



The Adventist Woman

The Journal of the Association of Adventist Women

The 2006 Conference

By Carmen Seibold

It was Sabbath and the women gathered in worship sang the morning hymn. The beauty of the female voices lifted in praise filled me with an ineffable longing for God. Many similar moments amazed, touched, and inspired me at the annual conference of the Association of Adventist Women (AAW). We met October 11-15, in Seattle, Washington, to honor the AAW Woman-of-the-Year awardees for their accomplishments, which highlight this year's theme, "Globalization and the Adventist Woman."

"Our women amazed us" (Luke 24:22) is the surprised admission of an apostle describing the women who met the resurrected Christ. And our women continue to be amazing. We celebrated thrilling ministries of Adventist women for their God as we mourned the world's hurts that make them necessary. I was reminded of how crucial it is that Christianity hold up women as the daughters of God, who are equally called to worship, serve, and reflect the divine image.

Phetsile Dlamini, pediatrician of Swaziland, is the 2006 honoree for Distinguished Service. The child of an Adventist family, Dlamini has become an international leader in issues concerning HIV/AIDS, such as the pricing of medications, and she has given presentations at the United Nations on the plight of orphans. She has served two terms as minister for health and social welfare for the Parliament of Swaziland, facilitating crucial reforms that include state-subsidized health care. As the current ambassador to the New Partnership for Africa's Development in the Organization of African Union, Dlamini integrates health policies and programs among several nations.

This remarkable Adventist woman spearheaded her country's ratification of the 1995 Convention on the Rights of a Child, was a creator of a juvenile court system for Swaziland, and is involved in multinational projects to combat tobacco use and decrease deaths from malaria.

Eugenia Giordano, a physician originally from Argentina, is 2006 Woman of the Year for Professional Life. She established and directs with her husband, Oscar, the Adventist HIV/AIDS International Ministry Africa Office (AAIM). The Giordanos were missionaries in the developing world when HIV/AIDS began its tragic spiral into an epidemic. Alarmed by the stigmatization that was driving a majority of infected church members into



The 2006 honorees: Zhu Ai Zhen, Eugenia Giordano, Merikay McLeod, Phetsile Dlamini, Paula Leen, Linda Zhu, Rudy Torres, Aune Greggas

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

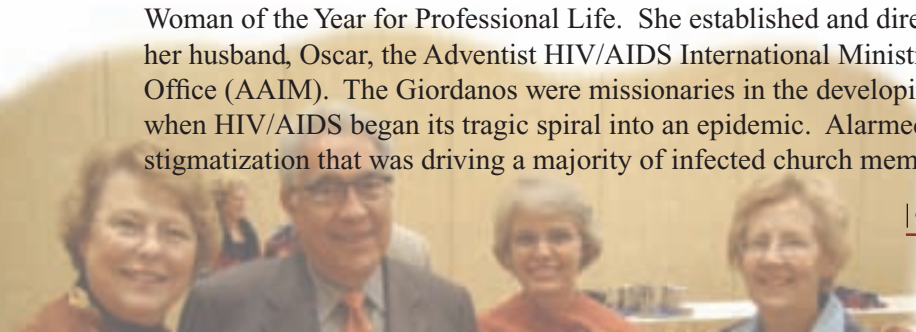
- 4 -
Ordination of Women

- 6 -
Two Women in Nyalgunga, Kenya

- 10 -
Eden Valley Academy Update

- 12 -
Paula Leen Update

| continued on page 8





Verla Michel Kwiram

I'm guilty of it! Many of us are guilty of it! Most of us have the propensity to become status seekers. From early childhood, we compare ourselves to others and suffer when we feel that we are less attractive, less intelligent, or less loved than others. We attempt to distinguish ourselves by feeling superior in some category or other. This is not the Christian ideal, but it is a powerful human drive.

This doesn't go away as we outgrow childhood. We vie for the top spot as musicians, athletes, or scholars and take satisfaction in being accepted at the best schools. We want to be the most beautiful, the most attractive, the most accomplished, the most well-traveled, the most articulate, or have the best reputation.

We want to marry someone from a "good" family, who has achieved or will achieve professional success. We want to live in a nice neighborhood with successful neighbors and friends.

When we achieve all of these things, we consider ourselves the objects of heavenly favor, blessed by God for our virtues and hard work, careful planning, frugality, and perseverance. We equate our successes with God's approval and blessing.

Ironically, no matter how much we accumulate, it is never enough. We always feel that gaining this or that will bring that elusive security and happiness we seek.

The aspiration for status is deeply ingrained in the human psyche, and women are not immune to status hunger. In the past, most women who achieved or maintained status did so through marriage. Once they achieved a clear advantage, they didn't want to give it up (and still don't). Indeed, the class of women most opposed to women's suffrage was that of the well-married wives of wealthy or influential men (see Barbara Welter, *Dimity Convictions*).

Indeed, privileged women's lives of leisure were dependent on the support of lower classes such as slaves, servants, or "working class" helpers. Without a servant class essential to burnishing the image and the appearance of success, high status and its accoutrements cannot be

sustained. Thus the labor of slaves or lesser mortals was essential to the gracious way of life for both women and men before the Civil War in America.

Because America's political philosophers proposed a meritocracy based on free public education and employment based on skill rather than inherited or class privilege, some of the excesses of European aristocratic practice were avoided in America. Proficiency exams designed to qualify citizens for position and advancement—"may the best man win"—opened opportunities for a vast number of hard-working Americans. Yet all of this was accomplished without much thought about women or racial minorities.

