



NEIL BILOFF

Learning from the Lego

Recently Economist Magazine reported that large corporations are using children's toys to train employees. For a fee of \$7,000, a company can contract a two-day workshop in which Legos are used to build "metaphorical abstractions." These are Lego creations which capture a problem or a situation at work, and illustrate solutions in clear and creative ways. Some are calling it serious play.

The prophet Ezekiel was called by God to do some serious play when the people of Israel were trapped in exile in Babylon. They were far from home, feeling hopeless and totally lost. In the middle of all this the Lord comes to Ezekiel and gives him a vision of a valley full of bones. Very dry bones. Bleached bones. Dead, disgusting, disorganized, disconnected bones. "Mortal, can these bones live?" God asks the prophet. It was like looking at a tub of Legos, and asking if these building blocks can

come to life. But Ezekiel, knowing the unlimited power of the Lord, says, quite diplomatically, "O Lord God, you know." "Prophecy to these bones," commands the Lord. "Say to them: 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.'" So he prophesies to the bones, and suddenly they begin to click together, like so many Lego building blocks. The foot bone connects to the leg bone, the leg bone connects to the hipbone...you know the song. But they are still not alive. So God says, "Prophecy to the breath." So Ezekiel prophesies as God has commanded him, the breath comes into them, and they come to life — a vast multitude of living people.

This is very serious play. But what does this vision mean? Could it be like one of those "metaphorical abstractions" only on a supernatural scale? God is quick to interpret the vision, saying to Ezekiel, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They



NEIL BILOFF, PRESIDENT

say, 'our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost.'" But God hasn't forgotten them, because it is the Wind-Breath-Spirit of God which fills the dead bodies and causes them to stand on their feet, "a vast multitude." So the answer to God's original question to Ezekiel is really quite simple. "Mortal, can these bones or any bones live?" Yes, if they're filled with the Spirit of God. For if the breath of God comes upon any family, church or conference, it will surely live. †

Conference Calendar

DAA GRADUATION WEEKEND

May 22-24, 2009

Dakota Adventist Academy

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

May 31, 2009 • 10:00am

Dakota Adventist Academy

DAA & K-12 BOARD

May 31, 2009 • 1:00pm

Dakota Adventist Academy

CAMP MEETING

June 9-13, 2009

Dakota Adventist Academy

DAKOTA ADVENTIST CAMPS

Junior Camp I • June 21-28

Teen Boys Adventure Camp

July 1-5

THE **DAKOTA MESSENGER**
IS A PUBLICATION OF THE
DAKOTA CONFERENCE OF
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS®.

PLEASE SEND ALL NEWSLETTER
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605.224.8868.

Dakota Quinquennial Constituency Session

Sunday, June 14, 2008 ♦ 9:00am

Dakota Adventist Academy Auditorium

Registration 7:30am. Delegates encouraged to register early.

Lunch provided for delegates.

DAA to Purchase 'New' Coach After Old One 'Retires'

Rachael Boyd, DAA Development Director



During a recent academy trip to help sandbagging efforts in Fargo, North Dakota, DAA's 1978 coach bus broke down on their return. Leaving the coach at a repair shop in Jamestown, the unexpected news came in that the cost of repairs would exceed the value of the bus. The academy needed to make a decision: Do we fix a bus which has been unreliable over the years, or find a new bus which fits the Academy's needs better?



Rachael Boyd

After much prayer and consideration, the academy has decided to move forward towards the purchase of a 'new' coach for the school. A 1986 MCI 102A Coach was available for sale for \$20,000 in the Phoenix, Arizona, area; it was recently refurbished by the owner. The bus is in excellent condition. After an inspection by an alumnus, the DAA Board gave the go-ahead to raise necessary funds. Purchase of the bus is pending final approval by DAA maintenance staff.

Students will be actively fundraising for this worthy project, but we need your help too! Should you like more information or are interested in assisting financially with this project, please visit our website, www.dakotaadventistacademy.org, or call Rachael Boyd (ext 236) or Leonard Quaile (ext 215) at 701.258.9000. You can also reach DAA's Development Department via email at DAAdevelop@aol.com. We will be happy to help you in any way possible.

