



**SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTIST CHURCH**  
**DAKOTA  
CONFERENCE  
NEWSLETTER**

Volume IV, Issue VI



NEIL BILOFF

# No Thanksgivings?

Standing in front of a large Cathedral in Germany, I marveled at the architecture. It was truly a magnificent piece of craftsmanship. At the beckoning of our tour guide, we proceeded through the large wooden front doors. The inside was as ornate as the exterior. Our guide took us from room to room until we met the members of this congregation on the lower level. The basement was filled with dead men's bones. This huge church building had ceased being a home for the living and now was only a resting place for the deceased.

This phenomenon I found was not isolated to this one church. It is common across Europe. According to the Washington Post National Weekly, on a recent Sunday morning, the large and famous Canterbury Cathedral touted a grand total of thirteen worshippers. Has the church in

Europe lost its reason for existence? Is there no one singing? Is there no praise left among the people of God? It appears that very few Europeans are responding to the call of Psalm 95. "Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol Him with music and song!"

Are Americans doing any better? Our own noble religious holiday, Thanksgiving, has evolved into little more than feasting and football. Throughout most of America's history, Thanksgiving has been our one truly sacred national holiday. But today less people are "singing to the Lord" and "making a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation!" (v. 1). We are faced instead with an entitlement generation that is no longer thankful.

A recent Newsweek front cover was so bold as to declare the decline and fall of



NEIL BILOFF, PRESIDENT

Christian America. It does seem that a sense of true gratitude is fading from both our churches and our culture. Given the prosperity of modern life, many have the sense that wealth and wellbeing are a right, not a gift from God. Consider the gratitude of the Mayflower Pilgrims for simple survival. In a nation that appears to be losing its spiritual footing, let us continue to be faithful and thankful.

## Conference Calendar

**REGIONAL MEETINGS**

- November 14, 2009  
Aberdeen
- November 21, 2009  
Sioux Falls
- December 5, 2009  
Rapid City

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
AND BUDGET MEETING**

December 6, 2009 • 10:00am  
Pierre

**FESTIVAL OF CAROLS**

December 11-12  
Dakota Adventist academy

**K-12 BOARD**

December 13, 2009—10:00am  
Dakota Adventist Academy

**PASTORS MEETINGS**

January 10-13, 2009  
Dakota Adventist Academy

**PATHFINDER BIBLE  
BOWL**

January 30, 2009  
Dakota Adventist Academy

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

PLEASE SEND ALL NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS TO EDITOR, JACQUE BILOFF (JBLOFF@YAHOO.COM) OR CARE OF THE DAKOTA CONFERENCE, P.O. BOX 520, PIERRE, SD 57501. PHONE: (605) 224-8868.

## Conference office holiday hours

*The Dakota Conference will be closed for certain holidays. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience this might cause.*

**November 25 — close at 12:00 noon**

**December 23 — close at 12:00noon**

**November 26 — Thanksgiving**

**December 24 — Christmas Eve**

**December 31 — close at 12:00noon**

# Youth Take a Stand at Bismarck Rally

Loren Nelson III

More than 50 young people filled the Bismarck church on the afternoon of October 17<sup>th</sup>, all eager to hear Pastor Marland May of Southwestern Adventist University speak about “stepping up,” and “taking a stand” for their beliefs. Sharing from his own experiences, May explained to the youth how he left football and other sports behind to serve God, even when it meant turning down colleges who wanted him to play football on Friday nights and Sabbath mornings.

Each meeting was opened with music and song, provided by musician Jared Clark (also from Southwestern). Young people were encouraged to get to know each other better by participating in ice breakers which asked each youth what they would change about themselves. Pastor Abel Rios presented a class on the “ABC’s of Personal Devotional Life,” Pastor Loren Nelson III a class on “The Shortest Bible Study: Assurance of Salvation,” and May included a “chat session with Pastor May.”

Vespers incorporated supper and the traditional “Great Adventist Race,” a game where teams of youth complete lists of unusual activities and assignments such as handing out five pieces of literature or collecting food for the Ruth Meijer House. The rally concluded Sunday morning when many young people returned to meet at the church, where they helped with anything from cleaning in and around the church, assisting area friends and neighbors in need, and selling pizza coupons for the Ruth Meijer House (a shelter and community center). Plans are already under way for the next youth rally.