Skirting the issues of slavery and the role of women left two servant classes in place. Later, after the practice of slavery was toppled, working- and middle-class women filled the servant void in part by working diligently inside the home to provide their husbands with the time and resources to focus on careers and, thereby, to maintain superior status. (Technological advances and lifestyle changes also played a role.) Over time, the results of this strategy were viewed as natural, even God-given, rather than a simple consequence of education and opportunity.

Indeed, when dealing with persons who have had no education, it is hard to determine whether their lot in life is due to lack of opportunity or lack of ability. Almost invariably, under-educated and under-privileged persons are considered to have inherently less ability. Throughout slavery, blacks were forbidden to learn to read, and their ignorance was used to denigrate their capacities.

In America, the women in my generation routinely dropped out of college "to put hubby through school." With less education, they were obviously less qualified, and consequently they had fewer opportunities, which in turn led to less recognition than their husbands received. The logical conclusion? They must be less capable!

However, when girls eventually gained widespread access to higher education and it became socially acceptable to excel, girls achieved distinction as often as boys. The record shows that talent and ability to learn is not limited to one sex. As doors open, women display remarkable aptitudes, accomplishments, and character. Oberlin was correct in stating in 1834 that, given the opportunity, female character could be elevated, "by bringing within the reach of the misjudged and neglected sex, all the instructive privileges which hitherto have unreasonably distinguished the leading sex from theirs."

The wrenching dilemma facing Adventism is whether it will include women in its talent pool or if it will continue to choose leadership based on sex alone, regardless of merit. Will it blindly continue its historical posture of discriminating against women, or will it find the will to eliminate this modern form of psychological slavery? Our

record in dealing with racial segregation in the church does not provide much room for optimism.

Over the past century and a half, men have arrogated to themselves virtually all of the leadership positions in the church and have exercised exclusive control of the organizational structure of Adventism. They have maintained their ascendancy as a class, making all decisions and setting all priorities, directing resources to the needs that they recognize from their own experiences, assuming that their experiences are normative and ignoring the women's perspective as inconsequential.

Keeping women "in their place" benefits men, giving them more opportunity and power. Unfortunately, women employed by the church have largely stayed "in their place," and men have reaped disproportionate benefits, to the detriment of the church.

The assumption that men should automatically and necessarily have higher status must change—for the good of the church. To enact the Christian ideals that we profess, women's gifts must also be nurtured, developed, and given recognition. Women must find their voices, validate their own experiences, express their God-given insights, reexamine the church's priorities in light of women's needs, allocate resources in a balanced way, and implement policies that eliminate the stigma of being born a woman.

Until it encourages the full development of women, the church impairs its effectiveness and loses its promise for the future. *AW*

Verla Michel Kwiram

Inspired by *Status Anxiety*, by Alain de Botton (Vintage Books, 2005).

"Study after study has taught us that there is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, improve nutrition and promote health, including the prevention of HIV/AIDS."

— Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General

Comments from Readers

Having a website for this organisation is a good way to reach ladies in areas of the world that do not have ready access to the resources you have in the USA. Thank you and I look forward to being a part of this world wide organisation. I'm very grateful to Mrs. Joy Butler, Women's Ministry and Prayer Coordinator of the South Pacific Division, for her introduction to this organisation.

Blessings and Christian
Regards,
Anna Ryan

I feel so blessed from attending AWW Conference. It was so nice meeting and making new friends. During our praise report and prayer request period at church yesterday, I told the members about my experience at AAW Conference and asked for prayer for the awesome work that women are doing in the mission field.

Rosemary Tyler
San Francisco

As an ally and supporter of the role/ordination of women in Adventism for some twenty years, it is heartening to see progress on a number of fronts. As one who now observes and comments from the sidelines, I celebrate the influence of the AAW, note the emergence of bloggers like the Adventist Feminist, as well as Adventist Women for Peace. The future of the SDA church can only be healthier for your presence and efforts at building a more inclusive community of faith.

Rev. Mark Chaffin
American Baptist Chaplain in
Long-Term Care
Upstate New York

Send your comments concerning *The Adventist Woman* to PO Box 25025, Seattle, WA 98165-1925. Or e-mail our editor, Carolyn Lacy, at carolynlacy137@verizon.net.

Adventist Church President Comments on the Ordination of Women

By Bettye Wells Miller, *The Press-Enterprise* (27 January 2007)

Consensus needed on women, Adventist church president says

In an interview at Palm Springs Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Rev. Jan Paulsen said the global church "needs to find a way to sign off on it [ordination of women]. If they don't, those (regional) conferences that want to ordain women will find themselves acting in a rebellious way against the global church. That is not healthy." Paulsen asked women who feel called to ministry to be patient as the global church seeks consensus. In the past,

Paulsen has said that he supports ordaining women. "I know I'm asking a lot of women, because they feel they have waited a long time already," he said. "Objections will weaken as people see women in ministry," Paulsen predicted. "Let's see where the Lord leads in this matter."

Like most denominations, Adventists struggle with the departure of young adults from their churches. In the interview, Paulsen said he has been hosting live teleconferences with young Adventists. During one of those

conversations a young adult told him, "You may not be here in 10 years' time. If you don't trust us with responsibility, we may not be here either."

"If young professionals are not being trusted with leadership roles, they will leave the church," Paulsen said. "They are as much a part of the church as I am and, under our Lord, have responsibility to look after his good name." *AW*

Adapted from *Adventist Today*, 30 January 2007.

Peggy Harris
4309 Sandy Spring Road
Burtonsville, MD 20866-1139
800.433.9274, 301.384.3727 Office, 301.421.9652 Fax
Email: peggymjh@msn.com Web: www.tagnet.org/wash

January 31, 2007

Dr. Jan Paulsen, President
The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600

Dear Dr. Paulsen,

I really appreciate the many contacts you have made with young people in our church. These youth are of special concern for us as parents and grandparents. Also appreciated are your encouraging remarks recently regarding the ordination of women as reported in *The Press-Enterprise*."