Thank you in advance for your contributions and prayers! †

Peck Family Welcomes Newest Addition



Despite a blizzard, spring flood waters, and lack of midwife, Pastor Jordan and Natalie Peck delivered their third child on March 23rd. As many of you may have read in the *Adventist Review*, the

Outlook, local newspapers, or seen on CNN, Margaret Elana arrived under unusual circumstances. Sadly the family did lose their home in the flood, but they are presently back together—and everyone is safe and healthy.

In January, Peck started a "cold church plant" in the Fargo, North Dakota area. This is a plant which does not utilize existing Adventist members, but cultivates new believers from within the surrounding community. The family has found a new, temporary residence and Peck is already back to work for the Lord. †

Save the date for

Dakota Conference Women's Retreat

September 18-20, 2009 • Bismarck

**Redemption of Woman,
Stories of Women in the Bible**

Guest Speaker: Marquita Klinedinst



Attention All Dakota ACS/DR Volunteers!

Get out your yellow shirts and meet the rest of the group in the gym at DAA on Saturday afternoon, June 13th at 3:00pm to help set up and serve the constituents. President Neil Biloff has requested that ACS/DR once again be of service Saturday night. For those who participated the past few years, it is a wonderful way to witness to others and socialize with our members. If you forget your yellow shirts, I will have one there for you.

What Are You Doing with Your Summer?

Dakota Adventist Camps

Lords & Ladies of the Heavenly Kingdom



Lords and Ladies: Come join our court, as we embark on the journey of a lifetime, "The Search for the Heavenly Kingdom!"

Junior Camp I (June 21-28) at Flag Mountain Camp

Junior Camp II (July 19-26) at Northern Lights Camp

Teen Camp (July 12-19) at Northern Lights Camp

Teen Boys Adventure Camp (July 1-5) at Flag Mountain Camp

Teen Girls Retreat* (July 8-12) at Flag Mountain Camp

Visit www.dakotaadventistcamps.org or www.dakotaadventist.org for up-to-the minute information on Dakota Adventist Camps. Contact Camps Director Loren Nelson III for additional information.

*Contact Anne Wham for more info on the Teen Girls Retreat: annelwham@hotmail.com or 605.224.8868, ext 222.

Refuge through the Storm

2009 Dakota Conference
Camp Meeting

June 9-13

Dakota Adventist Academy • Bismarck, ND
www.dakotaadventist.org

Guests Include:

- Larry Evans, Undersecretary of the General Conference
- Gary Gibbs, VP of Hope Channel
- Roscoe Howard, President of the Mid-America Union
- Dr. Bill Knott, Editor, *Adventist® Review*
- Dr. Jon Paulien, Dean, School of Religion, LLU
- Belko Brass, Instrumentalists

Photo © John Kirkwood



Students Inducted into National Honor Society

Almost one fourth of DAA's student body belongs to the National Honor Society (NHS) after the induction ceremony which took place January 31, 2009. Five new members received pins and certificates: Matthew Boyko, Emily Lindensmith, Leanna Quail, Cody Schober, and James Yow. Five other students were already members.

members: Ashley Boyko, Angelica Miller, Tabitha Schumacher, Michael Stolz, and Elliot Way. NHS is an organization promoting scholarship, service, leadership, and character in high school students. Belonging requires a cumulative 3.5 GPA. † ~Gary Way, DAA English Teacher

Dakota Youth Assist in Mandan Evangelistic Series

Contributors: Pastors Darrel Lindensmith & Loren Nelson III

Four Dakota teens assisted Pastor Darrel Lindensmith with his spring evangelistic series held last month in Mandan, North Dakota. James Yow discussed *Daniel Two*; Michael Stolz presented the *Importance of the Cross of Christ*; Tabby Schumacher spoke about the *Importance of the Sabbath*; Christine Taylor stressed the *Importance of Healthful Living*. Opening night nearly 50 people listened to Lindensmith discuss *Scientific Creationism and Scripture: Natural Evidences of God from Design*. After that, about 10 visitors attended regularly. The series concluded with a former Adventist woman recommitting her life to the Lord. She joined the Mandan church via Profession of Faith on March 21st. According to Lindensmith the meetings, held at the Mandan Adventist Church, "were a great blessing" to their church. †



