

Nothing to Fear

This is the 76th installment of a multi-part series taken from Bob DuPuy's book, *Nothing to Fear: The Story of Seventh-day Adventism in the Dakotas,* published in 1983.

Chapter 14: Hard Times, Good Times - Part 2

The academy's problems were one phase of a conference-wide crisis that suddenly became apparent in the late summer of 1921. At several points over the preceding years, when agricultural downturns had reduced tithe and offering revenues, a recurrent litany of apparent fiscal responsibility had been issued from conference headquarters, warning that unless giving picked up, workers would have to be laid off and services to the field reduced. These appeals generally resulted in a slight improvement of the situation as some renewed stewardship fidelity combined with the cyclic upturn in the farm economy.⁵

But a recent series of bad years had brought the North Dakota Conference to a much more serious situation than ever before. At a Conference Committee meeting in Jamestown on August 31, 1921, conference and union officials revealed that nearly \$4,000 in back wages was due to the ministers and that tithe shortages were making the deficit grow steadily each month. Acting upon the information, the committee voted to lay off four ministers and double up the office departmental assignments. At the same meeting, Henry Humann, troubled by illness as well as the conference's financial problems resigned from the conference presidency after only fourteen months in office, and Fargo pastor P. G. Stanley was elected President.

Stanley reported the decisions of the committee to church members via the pages of the *Reaper*, lamenting "this serious financial embarrassment," pledging to "stop every financial

leak possible," and urging church members to be more faithful in tithing and to be willing to pay travel expenses if they desired a visit from one of the ministers.⁶

Sheyenne River Academy's difficulties reached crisis proportions in early 1922. Due in part to current economic conditions in the state the Academy's enrollment was down seriously, accounts receivable were up sharply, and, deprived of the conference's generous annual subsidy (due to the hard times), the academy was in desperate shape and its true financial condition over the years began to be understood for perhaps the first time.

Studying the situation, the Sheyenne River Academy Board and the Conference Executive Committee discovered that the school was \$18,000 in debt, \$8,000 of which was back salaries owed to the teachers, (equivalent to the full annual salary of eight teachers). The conference, it was revealed, had only been able to pay one of the three teachers' salaries it had been assuming over the years and had contributed only \$620.79 toward the operation of the school, instead of its annual subsidy that had, since 1915, averaged nearly \$8,000.

Separated from its heavy conference subsidization, the academy, it was now apparent, had never operated on a self-supporting basis. In addition, it was apparent that the academy would need 130 students, far above its present capacity, to successfully operate.⁷

Noting that the South Dakota Conference was in a similar situation, the academy board requested the conference committee to call a special constituency session for February 21, 1922, to consider closing Sheyenne River Academy, and uniting with South Dakota in a joint school at Plainview Academy, Redfield, South Dakota.⁸

5. Northern Union Reaper, September 15, 1908, 3; August 16, 1910, 3,4.

6. Ibid., September 13, 1921, 3.

7. Ibid., March 7, 1922, 9,10.

8. Ibid., February 7, 1922, 5.

Next time from *Nothing to Fear:* Chapter 14: Hard Times, Good Times - Part 3 by Robert K. DuPuy

If you are a new subscriber or have missed the earlier installments, you can find all issues of the *Dakota Dispatch* on our website:

dakotaadventist.org/communiques/dakota-dispatch

The first installment of Nothing to Fear starts in the October 22, 2020, issue.



For more information and to register, <u>click here</u> visit our website. Please note, early bird pricing ends TODAY!

The Ames Train

I'm a morning person. It's both a blessing and a curse. When the girls and I took a trip to Ames, Iowa, to visit my son and his family, we had a great time. When 10:00p rolled around, I laid my head on a couch pillow and fell asleep. My family had animated conversations all around me while I soundly slept.

They eventually went to bed, although I have no idea when. I was blissfully asleep.

At 5:00a, my inner alarm clock dinged, my eyes opened, and I was wide awake! The house was quiet, so I went for my usual morning walk.

I headed down the street toward a train crossing my intersection, horns blaring and wheels rattly-clacking and the wind whooshing as the train cars zoomed by to the west. As I crossed the tracks, I looked to the west where the train was headed and was surprised to see not a red flashing light from the caboose, but the 3 headlights of a second approaching eastbound train!