Our church at Beltsville, Maryland has long had women serving in ministry. This has proved to be a real blessing but discouragingly painful for them since they had no hope of ever being ordained. It's time for us as a church to progress and see the amazing difference women can make in ministry. Thank you again for your efforts in this area.

I'm sure that the levels of abuse that exist in the church (that our W.A.S.H. Board materials address) would not have been as necessary if our church had fully recognized Women in Ministry as it began to do early in our church history. Now here we are at the end of time with so much healing to take place at the same time as we are spreading the Gospel. This is an impossible task, but our church has all the Heavenly agencies available. What a blessing that is and what a blessing you are!

Most sincerely,

Peggy Harris
W.A.S.H. Board Chair
www.tagnet.org/wash
(Women and Men Against Sexual Harassment and Other Abuses)
peggymjh@msn.com



Aune and Ben Greggias



Bonnie Dwyer and Merikay McLeod



Karen Kotoske, Paula Leen, and Yvonne Wyer



Linda and Auntie Zhu

Faces & Friends at the 2006 Conference



Phetsile Dlamini

Black Friday

For two decades, Kenyan Adventist women from more than 200 Nairobi area churches have operated two major projects—a school and home for street boys (Kilimani Upperhill Children’s Home and Primary School, presently located in Isiolo in the Meru region in the foothills of Mt. Kenya), and a school for Maasai girls in Kajiado, Kenya. Both of these schools provide high-quality care and education for destitute children and orphans.

On July 21, 2006, 89 women’s ministries leaders and volunteers from Nairobi boarded a school bus and headed to Isiolo carrying food, clothing, and other supplies for the 325 boys served by the school in Meru. Foundation funding for the school had not been renewed, and only enough food was available to provide one meal a day for the boys. The women were going to service the facilities and carry food to the boys.

Tragically, the bus’ brakes failed in a hilly area at the Meru-Isiolo road junction in Subuiga, causing an

accident that took the lives of eight church members and injured many more. The names of those who died are:

- Henry Muthini Kiamba**
- Ruth Binge**
- Joyce A. Olum**
- Peris Gechemba Omari**
- Dorcas Mabiria Giteya**
- Esther Kemuma Mweresa**
- Beatrice Achieng Gode**
- Leslie Andale Jabuya (driver)**

The Central Kenya Conference appealed for funds to pay medical, transportation, and funeral expenses for the victims, and generous Kenyans responded with \$36,000—a huge amount in the Kenyan economy. Each family of the eight who died was given approximately \$1,500 to transport the body to rural family homes and for burial expenses. Two who lived for two weeks after the accident incurred medical expenses totaling \$11,000 and then had burial costs. Twenty-eight crash victims were admitted to the hospital and 25 more were treated as outpatients. Of these, four women suffered broken hips, and Mary Gor’s leg was amputated. The fund paid for a portion of these medical expenses.

Mary Gor, who formerly made her livelihood as a vegetable vendor, is the Children’s Ministries Coordinator for her congregation. Although she is confined to a wheelchair and still suffering significant pain, her spirit is strong. Mary requires at least one more surgery and a prosthesis so that she can resume her work and again provide for her family’s needs. It is estimated that the surgery will cost \$1,000 and the artificial leg will cost an additional \$4,000. Because the original \$36,000 fund has been depleted, Mary has no way to defray the cost of the surgery, let alone a prosthesis.

AAW members and friends are urged to contribute to AAW’s benevolence fund. Funds will be earmarked for those whose suffering and medical needs are great. **AW**

To donate, click on the following web site, and find a listing for “Benevolence Fund,” (<https://www73.safesecureweb.com/AAWSafeSecure/Donations.aspx>).

For more info and photos of the deceased crash victims, go to <http://www.sdacentralkenya.org/news/crashupdate.htm>.

Two Women in Nyalgunga, Kenya

By Amy Symons

Pamela Okoth

Pamela Okoth is a real diamond in the rough. She has the most open, honest, and jovial disposition. She maintains this cheerful attitude even when she discusses being inherited by a man who stayed in her home for a month. She had to prepare meals for him and pay him money; and he would wear her deceased husband's clothes. She finally was successful in telling him to leave after he broke her door down one night in a drunken state.

She smiles widely and laughs wholeheartedly while she sits in a 10 foot × 10 foot mud home divided into a living and sleeping area by clean but old and tattered sheets. Her chickens nest under the table opposite the door. Behind her front door, in an area revealed when the curtain is caught by the wind, Pamela stores her kitchen pots and two large sacks of maize.

Pamela sleeps in this small space with her seven children and one grandchild. I am able to feel the planks of the couch beneath the thin cushion on which I am sitting, and I can't fathom how nine people could sleep in this space, much less even remotely comfortably.

Pamela does her cooking outside. If it rains at night her children must go to bed hungry; there is no space to cook in her crowded home. Everything I see in Pamela's home makes me feel her desperation—so many mouths to feed, so little space, Pamela's having a newborn just weeks after her daughter gave birth; both of them without husbands to help care for them. But at the same time I feel such hope sitting there. Her bags of maize show me that she worked hard to gather that much maize and realizes that she must start saving now for the months ahead. Her son comes home while I am talking with her and without a word immediately grabs the pail to go milk the family cow. I later learn from others what I sensed myself from just sitting in her home—that Pamela is one of the most dedicated and hardest working widows in the project [Nyalwodep, operated by AAW 2005 WOYA Alice Ouma].