Dakota Conference of Seventh-day Adventists[®] Financial Highlights—March 31, 2009

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>	<u>Percent Increase (Decrease)</u>
1. Tithe Income				
Month-to-Date	255,715.23	333,351.86	-77,636.63	-23.29%
Year-to-Date	778,097.86	892,094.15	-113,996.29	-12.78%
2. Dakota Challenge				
Month-to-Date	9,491.19	11,844.30	-2,353.11	-19.87%
Year-to-Date	31,108.31	28,794.02	2,314.29	8.04%
3. Unrestricted Evangelism Fund Bal.	3,774.53	52,377.68	-48,603.15	-92.79%
Temp Restrict Evangelism Fund Bal.	522,446.77	203,659.81	318,786.96	156.53%
4. Cash Position (Cash + Investments)	1,267,701.35	1,085,961.92	181,739.43	16.74%
MAUC Revolving Fund	1,266,296.49	1,213,877.99	52,418.50	4.32%
Total	2,533,997.84	2,299,839.91	234,157.93	10.18%
5. Accounts Receivable				
Elementary Schools	43,118.42	66,319.66	-23,201.24	-34.98%
Churches	60,569.52	78,850.28	-18,280.76	-23.18%
DAA	61,295.36	76,450.17	-15,154.81	-19.82%
6. Percent of Working Capital (Note #1)	137.09%	159.43%	-22.34%	
7. Current Ratio (Note #2)	9.69:1	7.76:1		
8. Percent of Liquid Assets to Commitments	125.18%	145.32%	-20.14%	
9. Total Operations	<u>2009 Actual YTD</u>	<u>2009 Budget YTD</u>	<u>Over/(Under) Budget</u>	<u>2008 YTD</u>
Income	968,579.76	1,005,946.00	-37,366.24	998,453.43
Expenses	1,197,274.17	1,195,438.00	1,836.17	1,143,989.76
Net Gain/(Loss) before Transfers	-228,694.41	-189,492.00	-39,202.41	-145,536.33
Net Transfers In/(Out)	58,029.29	16,862.25	41,167.04	0.00
Net Increase/(Decrease)	-170,665.12	-172,629.75	1,964.63	-145,536.33
Net Assets - January 1	2,870,758.29			2,673,542.75
Net Assets - End of Period	2,700,093.17			2,528,006.42
10. Operations for Selected Departments				
Pastors S-200	351,908.18	377,127.00	-25,218.82	367,975.19
Evangelism S-230	46,686.34	74,340.00	-27,653.66	78,333.32
Church Planting S-231	35,617.80	36,156.00	-538.20	39,744.97
Church Schools S-302	119,687.26	110,124.00	9,563.26	107,874.99
DAA S-304	210,573.32	110,085.00	100,488.32	90,700.00
Medical Distributions S-730	66,372.91	43,749.00	22,623.91	58,449.66
General Administrative S-798	115,033.25	131,466.00	-16,432.75	106,525.67

Note #1 Percent of Working Capital reflects the percentage of reserves the conference has, as compared to policy. Policy requires the conference to maintain reserves equivalent to 25% of unrestricted income plus 100% of long-term payables, capital functions fund balances, and temporary restricted fund balances.

Note #2 Current Ratio is the comparison of total current assets to total current liabilities.