I hustled across the tracks and began walking on a gravel side street that ran parallel to the tracks. This time, the sounds of the engine as it bore down on the intersection shook my bones. I was so close to the train that I was dwarfed and muted by its presence and might. I could've screamed at the top of my lungs and still not been heard by any of the neighbors.

In fact, a deer bolted out of his hiding spot near the tracks and crashed through the bushes almost right in front of me, and I couldn't hear any of it. I could see his frightened silhouette in the darkness of the early morning, but no sounds.

Then the train passed, and all was blissfully quiet. I focused on the small but important sounds of life around me. The crunch of gravel under my feet. The rustle of grass as a rabbit hippity hopped through someone's backyard.

It was a relief to be in the stillness, especially after the deafening noise of both trains.

That got me thinking about the story of Elijah in the book of 1st Kings; he had been running away from wicked Queen Jezebel after God accepted Elijah's sacrifice and the promised rain came. I can picture him running, with thunder clapping and rain beating against his face, as he ran for his life.

Maybe the thunder shook Elijah as much as those Ames trains shook the deer. Elijah couldn't think, couldn't hear, or be heard. All he could do was keep moving. He kept running for 40 days until he arrived at Mount Horeb. In that 40 days, it appears his mind was fixated on the fear of Jezebel and with asking where God was in all of this.

God answered on the mountain and passed by Elijah. Similarly to the train, there was lots of intense noise before the Lord appeared. Elijah witnessed a powerful wind, but God wasn't in the wind.

Next came a rumbling earthquake. The ground shook! But no God in the earthquake.

Same with the fire. God wasn't in the roaring fire.

Finally, there came a gentle breeze. I can sense the relief in Elijah's countenance at the absence of the wind, the earthquake, and the fire. His mind was clear; his senses finely attuned.

And in the quiet stillness is where he found the Lord. God spoke to him, and Elijah was able to be fully present and listen with his whole being to the gentleness of the Lord.

Trains are amazing and impressive and very loud. The stillness that comes after is so sweet.

That's where Jesus is. In the stillness.

"Be silent, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

Worship Thoughts by Brenda Klein, member of the New Home Adventist Church in North Dakota. Follow Brenda on Facebook for more devotional thoughts at <u>Farm Girl Faith</u>. Photo courtesy of Canva.



Just Jesus. Adventist Campus Ministries

The Just Jesus. mission trip took place from December 20, 2023, to January 8, 2024. Although our Dakota Conference group was slightly smaller than in previous years, the three weeks proved to be incredibly fruitful. In the picture below, you can see most of our team gathered. We secured an unused UN School building nestled deep within the refugee camps along the Sudanese border in Northern Uganda, serving in medical care, children's ministry, and mission construction.

For 11 days, our pharmacy was open, staffed by doctors and nursing students from both the US and Uganda, tirelessly treating patients. In total, our teams attended to 738 individuals and distributed medications valued at \$4,899. Simultaneously, an equal number

of children participated in our children's ministry programs.

The construction efforts at the mission compound kept the rest of the team occupied. Volunteers can be seen in the photo below laying tiles in the mission building.

One of the highlights of our trip was witnessing Brother Joddy Meidinger's baptism at the West Nile River, right on the border of South Sudan.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the numerous churches and individuals whose contributions supported our campus ministries' mission program. The young participants who joined us were enriched by life-changing encounters while serving Christ and experiencing cross-cultural teamwork alongside young African Adventist believers. We also want to thank Dr. Karen Andres from the Bowman Adventist Church for serving as the trip's medical director.

We are excited to announce that our next mission experience is scheduled for December 18 to January 7, 2025-26. We invite you to consider sponsoring a young college-age student for our next medical and gospel mission!



Donations can be made at: fargoadventistchurch.org > Online Giving > Mission Trip. Article and photos submitted by Pr. Darrel Lindensmith, pastor of the Fargo / Wahpeton church district in North Dakota.

How Dakota Adventist Academy Helped Me

Hi, I am Celeste Gareau, and I live in Saskatchewan, Canada. I am a senior at Dakota Adventist Academy, and I have been a student since my sophomore year. I am involved in many extracurriculars like bells, orchestra, and autos. I also enjoy participating in sports like volleyball, basketball, and acros. DAA has supported me through my years of high school, especially spiritually and developing my life skills.