Her husband died in 2000; she had six children with him, and they are now between the ages of seven and eighteen. She gave birth to a baby boy on November 30, 2005, while I was visiting the project.

After her labor pains started, she attempted to walk to the hospital nearly 10 kilometers away. She didn't make it and gave birth to the baby on a dirt path that morning. She may be the strongest woman I have ever met because when I saw her later that day she looked as though it was just another normal day. Pamela deals with what life hands her and she does it gracefully under the greatest pressures I have ever witnessed.

Rose Odipo

When I entered Rose's home, I marveled at how clean and orderly Rose could make a 10-foot × 10-foot hut made of mud and grass. Crisp and clean tablecloths covered the two tables in the room. Her guests—Job, Alice, and I—lined one wall sitting on a simple wood couch with a cushion, and Rose sat across the table from me in front of a self-hung curtain of clean sheets that divided her home into living and sleeping quarters. In addition to this house, Rose also has another small hut in poor condition that serves not only as her kitchen but for sleeping quarters for her two sons, aged twelve and fifteen, who live with her.

Rose Odipo lost her husband in 1999; he left her with five children. After he died, she survived by selling bananas and tomatoes from the trees and bushes he had planted. Her children range in age from eight to eighteen. Her oldest child, a daughter, never attended primary school because the family couldn't afford school fees and supplies. She recently got married and no longer lives in her mother's house. Rose's 17-year-old son left school after grade six. The discrepancy in education between the genders is common in Kenya, and Rose's family is no exception. But even the boy couldn't continue beyond grade six because the family didn't have the money. Rose's youngest daughter, Ezra, lives with Rose's mother because Rose can't afford to feed her.

When I asked Rose if she had any emergency needs, she requested a mattress because her sons sleep on sacks on the kitchen floor, and she doesn't have a mattress on her bed.

The Nyalwodep project helped Rose to build her house. After her husband died, she refused to be



inherited; culturally, this forced her to stay in the home that she lived in with her husband, even though it was virtually falling down. Rose would send her children to spend the night elsewhere; because of tradition, Luos must sleep in their homes, so Rose remained. During a storm one evening her then eight-year-old son, who was sleeping at a neighbor's house, came running back to his mother's house. Imagine an eight-year-old running back home during a storm, with no sidewalks and no street lights. Two of the walls of Rose's house had fallen down by this point, and her

son feared for his mother's life. When he came to his mother, he was scared she was going to die in the storm, and he told her he would rather die with her than stay sheltered. *AW*

Amy Symons, an attorney, visited Nyalwodep, Kenya, for two months in 2005. She is a graduate of George Washington University School of Law. She became acquainted with the orphans at Alice Ouma's (2005 WOYA) Nyalwodep project and is now trying to assist a few of them with their educational expenses.

Verla Kwiram



Oscar and Eugenia Giordano

Penny Shell, Rudy Torres, and Norma Osborn



2006 Conference Views

Poverty has a woman's face

From my bed I can see her serve some food to the little ones. She turns as she puts down the last plate, and I try to see into her eyes. She avoids mine. But I know she is tired and she wants to go out and talk to her friends. I can hear their laughter through the evening quiet. My child, I fear I have failed you. But what choice, what choice did I have?

This thought could have belonged to any of a million women in developing countries. Poor, and with a partner ill with AIDS or malaria or tuberculosis, these mothers cope the best they can. Often this involves keeping the daughter (nearly always the daughter) home from school. The mother saves on school fees and bus fares and ensures there is someone at home to care for the sick. It allows her to continue to tend the

land, fetch water or sell produce on the market. By the time she herself gets ill, which she will, worn out and vulnerable to infection from her sick husband, the pattern is well established. The daughter takes over from the mother, and maybe a younger sister will now stay home from school too. Their dreams of becoming doctors or teachers are probably gone for good. Their country, because of the lack of choice its poorest suffer, is itself that much the poorer. *AW*

Adapted from an account by Professor Tony Barnett, found at <http://ec.europa.eu/comm/development/body/theme/aids/html/nl0401.htm>.

Adapted from an account
by Professor Tony Barnett

The 2006 Conference

Continued from page 1

hidden suffering and death, they appealed to the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which invited them to launch AAIM.



Paula Leen, Karen Kotoske, and Merikay McLeod

From their headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa, the Giordanos minister to three African divisions, which comprise some 16,000 churches and 4.5 million members. AAIM estimates that more than ten percent of these Adventists have HIV/AIDS, which result in more than four thousands deaths yearly. The Giordanos travel their vast territory encouraging openness about HIV/AIDS, sensitizing church leaders, and mobilizing members to care for the needs of the affected.

Aune Gregg's award for Church Life honors her ministry in two widely separate countries and cultures—her native Finland and the Kingdom of Nepal. She is secretary of the Finnish Adventist Temperance Association and a key influence in the acceptance of Finnish women as pastors. In 1997, through her affiliation with the World Health Organization, Gregg became responsible for the development of Nepal's anti-tobacco education.

Gregg established the Health Education and Tobacco

Intervention Program for the kingdom by means of a new consortium among the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Finnish Adventist temperance organization, and Nepal's Scheer Memorial Hospital. With the creative use of varied teaching methods, which include street dramas, the program has succeeded far beyond expectations, reaching three hundred thousand Nepalese teenagers to date. Nepal's tobacco use rates, once the highest in the world, now approximate European levels.

Paula Leen, an American missionary in Zimbabwe, was recognized for Lifetime Achievement. Leen was sent home on permanent medical leave from her secretarial position in the East Africa Division, but the tremendous needs she had witnessed would not let her rest. She eventually returned to Zimbabwe and founded her own ministry, Zimbabwe Orphans Project (ZOP).

