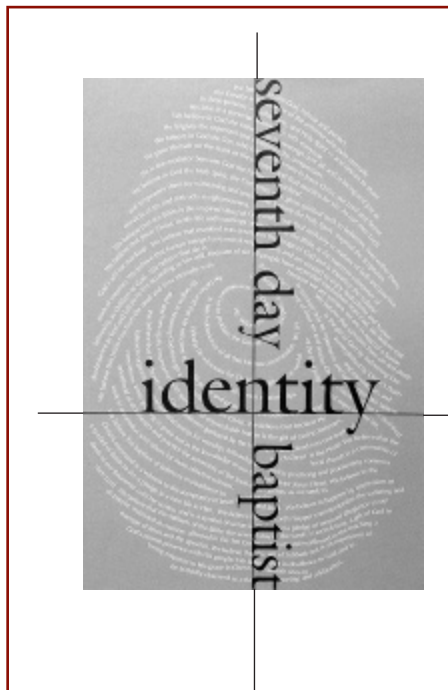
Who are the new members of the Missionary Society's Board of Directors? The list of names was provided in late March, soon after their annual meeting.

See what you might have missed? Along with reading some personal reflections from our execs, you can learn how to donate funds toward disaster relief efforts, and see opinions and news from the greater Baptist world. And there are even more tidbits coming from fellow members at the "Church News" section at the website.

If you'd like to be notified by e-mail about the latest blog entry, write to me at [editor@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:editor@seventhdaybaptist.org). Or become a friend of *Sabbath Recorder* on Facebook. Either way, we'll send you a blog alert with a link right to our site.

You'll get important information (and some fun stuff) much quicker than seeing it in the *Recorder*. Happy e-reading!





*We may have lost  
our 'Distinctives'...  
...but we've found  
our 'Identity'!*

## **Seventh Day Baptist Identity**

A very popular item at Conference, this colorful 32-page booklet is the perfect introductory study of what SDBs believe. Filled with Scripture references, each section follows our denominational Statement of Belief (included in the back of the booklet). The cover's distinctive fingerprint is actually formed with words from our Statement—a clever design by artist Pat Cruzan.

The new "Identity" updates and replaces our old "Distinctives" booklets.

Each copy is only 50 cents (plus 75 cents postage; e.g., \$1.25 for one). Please call us for larger orders so we can calculate the shipping costs. Or, go to our on-line store and the checkout system will calculate the shipping for you.

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