Growing up, I was raised Adventist; I was baptized at the age of 12. I knew who God was and had a good foundation and knowledge that my family set up for me. Coming to DAA, I have grown in my own personal walk with Christ. Every fall and spring, we have a week of worship. Guest speakers come, and even the students give a worship talk or their own testimonies. We have three praise team groups that lead out in song service for vespers, church, and any spiritual event. This gets the student body involved with the worships. We also travel for *Churchto-Church* where a small group performs the



entire church service. I have been part of a group who went to the Spearfish Church in South Dakota. It was an awesome experience to go minister with my friends and show what our school is like, and who we represent.

DAA gives us many opportunities to improve our life skills. We get the chance to do handson work that could benefit us in the future. At DAA we have autos and construction classes. In the construction class we learn how to stay safe on a worksite, even if it is not a construction site. We take an OSHA class and have the opportunity to be OSHA certified. Right now the construction class is working on building two garages. In the autos class, we develop critical thinking skills as we "problem-shoot" vehicles. We learn how to behave in the auto shop and work the lifts for the vehicles. Throughout the classes, we learn how to be independent and learn to do things ourselves so that we could save money in the future.

The dorm gives us a sense of responsibility that we would need in adulthood. By being dependent on ourselves, we learn to manage our time. The deans are here to be just a guideline of what we should be doing and to keep us on track, but it's our responsibility to make it to class on time, do our homework, and even do our own laundry. This is the

perfect transition from being at home and depending on our parents, to preparing ourselves to live on our own, just with a little help from the deans. We build friendships that will last forever, and that we can depend on. Eventually, the dorm becomes like one big family, keeping each other accountable for our actions.

Coming to DAA I have created so many memories that I will never forget. I have friends that I know I will keep in touch with later on in the future. DAA has made a big impact on my life, spiritually, giving me support throughout the year, and guiding me to acquiring life skills every day.

Article by Celeste Gareau, DAA class of 2024. Photo submitted by Celeste.

Watertown Church Chronicles: Reflecting on a Year of Community Impact

In March 2023, the Watertown Seventh-day Adventist Church hosted an impactful *Mad About Marriage Seminar* led by Mike Tucker from *Lifestyle Magazine*. The seminar drew seven guests from the public and spurred a series of follow-up meetings over six weeks, with one couple describing it as "life-changing." They even expressed interest in attending church regularly.

In April, the church celebrated significant events, including the beautiful baby dedication of Carter Rickard, son of Austin and Kendra Rickard. They also honored the local firefighters with a special ceremony, recognizing their dedication and sacrifice.

Moving into June, the church organized its second Family Fun Day, which attracted 38 guests from the community. The event featured various enjoyable activities, fostering a sense of togetherness and joy.

Building on this success, the church decided to host a free fall festival later in the year. Despite some initial setbacks, including goats devouring donated pumpkins, the community rallied together, donating pumpkins and resources. The event featured an array of attractions, from a petting zoo to free prizes donated by local businesses. Through social media outreach and community engagement, the festival drew a significant crowd, including 144 kids and their families.

The church's active presence on social media, particularly Facebook, has allowed it to connect with the community and share uplifting content regularly. The overwhelmingly positive response from attendees underscores the impact of these events on fostering a sense of community and goodwill.

Looking ahead, the church remains committed to its mission of outreach and service, eagerly anticipating future events like the spring Family Fun Day. Dreaming big and trusting in divine guidance, they continue to make a positive difference in their community.



Article by Darla Anderson, head elder of the Watertown Adventist Church in South Dakota. Photos by Connie Bousa, Watertown Church clerk, and Darla Anderson (submitted).

Dakota Adventist Academy Work Bee

Dakota Adventist Academy work Bee Work Bee The searching for a way to give back? We are searching for volunteers of all skill levels to donate their time on Sunday, April 7, 2024, from 8:00a-3:00p. Join us at the Academy as we work to revitalize our school while reengaging with our community. Lunch will be provided. Please register online and let us know what skills you can share. Calling ALL handymen, handywomen, and those with skills in wiring, plumbing, carpentry, sheetrock, sweeping, and cleaning—we need you! If you can hold, carry, or help wherever you may be needed, then please plan to join us for our 3rd annual Work Bee on Sunday, April 7, 2024, from 8:00a-3:00p. Lunch will be provided.