Seventy-two year-old Leen donates her services as director, her Social Security checks, and gifts from supporters for the benefit of "her" people. The region's profound poverty spurs her extraordinary feats. She acquired land to grow food for



Aunty Zhu [Zhu Ai Zhen, WOYA 2006] expressed to me the contagious sweet feeling of being cherished by loving sisters which she experienced at the 2006 AAW Conference. You see, in China, we never had such meeting where sisters and brothers from all parts of the world can meet together and encourage each other. We do meet every Sabbath but it's different for sure when it is going to be with your sisters! I could see the difference from what Aunty Zhu told me. She felt that was like a foretaste of heaven. Rebekah Liu, 2/22/07

the orphanage and provide employment. Needing a reliable source of water, she taught herself to construct dams, wells, and storage tanks. Now her orphanage has twenty acres of gardens, and her orchards offer the area's only employment.

Leen's food program regularly sustains more than two thousand people, and she has given away more than one million articles of clothing. Several times a week, she transports the ill to the nearest hospital eighty miles away, using the same truck that at other times carries

continued

food, schoolchildren, and medicines, and increasingly doubles as the local hearse. She rises at 3:00 in the morning and by flashlight embarks on the endless demands of the day.

Merikay McLeod was presented with the award for Outstanding Achievement for landmark lawsuit that brought her equal pay for equal work to women employees of church-related businesses. In the early 1970s, McLeod was a young assistant book editor at Pacific Press when she discovered not only that she was paid significantly less than male peers, but also that women employees were ineligible for head-of-household benefits. The women's lower pay scale reduced their Social Security income in retirement as well.

Her efforts failed to correct the discrepancies through conventional channels with the Press administration. For McLeod, it was a matter of justice to persevere with a complaint to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and a subsequent class action lawsuit on behalf of the Press's women employees. Hers was

the first lawsuit in the nation to apply Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to church-connected entities; it was the precedent-setting case for women in many denominations to secure equal pay for their work.

McLeod's pursuit of fairness exacted a price—the Press fired her, her friends rejected her, and she is still a controversial figure for many Adventists. But she reports no regrets following her conscience and believes that God continues to bless her life. She lives in Northern California and is a national award-winning journalist.

Linda Zhu (Zhu Qing Yan) is a Chinese third-generation Adventist and the AAW's award recipient for Community Life. After completing graduate studies in business, she became the first employee of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in her country and established the headquarters for ADRA China.

Until recently, Zhu was ADRA's director for its straw-bale buildings program, which has resulted in the culturally appropriate construction in northern China of more than six hundred houses as well as three schools. Straw-bale walls have far better insulating qualities than those built with traditional materials and are safer in earthquakes. They are ecologically superior, utilizing what was once waste



Norah Bagarinka
and Sandra Schultz

rice straw, and reduce pollution from coal fumes released while firing bricks.

The project won the Building Social Housing Foundation's World Habitat Award in 2005 at the UN Habitat Conference.

Consequently, the Chinese government is adopting the building model. With this success firmly underway, Zhu is turning her talents to HIV/AIDS prevention for ADRA.

Zhu Ai Zhen, a lay elder of the Beijing Adventist Church, was recognized for contributions in Spiritual Leadership. Zhen was the daughter of an Adventist pastor's family and studied nursing. In 1960, shortly after her marriage, she was charged as a counterrevolutionary and sentenced as a criminal for three years, with another term to be served as a nurse in a re-education camp. She was released in 1971.

Retirement from nursing meant more time for church work, and Zhen devoted herself full time as a volunteer. In 1995, she was called to preaching and to date has planted ten house churches, some with two hundred members. As an ordained elder, she preaches, provides pastoral care, and solemnizes communion and funeral services for her house church members.

In addition to the women's awards, **Rudy Torres** was named Champion of Justice, in appreciation for his courageous support of Adventist women in pastoral ministry.

Throughout the conference, other notable women from around the globe brought their stories of service and devotion to God. Professor Phyllis Tribble delivered a knock-your-socks-off textual analysis of the story of Miriam and the Sabbath sermon on Naomi. Verla Kwiram, AAW president, is the remarkable woman who planned, organized, and saw to every detail of the conference with tireless personal warmth. (Verla, all of us who attended rise up and call you blessed.)

The Association of Adventist Women will celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary at the 2007 conference October 24-28 at the Hilton Hotel in Silver Spring, Maryland. **AW**

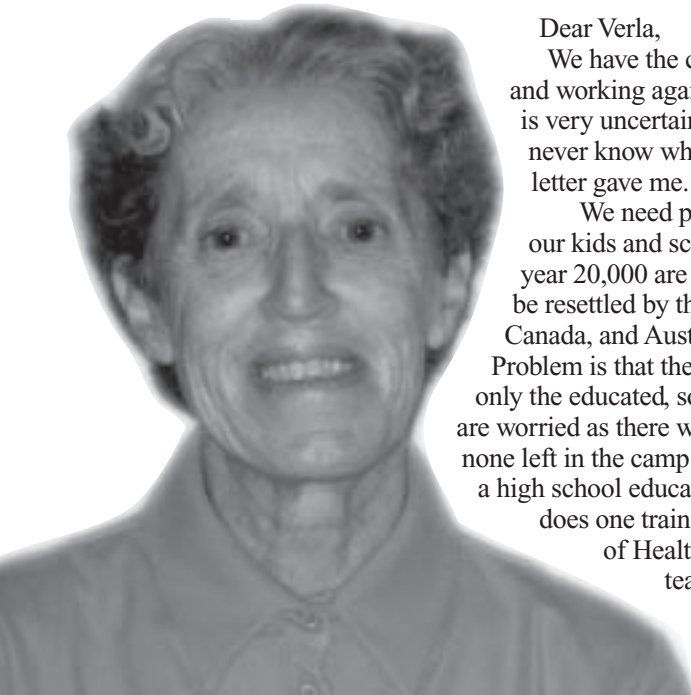
Carmen Seibold writes from Columbus, Ohio.