Academy Students Show Selfless Service to Fargo, Jamestown, & Bismarck Communities

Contributors: Loren Nelson III, Rachael Boyd, Leonard Quaille



Photo courtesy Jan Peoples

Record spring flooding hit the Fargo, North Dakota, area earlier this spring when the Red River crested at 40.82 feet. A call went out nationwide for assistance. Volunteers were needed to help fill and place sandbags in the vicinity. Dakota Adventist Academy students and staff answered this call on March 23rd. Forty-five students and fifteen faculty and staff members departed Monday night in order to fill sandbags at the Fargodome Tuesday. The crew, joined by Dakota Adventist youth from the Fargo, Dickinson, and Grand Forks areas, spent the night in the Fargo Adventist Church, returning to work early the next morning. Upon arrival at the Fargodome, the team observed swarms of people and piles of sand littering the once clean cement floor. DAA's group of 60 joined thousands of volunteers shoveling, filling, tying, and hauling more than 500,000 sandbags (**filled Tuesday alone**). Several academy students went directly to the 'front lines' to help protect a house from rising waters. Filling sandbags onsite and placing them five feet high around the house, Dakota youth made a favorable and lasting impression on the owners. After a long day of sandbagging and an approaching snow storm, DAA left Fargo heading for home.

However, when the storm made travel too unsafe, the group stopped in Jamestown for the night. Jamestown church members stepped in and took weary students and staff into their home providing them with hot showers, warm beds, and delicious breakfasts. DAA is grateful to the members of Jamestown for their hospitality and help!

Late Wednesday morning, the team gathered back at Hillcrest Elementary to head home. Upon discovering the coach bus did not work properly, the students were split into two groups. One group headed back on the shuttle bus to contribute to sandbagging efforts in the flooded Bismarck area; the other group remained at Hillcrest Elementary until the bus was ready. The students in the first group were eager to return and be of service to their Bismarck community, despite the hard work already done in Fargo. Despite bus troubles, God blessed this trip by ensuring everyone got home safe and sound.

Flooding continued in various North Dakota regions throughout April. Ron Naasz of Jamestown called Leonard Quaille on April 17th asking if he knew of anyone who would be able to help in their community. Quaille immediately coordinated their team of more than 50 students and staff, and dispatched them to Jamestown. After a long day of placing sandbags in various areas around the city, the tired crew returned to Bismarck—only to leave the next day for a regional meeting in Dickinson. A disaster coordinator in Jamestown was astonished that our Dakota Adventist teens would work with such enthusiasm and dedication for people who were essentially strangers, while local Jamestown teens grumbled and angled to get out of working for their own community.



Photo courtesy Loren Nelson III

After their experiences helping during a time of disaster, academy students wanted to do more. Dakota Senior Youth Director, Loren Nelson III agreed to facilitate this desire by coordinating efforts with Dakota Adventist Community Service & Disaster Relief Coordinator, Phyllis Alexander. Together with DAA, they decided to utilize a portion of the academy as a mini-warehouse for hundreds of cleaning kits, clothing, water, etc. Students and staff will help unload and distribute the items between now and Camp Meeting.

Academy and conference personnel are extremely proud of our Dakota Adventist youth. They show a selfless spirit to serve their communities, while maintaining their schoolwork and studying for exams. We are fortunate to have them as a part of the future of our church. †



Photo courtesy Jan Peoples

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There's no Such Thing as a 'Free Lunch'

(except from your Trust Services Department)

Interested in creating a will or trust, and want to learn more about the services your Dakota Conference Trust Services Department provides? Be sure to join me for a short seminar during the Friday night meal during Camp Meeting!

We will meet together in the Home Economics room (just off the cafeteria) on **FRIDAY, JUNE 12TH AT 5:30PM**. Your meal will be **on us!** Simply present the ticket (right) to the cashier as you go through the cafeteria line before heading to the Home Economics room.

I will explain the purpose and value of the following documents:

- Wills
- Trusts
- Power of Attorney Documents
- Health Care Directives
- Charitable Gift Annuities
- Charitable Remainder Trusts

It's never too early to establish a will; anyone 18 or over should consider creating one.

I look forward to seeing you there! Feel free to call me at 605.224.8868 for more information.

Charlie O'Hare, Dakota Conference Trust Representative

Trust Services

Present this ticket as you go thru line to
receive your **free dinner** on

Friday, June 12th at 5:30pm.

**Please proceed to the Home Ec Room next door to
meet with Charlie O'Hare.**

This dinner is designed for serious interests only. Thank you!