This year's Work Bee will take place in the classrooms, boys' dorm, and girls' dorm. Volunteers are needed to complete the following tasks:

- Replace ceiling tiles
- Install blinds
- Install faucets
- Caulk windows
- Install light fixtures
- Vacuum & sweep
- Clean gym floor mat
- Drill holes & cut angle iron
- Install commercial glass
- Run chainsaw
- Demo & hang drywall

<u>Click here</u> to fill out a form so we can place you in a suitable work area. Thank you in advance for your kind help as we seek to help our Academy!



Scholarship Opportunity

Two types of grants are available through the Frank & Lulu Saunders Scholarship to students holding church membership in the Dakota Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Enrollment must be in a post-secondary educational institution that is listed in the most recent official Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook.

The Back Story

In the early 1900s, the Rhoads and Saunders families lived on farms less than two miles apart near Leonard, North Dakota. Bessie Saunders was a teenager keeping house for her bachelor brothers, Roy and Frank. Lulu Rhoads was a student at Elk Point Academy in South Dakota. While there she persuaded Bessie to come to the academy for her high school education. Bessie, wanting to look her best, arrived at the academy adorned in jewelry and makeup—not allowed in the academy dress code of the day. Shocked, many school faculty felt she should be sent home, but Principal Bert Rhoads, Lulu's uncle and an

experienced educator, said, "Let me deal with this." Soon Bessie adopted а more modest appearance, and eventually, her Christian training allowed her to lead both Frank and Roy to dedicate their lives to God. Lulu had some summer school teacher training and taught school for a couple of years, while Bessie became a nurse.

Roy Saunders attended Sheyenne River Academy in North Dakota and eventually married Florence Rhoads, Lulu's younger sister. Together, they became missionaries to South America.

Frank Saunders married Lulu in 1909, settling on the Saunders farm a few miles from Leonard. The couple had four children



who grew to maturity: Eldon, Francis, Faith, and Jeanne. Upon finishing the local eightgrade country school, Frank and Lulu wanted all their children to receive a Christian education, so several attended Sheyenne River Academy, and at least one attended Maplewood Academy in Hutchinson, Minnesota. The boys eventually made their career in farming.

The depression years were difficult. Lulu made soap from tallow and lye for the academy to help pay the \$21 monthly tuition, room, and board. The children remember mom wearing the same coat for twenty years, and one of the girls wore overshoes to class because her shoes had a hole in the sole.

Frank and Lulu would be pleased to know that their sacrifices and efforts eventually established a scholarship fund to help Dakota students receive a post-secondary education. In 2020, the scholarship was opened up to another group of worthy students as well. As Jeanne had attended Maplewood Academy, she requested that any Maplewood graduate be allowed to apply.

Donations to this fund may be made to the Dakota Conference marked "Saunders Scholarship."

<u>Click here</u> for more information.

Youth & Young Adults

This weekend, Pathfinders from around the Dakota Conference will be gathering at Dakota Adventist Academy for our annual Pathfinder Bible Experience (PBE). This year the Pathfinders have been studying the books of Joshua and Judges. We are proud of all of our Pathfinders who have been diligently studying the Bible and "hiding God's Word in their hearts." Our Pathfinders who finish with a high enough score will advance to the MAUC PBE in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Saturday evening following PBE, our Pathfinders will participate in a pinewood



derby challenge. This is the first time we have been able to have a pinewood derby since 2020 and COVID closures, and we are very excited to have it back! If you are in the area, come join us this weekend. We've included Saturday's schedule in case you would like to come and cheer on the clubs.



Prayer Ministries - Monthly Prayer Emphasis

Please keep the following in your prayers for March:

Theme: Blessing the Seed - Planting for Harvest

Pastoral Staff: Harold Chin, Casper du Plessis

Office Staff: Lynnette Struntz, Mark Piotrowski, Mark Seibold, Mark Weir

Adventist Entities: Bottineau Church, Bowdon Country Church, Goodrich Church, Harvey Church, Manfred Church, McClusky Church, Minot Church

North Central, North Dakota: Bottineau, Minot, Minot Airforce



Base, Rugby, Garrison, Goodrich, McClusky, Turtle Lake, Butte, Harvey, Manfred, Bowdon, Turtle Mountain Reservation

<u>Click here</u> to visit the Prayer Ministries webpage.

Kids' Corner

Easter is coming up on March 31. This season is a special time to focus on Jesus and all that He has done for us through His life, death, and resurrection. Here are some resources for celebrating Easter with your children.