© 2006 *Spectrum*/AAF; reprinted with permission from *Spectrum*, Vol. 34, Issue 4, Fall 2006



Update on Eden Valley Academy, Thailand

Helen Hall, a 2005 AAW Woman of the Year, is director of Eden Valley Academy in a remote area of Thailand near the border with Myanmar. On March 10, 2007, she sent the following letter to AAW President Verla Kwiram.



Dear Verla,

We have the computer up and working again but e-mail is very uncertain. You will never know what a lift your letter gave me.

We need prayer for our kids and school. Next year 20,000 are going to be resettled by the USA, Canada, and Australia.

Problem is that they are taking only the educated, so all NGOs are worried as there will be almost none left in the camp with even a high school education. How does one train hundreds of Health Medics, teachers who have only a Grade 4 education? Almost

all Adventists in the camp have applied for resettlement, a very sad indictment of their interests and concern for others. Right now the Burmese are attacking near the Mae Sariang area and are also moving close, on the Burma side, to our area. Many refugees are camped near the border and are being fed by AID agencies. The entire world it seems is mad.

It is so difficult not to be discouraged at present when so many people on our staff seem to show interest only in resettlement. The minute I am out of the school, they just roam around and leave their classes without a teacher. Most of these are the newly arrived from Burma who claim to want to help us, but!!

Our funding is really down the drain this year. Probably my fault as I have had not time to write much, many teachers sick, but in addition, working in a field outside of Australia's area makes it difficult. Many of our faithful supporters over the years have gone into retirement homes and that means they have no income. Others have died. There are groups doing a fine work, who go from church to church campaigning all the time and are visible, but for us here that is not so. I wanted to put an ad. in the Record, but was told by the editor that we are not an official church institution, so he could not do it. I sent Nathan a note about our baptisms, and he says he will try and get that in soon, just to remind folk we are still here. Anyhow I was feeling a bit low and I prayed that the Lord would send me some encouragement. That morning your email arrived and that evening, I got a phone call saying the Burma Karen Christian Association in America had sent some money for us. I have never even heard of the group, so the Lord told me to trust Him and not to look at the present situation. Thanks for your encouragement.

Now we have been flat out trying to get graduation organized and over. I had the usual problems with teachers

afraid to fail anyone for fear of retaliation from parents.

Our current principal wants to pass everyone to have a big graduation group, but the standards are going down, down, and I refused to do that. We pushed a few through Year 10, on the condition that they could not continue to Year 11. Most schools in the camp stop at 10.

Anyhow we had around 85 grads in Year 10 and 12, and they had a wonderful day. We discovered, however, that few were willing to help with cleaning of school, decoration of hall, etc., not at all like last year's group. They wanted to be the stars but do nothing. The young teachers, who were in charge, were very disillusioned about this. Now we are calling for all who intend to continue school next year to come and work.

We need to move our bamboo, given by NGOs to our area, move books to our new library and pack others to take out of the camp. Reduces the danger of losing all in fires. All this needs able-bodied students. I am at the stage of no work, no school. One kid refused to have his hair cut, then got one of those queer cuts where it sticks up all the way across the middle (don't know what they term it), came back to school like that and was told by the teacher it was unsatisfactory. He whereupon went to get his mother, who called the teacher everything in front of the entire school. Next day I had a little talk with mother and son and suggested they find a new school for next year. This kid threatened to burn down the teacher's house.

Violence is on the increase in the camps. If you can't have what you want, smash something or get out a knife and stab someone. I refuse to tolerate such behavior. Refugees can behave like ladies and gentlemen, too. Too many NGOs make all sorts of weak excuses about the kids. One of our staff, a young teacher, had a disagreement with his girlfriend. She hid in the bushes and knifed him as he went past. He is still in hospital with serious injuries. When I asked what was happening to the girl, I was told it was a family matter and no one could interfere. Good luck if we get these kinds of kids in our society in the West. They will fit well with the undisciplined already around.

This year schools are so hard hit by resettlement that they are trying to run two sessions of school daily using the same teachers. I doubt it will work well as most teachers are married ladies and need time to see to the needs of their families. Carrying water takes time, cooking on an open fire also, not to mention getting kids organized to study by candlelight each evening. They also have to carry food on distribution days. Some schools have shut down senior school entirely, and others are running on only Primary level. Don't know what we will be doing as no one knows who is going when, so how can we plan?

I wish computers would work properly. Our hard drive began to take 15 minutes to open the Word program and an equally long time to close down. Then it froze. We took it into Mae Sot and got a new hard drive installed. I was told that we should not save things or work on C drive. As they had installed everything on the old computer, I wonder why they didn't do it correctly then. Anyhow we had all our exam papers on it and could access nothing. We had to postpone exams by a day to get the computer fixed! It has been a frantic week because of that. Then some teachers copied papers onto our stick, and, unknown

to us, there was a virus. Meanwhile Mo, our computer guy, copied everything off the old disc onto the stick! Great. It took more time to clean that up.

Then I discovered the computer was not saving things. I spend hours proofreading exams, a huge task, as their English is never very accurate, only to find when I opened the computer later to print, nothing had saved. Actually four papers had completely disappeared. We were up late into the night trying to get things ready for the next day. Now e-mail is queer, too. I sent three emails to the office in Bangkok. We have decided to give awards to those who have taught for many years, and I wanted to get the plaques made. The e-mails arrived blank. I sent one more and went down to the

Internet café in Merah Mart to make sure it really went. Blank again. We need an expert to tell us what is wrong with all these messages lost in space. It tells us it is sent.