# The Redemption of Women

Jacquie Bloff



Speaker Marquita Klinedinst with two women from the retreat weekend.

“I have never been away from my husband, except overnight in the hospital to deliver a child,” one guest declared, “this is very biblically based and I am enjoying myself very much.” Women taking time from their normal duties to encountering Jesus’ love and rest is what happened at the twenty-first annual Dakota Conference’s *The Redemption of Woman* weekend retreat.

Marquita Klinedinst of Lincoln, Nebraska shared her passion to help people find physical and spiritual wholeness through biblical principles. The women were encouraged to rotate through three different breakout sessions during the three-day weekend that included: Ordinary Woman, Extraordinary God (a study of Huldah, Hannah, the Little Maid and the Shunamite woman by Sandy Simanon and assistants); Entreat Me Not to Leave Thee (the extraordinary friendship of Ruth and Naomi presented by Evelyn Glass) and The Widow’s Oil (how to extend resources in these critical economic times led by Brenna Kerr).

(continued on page 3)

# Dakota Children's Ministries Training Workshop

Jacquie Biloff

At Ida Lehmann's first story hour, the oldest child fell off his chair, followed by each sibling in turn. From that comic beginning the children have grown to love their spiritual mentor and are being introduced to their loving Savior. For those who care about children, Anne Wham organized a children's ministries training workshop which was held at the Dakota Adventist Academy in Bismarck, North Dakota.

She invited Dr. Donna Habenicht of Wisdom Tree Ministries who shared that sometimes children teach us while we are trying to teach them. Habenicht's seminars were not so much a how-to workshop but an understanding of to-whom, for-whom, and for-what purpose. Her passion is to bring children to an understanding of what it means to love Jesus. She explained the

different levels of learning and how a child can accept Jesus at each age-appropriate stage.

Attendees were as diverse as the topic presentations; from the grandmother concerned about her prodigies to the husband supporting his wife's spiritual gifts. Teen Leaders in Training (TLT) added piquancy to the audience, and women mentoring younger leaders responded as well.

Lehmann related how the Lord had "laid it in her lap" to have a story hour. She had visited a lady who lived adjacent to their vacuous farm that insisted on giving her a head of cabbage from her weedy garden, apologizing while explaining that she had to crawl to do any weeding. Lehmann decided to return with her time-tested weeding tool to help. The neighbor lady was so fascinated with the implement that she called her son to come see it.

He brought his girlfriend and their three children. He operated the tool for over an hour, and with all hands, the garden was soon tidy. Lehmann offered, and later the mother requested that she conduct a story hour for her children. Lehmann invited another neighbor's children as well. She will soon be conducting a story hour program to conclude the story hour series so the parents can see what their children have learned.

Habenicht reminded the group that "Children learn more during their first three years than

any other time in life... Lots of physical activities and sensory experiences are necessary for mental development. Without these, thinking remains underdeveloped... We can provide learning activities with sensory experiences that will help children grow in understanding."

Habenicht has written several books about teaching children to love Jesus. One is available through Anne Wham at a discounted price called Teaching the Faith. For more information, contact Anne at the Dakota Conference Office at (605) 224-8868, ext. 222.



## The Redemption of Women (continued from page 2)



"praisersize" (praise and exercise). Angelica Miller (18 yrs old) who joined her mother this year at the retreat declared, "I didn't know women of that age could have so much fun." Over \$2000 was raised for these two programs by the attendees at the retreat.

Fifteen percent of the one hundred and ten attendants were newly baptized members who had invited their friends to join them. Next year's seminar presenter will be Jan White who has family ties in Bowdon, North Dakota. Mark you calendars for September 10-12, 2010.

Each year a "Woman to Woman Project" is presented for the ladies to support. This year, however, there were two projects of interest: Teen Girls' Retreat which helps to provide funds for girls to attend a spiritual camp directed to their age group and a Native Heart-Healthy Education Program.