Enjoy a special Easter story, "The Parable of the Lily." youtu.be/HNmwLk2Y9Y4?si=pDKWZZuB4x_Rfwec

Easter Craft Corner: youtu.be/xKG5FFewK1U?si=zSeq4Rsqx73puD9J

Join Kelli in studying the book *The Wonder of Easter* by Ed Drew. Take a few devotional minutes every day to focus on the final days in the life of Jesus. <u>youtube.com/playlist?</u> <u>list=PLT8TBICrTY6eI1SnbUGieuH83t9Az48XT&si=iZKxa3qiOOg7CHuc</u>

If you are interested in contributing devotional or craft videos to be shared with our Conference kids, please contact Kelli at <u>dakotachildrensministries@gmail.com</u> Visit the Dakota Conference Children's Ministries YouTube channel, <u>Dakota SDA Kids</u>, and explore the many videos available for children.



Kelli Wasemiller is the Dakota Conference elementary education superintendent.

Dakota Conference Calendar

The offering schedule is in purple. The office preaching/visitation schedule is in blue. Conference Regionals and Town Hall schedule is in green.

March -

- 1-3: Pathfinder Bible Bowl and Pinewood Derby at DAA
- 2: Local Church Budget
- 3: K-12 Board at Conference Office (10a)
- 8-10: Men's Retreat at Medora, ND
- 9: Secondary Endowment
- 9: Women's Ministries Director Paulette Bullinger preaching in Minot, ND
- 9: Elder Ted Struntz preaching in Bowman, ND
- 10-13: New in Ministry Meetings at Conference Office
- 16: Local Church Budget
- 16: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Sioux Falls, SD
- 16: Women's Ministries Director Paulette Bullinger preaching in Turtle Lake, ND
- 16: Mid-America Union Pathfinder Bible Experience in Lincoln, NE
- 23: Dakota Challenge
- 23: Dickinson Regional with Elder Mark Weir Preaching
- 24: Executive Committee at Conference Office (10a)
- 29-30: Elizabeth Talbot at DAA
- 30: Local Church Budget

- 30: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Manfred, ND
- 30: Youth & Young Adult Director Elder Ted Struntz preaching in New Home, ND

April -

- 1: Office Closed Easter Monday
- 1-2: Elementary Teacher In-services at Conference Office
- 6: Local Church Budget
- 6: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Bowdle, SD
- 6: Education Superintendent Kelli Wasemiller preaching in New Home, ND
- 7: Work Bee at DAA
- 13: Dakota Challenge
- 13: Fargo Regional with Elder Mark Weir Preaching
- 14: Dakota Conference Nominating Committee at Conference Office (9a)
- 18: MAUC Executive Committee in Lincoln, NE
- 20: Local Church Budget
- 20: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Ellendale, ND
- 21: K-12 Board at Conference Office (10a)
- 23: Executive Committee via Zoom (7p)
- 27: Hope Channel International
- 27: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Hurley, SD

For more scheduled events, please see the calendar on the Dakota Conference website: <u>www.dakotaadventist.org/events</u>

Blessed & Kept

May you persevere.

May God grant you strength for the inevitable moments when you feel like quitting.

May you receive wisdom to know how to deal well with the difficult person you have been working with.

May you find grace for those who are making no progress. May that grace give you the patience to persevere until progress is made. May you celebrate that progress when it arrives, even if it is small.

May you experience an overwhelming sense of purpose in your perseverance. May the importance of your work give you pride in what you are doing. May those entrusted to your care, be they big or small, receive all that they need as God's love for them is channeled through you.

Written by Casey Bartlett. To follow Casey's Podcast Blessed & Kept click here.

February 29 Dispatch Photo



Photo taken near Emerado, North Dakota, by Troy Erickson, member of the Grand Forks Adventist Church.

The Dakota Conference Communication Department is always looking for beautiful photos to use in the *Dakota Dispatch*, the *Dakota Messenger*, the website, and more. If you are willing to share, please send them to communication@dakotasda.org with the name of the photographer and a short description of where it was taken.

Communication Director / Editor - Jodi Dossenko E-mail: <u>communication@dakotasda.org</u>

If you have local church news or stories to share,

Dakota Dispatch Mission: To build a climate of encouragement and blessing through the sharing of witnessing and evangelism activities. If you have news to share or would like to be added to the **Dakota Dispatch** mailing list, please email the Communication Department at <u>communication@dakotasda.org</u>. Cover photo credit: soybean field by Chrystal Rittenbach.

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