Anyhow, we have four more days and four more exams, then junior and middle school will have closing exercises. After that, I have two weeks to train teachers for the next school year and try to sort out what teachers we really will have, then home to Australia for a month. Hope to get some swimming and hiking done. Don't know how much fund-raising will be possible as orders have been given to churches not to allow it to be done for other fields. I have a few friends in charge of churches who may stick their necks out for us, but maybe the Lord has better

plans. We will have to pray and see.

I think your hectic schedule is much more packed than mine. You do a mighty job keeping up with all. I hope all goes well with your plans for meetings this year. I still think of the wonderful time I had with you folk and of the warmth of your friendship.

I don't know how to plan for the future of our school but God does, and we must just pray and trust in him.

May God continue to bless your work.

Helen AW

Donations to Eden Valley Academy may be sent to AAW, P O Box 25025, Seattle, WA 98165, and designated "EVA".

Book Review

Ten Miles From The Nearest Sin

Reviewed by Peggy Harris, Board Chair
Women and Men Against Sexual Harassment and Other Abuses (W.A.S.H.)
www.tagnet.org/wash

A powerful Christian novel that vividly contrasts the benign settings of conservative Christianity with evil incarnate. This fictional story, set in Takoma Park, Maryland, and in Angwin, Napa Valley, California, describes, with careful sensitivity, the abuse of a small boy and the chilling consequences on his life and on the lives of those he touched.

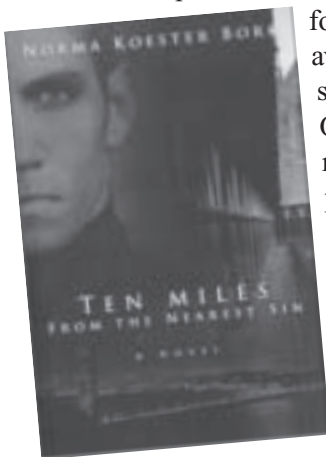
The author, Norma Koester Bork, has captured in this riveting book the compelling disastrous effects of hiding abuse under a carpet of denial and subterfuge. Sadly this story, though fiction, has many of the aspects of the many chronicles of abuse told to me over the past years.

I received an announcement of the book and ordered it because I am familiar with the locations where the story takes place. My husband read the book before I did, and it made him angry. Angry at the indifferent attitudes of church officials when confronted with the rape of a college student. Angry at the all-too-familiar ignoring when objections are raised at the cover-up. Angry at the results of not dealing with abuse when it occurs and letting

it go on to harm so many other individuals.

This book should be used as a tool to help us prevent making the same mistakes over and over again.

As the author points out—if background checks are in place and used, if the procedures that have been put in place are followed when an accusation is brought forward, then many of these problems could be avoided today. But only if church leaders and school administrators use the tools available. Otherwise they will continue to bear the responsibility of the lives destroyed, the life potential lost, and victims re-victimized. AW



Norma Koester Bork, Ph.D., is a retired professor of English, businesswoman, and noted speaker. She lives in Loma Linda, California, and is married with two sons and two “extraordinary” grandchildren.

Ten Miles from the Nearest Sin, Norma Koester Bork, 2006, ISBN 1-57921-842-3 WinePress Publishing, PO Box 428, Enumclaw, WA 98022, (877) 421-7323, www.winepressbooks.com (\$19.95 + S&H).

News From The Front

19 February 2007

Dear Friends:

Yesterday a friend called to tell me twin 10-month-old babies had been dumped at her factory. The mother couldn't afford them, and the father refused to recognize his responsibilities. They were dumped without a change of clothing or even a bottle!

Friday we brought in more than 20 patients, again on Saturday two more emergencies had to be brought in, and last night one rushed to nearby rural hospital and three more brought in today, which were two ladies in extended labor and a man running from the police and shot in the knee. They caught him with diamonds.

Since diamonds were discovered in a nearby area, more than 18,000 people have rushed there to search for them, but they've been chased, beaten, harassed and a few have even died, one being a lady badly beaten who had a baby on her back. The baby died from the beating. We are troubled every day we travel by being stopped by the police to search us for foreign currency or diamonds, but I think we have them mostly convinced not to trouble us, so now they usually let us go thru. But every day there are two or three or more roadblocks to go thru. Someone said there were also emeralds in the area, and some of our workers started to scratch the ground on the orphanage site and came up with what looks like pieces of melted iron. Someone told them where there is iron there's emeralds. I told them I hope they are wrong, because if 18,000 come here and the police chasing them, we too would be chased off the property!

An update of what is happening here is long overdue to you, but some of the things are quite sensitive so I did not dare to put them in an e-mail because anything negative said can land me in jail. I'm sorry that I haven't gotten an update to most of you before now, but it has been an incredibly busy time with problems of every sort greatly escalated!

In e-mails we've spoken about rises in prices, but to give you an idea how really bad it is, last month our water and garbage bill for the house in town was Z\$12,000; this month it's Z\$129,000. And no, I haven't used more than before. I looked again today for sunscreen for some of our albinos who are suffering from skin cancer. The current bank rate is Z\$250 to US\$1. The cheapest I could

find today Z\$44,540. If my math is correct, that's more than US\$160. Just 1/2 pint of cream is Z5,000 or US\$20. The cheapest I could find today of powdered milk, which was only 500 grams, was Z\$11,000 or more than US\$40. Peanut butter is Z\$5,700, which is US\$22, and prices of medicines even more unreasonable.