Dakota Women's Ministries partnered with the American Heart Association to start the first after school heart-healthy lifestyle program for Native American teen girls and their mothers in the Turtle Mountains.

To introduce the program, a spiritual-health emphasis was introduced which led into the necessity of physical heart-health, which was followed by

# Dakota Conference of Seventh-day Adventists® Financial Highlights—September 30, 2009

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>	<u>Percent Increase (Decrease)</u>
<b>1. Tithe Income</b>				
Month-to-Date	277,280.20	276,980.38	299.82	0.11%
Year-to-Date	2,447,752.61	2,673,756.39	-226,003.78	-8.45%
<b>2. Dakota Challenge</b>				
Month-to-Date	11,226.50	10,874.26	352.24	3.24%
Year-to-Date	96,742.21	93,682.44	3,059.77	3.27%
<b>3. Unrestricted Evangelism Fund Bal. Temp Restrict Evangelism Fund Bal.</b>	16,408.35 425,815.43	65,359.96 98,517.74	-48,951.61 327,297.69	-74.90% 332.22%
<b>4. Cash Position (Cash + Investments)</b>	1,220,791.73	1,091,937.56	128,854.17	11.80%
MAUC Revolving Fund	1,072,729.41	1,311,439.10	-238,709.69	-18.20%
Total	2,293,521.14	2,403,376.66	-109,855.52	-4.57%
<b>5. Accounts Receivable</b>				
Elementary Schools	35,152.90	38,798.25	-3,645.35	-9.40%
Churches	10,638.21	20,404.28	-9,766.07	-47.86%
DAA	81,526.18	94,986.40	-13,460.22	-14.17%
<b>6. Percent of Working Capital (Note #1)</b>	131.61%	143.51%	-11.90%	
<b>7. Current Ratio (Note #2)</b>	10.68:1	9.52:1		
<b>8. Percent of Liquid Assets to Commitments</b>	138.16%	121.40%	16.76%	
<b>9. Total Operations</b>	<u>2009 Actual YTD</u>	<u>2009 Budget YTD</u>	<u>Over/(Under) Budget</u>	<u>2008 YTD</u>
Income	2,835,984.11	3,017,838.00	-181,853.89	3,349,766.19
Expenses	3,380,550.39	3,586,314.00	-205,763.61	3,450,339.09
Net Gain/(Loss) before Transfers	-544,566.28	-568,476.00	23,909.72	-100,572.90
Net Transfers In/(Out)	179,008.72	50,586.75	128,421.97	23,290.54
Net Increase/(Decrease)	-365,557.56	-517,889.25	152,331.69	-77,282.36
Net Assets - January 1	3,032,633.93			2,673,542.75
Net Assets - End of Period	2,667,076.37			2,596,260.39
<b>10. Operations for Selected Departments</b>				
Pastors S-200	1,045,872.80	1,131,381.00	-85,508.20	1,064,862.43
Evangelism S-230	163,829.91	223,020.00	-59,190.09	229,023.63
Church Planting S-231	93,600.65	108,468.00	-14,867.35	93,899.05
Church Schools S-302	334,201.22	330,372.00	3,829.22	332,907.10
DAA S-304	395,458.82	330,255.00	65,203.82	314,937.51
Medical Distributions S-730	154,782.63	131,247.00	23,535.63	187,400.18
General Administrative S-798	337,685.45	394,398.00	-56,712.55	326,423.20

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.

# Finance Corner

ARLO HEINRICH, VP OF FINANCE



ARLO HEINRICH,  
VP OF FINANCE

Once again we have turned to the page in our calendar that reminds us to give thanks. One day, often associated with big family gatherings, an abundance of food, and football games on TV. Thanksgiving Day is a day for traditions, such as carving the cranberry sauce or planning the next day's assault on the malls. It is a day for giving thanks to God, for expressing gratitude for His many blessings.

Yet Thanksgiving can be much more than a holiday. Thanksgiving can be an attitude, a mindset, a daily approach to life. God's blessings are all around us every day. If we pause to take note of them, be grateful for them, and thank Him for them, we will be constantly reminded that He cares for us. "And be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Hebrews 13:5.

So give thanks; but also give, with thanks. Give to your family, give to your community, give to your God. Give of yourself – your time, your talents, your means. Give because giving is the essence of God's character. Christ gave himself for us completely and without reservation, and for this we can truly give thanks.

## Alumni Weekend: A Development Director's Perspective

Rachael Boyd, DAA Development Director

On this past October 2-4, SRA/DAA held its annual Alumni Weekend at DAA, celebrating 105 years of Adventist education in the Dakotas! For someone new to the Dakotas, the entire weekend from beginning to end became a whirlwind of faces and memories of the glory days at school. However, for the approximately 400 alumni, friends, and family, it was a time to mingle, worship, and eat together. Honoring the classes of 1940, 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1985, 1990, 2000, and 2005, the weekend was a whirlwind of great worship services and music performances, filled with classmates and nostalgia.

David Kaiser '90 (Friday Vespers), Douglas Janssen '70 (Worship Service) and DuWayne Carlson '80 (Sabbath Vespers) each shared a sermon, using personal experiences and memories to captivate their audience. The alumni enjoyed hearing the Sabbath School lesson from DAA's chaplain, Rob Griffin, showing them a little bit what Bible class is like. We were fortunate to have Jerry Lange '60 on hand, playing many wonderful piano selections throughout the weekend. Performances by Michael Harris, a musical guest from California, and the DAA choir and Dakota Singers rounded out the musical program

in the afternoon. What a blessing the music was Sabbath afternoon!

I enjoyed hearing the honor class updates on their adventures in the real world since graduation. One of the highlights of the weekend for many alumni and students was the supper Sabbath evening. Fresh fruit and sandwiches were provided and the laid-back atmosphere allowed alumni to visit even more. As the weekend drew to a close, the alumni met for a business meeting, where renewed dedication to the dorm renovation project was stressed. Finally a basketball game between the DAA Knights and the DAA Alumni ended with an alumni victory.

I have not yet returned to my own academy for an alumni weekend. So the SRA/DAA Alumni Weekend was really my first encounter with an alumni weekend. Watching the faces of alumni light up as they reunited with old friends and classmates reminded me of my long lost touch friends. Listening to memories of alumni's escapades at school brought back feelings of nostalgia for my high school days. So now I am making plans to attend my alumni weekend this spring. Please make your plans to attend DAA's Alumni Weekend next year: October 1-3, 2010!



Jerry Lange and wife Harrie  
perform for a Sabbath concert.

### NOTICE:

#### Dakota Conference Communication Contact Update

Please note that all articles, photos, and events should now be submitted to Jacquie Biloff, new communications contact for the Dakota Conference.

She may be reached at  
**[jbiloff@yahoo.com](mailto:jbiloff@yahoo.com)** or  
605.224.8868, ext. 221

**CONFERENCE STAFF**

**Neil Biloff**  
President  
**Larry Priest**  
VP of Administration/Ministerial  
**Arlo Heinrich**  
VP of Finance  
**Gwen Speak**  
Associate Treasurer  
**Edith Priest**  
Receptionist/Secretary  
**Jacque Biloff**  
Communications  
**Sharon Heinrich**  
Editor & Admin Secretary  
**Leonard Quaile**  
Education Superintendent  
**Charles O'Hare & Larry Priest**  
Trust Services  
**Julie Brude**  
Trust Services Secretary  
**Neil Biloff**  
Evangelism  
**Anne Wham**  
Ministries  
**Loren Nelson, III**  
Senior Youth Director & Camps

**Upcoming South Dakota  
Regional Meetings**

Central South Dakota • November 14, 2009 • 9:30a-2:30p  
Southwest South Dakota • November 21, 2009 • 9:30a-2:30p  
Black Hills South Dakota • December 5, 2009 • 9:30a-2:30p

**People on the Move...**



**Heading Home?**

**Speaker: Elder Neil Biloff, Conference President**

Come and meet with Dakota Conference Administration and Staff.  
Service features Dakota Adventist® Academy Musicians.  
A fellowship dinner will follow the worship service prior to the afternoon program. Please remember to bring extra dishes!

We look forward to worshipping with you this year.  
Call 605.224.8868 or visit **www.dakotaadventist.org** for more information.