We cannot buy sufficient food, medicine and other items at this rate so don't have an option but to use the parallel market, which is dangerous—Z\$3,500 to US\$1 a couple of weeks ago, then \$4,200 at the beginning of the week and presently \$5,000; however, it does sometimes go down—especially since the desperately malnourished and starving children must have milk and porridge; we add peanut butter to it for extra nutrition. There are a lot of food shortages with often no bread, margarine, milk, cooking oil, flour, sugar, and other items to be had, but since we have to come to town so often as an ambulance (almost every day and some nights) we are always searching for needed food each time. We are seeing a lot of severely malnourished babies, and even our rural hospital has appealed to us for food for them and for the regular patients because the provincial hospital which is supposed to furnish them with food has been unable to do so.

With a severe shortage of doctors and nurses who have fled to greener pastures, the current strike by medical personnel has created even more disasters with people literally dying in the hallways! Our own Vivian, the albino girl who had to have her ear removed because of a fast-growing cancer and her surgery rescheduled 5 times, has had a severe recurrence and it has apparently grown inward. With only one radiation machine in the country and that one broken down for several months, it has been impossible to get her treatment. When the doctor finally saw her again last week, he said she needed treatment immediately; but when calling Harare to get her booked, we were told there was no opening until March! I was sure this would be a death sentence for her, and she is in very severe pain. Because of this, we took her down to Harare anyway, praying that somehow she could be treated earlier, which thankfully has happened.

The owner of the house we're renting has decided he wants to sell it and is

asking US\$100,000. It is a very large house with plenty of storage, which is just what we need for fuel and food for all the families we are helping. The acreage looks to be about 1 1/2 acres. It's almost impossible to find a place to rent.

Midst all of this negativity there are bright spots. Margo Rees, who has been here helping, has been a wonderful help but she is leaving shortly. Marcel from the Netherlands has arrived but is only here for less than a month as he's visiting other projects in the area. Roland Anderson, a social worker from California, arrived on February 3 and will be here for two months. Some folks from Australia arrive mid-February for a month, another in mid-May, and a few others in July and August. There are other inquiries so there may be more coming, and I'm so thankful for those who saw how desperately I need help and have been busy trying to recruit volunteers, for which I'm extremely grateful.

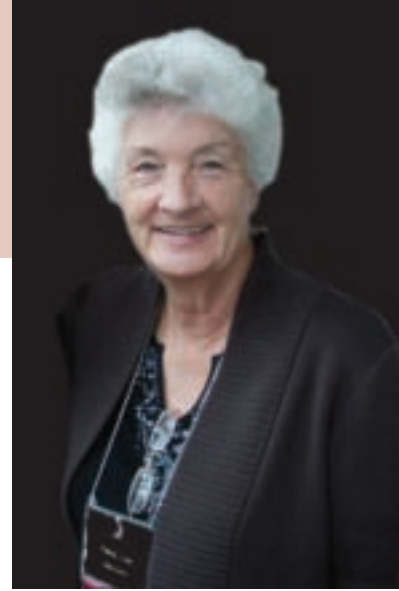
Having medical emergencies to take into town almost every day and some nights puts me behind on a lot of other urgent matters, so please be patient if you don't get prompt replies. We are hoping to get to some of the surrounding clinics with medicines as we did last week since there are extreme shortages of badly needed meds. I'm so grateful for those of you who are assisting us to procure more. We've been helping a couple of hospitals with meds as well.

It has started to rain a bit, even though more than two months late, which we're happy to see, and have planted part of the fields.

We have additional children in the orphanage—against the rules—just because they're suffering with AIDS and severely malnourished, and some have other health problems. Our children are precious, and we see many improvements with most of them. Two sisters, who seem to be severely retarded, are a challenge for us. I thought initially they may not be able to hear, but that isn't the problem. We had hoped to keep in the requested two- to four-year range, but most of those brought to us by Social Service are quite a lot older. It will be wonderful to have volunteers here to spend some time with them and give them some of the TLC they badly need.

A big thank you to each of you for your prayers, letters, assistance, and finding us help. It is appreciated more

Paula Leen, a 2006 AAW Woman of the Year, operates an orphanage in Zimbabwe. In an effort to feed employees, helpers, and their families, she has planted acres of orchards and vegetables that feed more than two thousand people. Here is a recent communication from her.



than I can say. I will leave this today to see if Margo doesn't want to add some to it since she is coming in tomorrow.

Paula AAW

Donations to the Zimbabwe Orphans Project may be sent to AAW, P O Box 25025, Seattle, WA 98165, and designated "ZOP".

Hi from Margo [Rees]:

What a blessing it has been to be here with Paula these last few months and experience firsthand what she has told us about in her e-mails, like late-night emergencies that have us rushing all the way to town, an hour's drive away, which Paula mentioned above, or to the clinic not so far away. Our matron came to my door at 10:30 one night when Paula was in town to say her neighbor was about to give birth and needed transport to the clinic. The two of them, along with two other women, had walked quite some way from Tambudzai's home to the orphanage in the dark. We drove to the clinic where the nurse said she should be admitted as the baby's head was showing! Thankfully no complications were expected, so we didn't need to take her to town.

But then last Saturday, the head war veteran in our area (who is very

appreciative of what Paula is doing for the community) came to see me in Paula's absence with a friend whose cousin had been in labor for three days, to seek transport to get her into town to the hospital. She was from an Apostolic family who do not believe in doctors or hospitals, but this man took it upon himself to call the police who went and saw her condition and escorted her to our local clinic. Then these two men came to us, so off we went, collected her from the clinic and drove into town, along with a nurse. We had to find a store to buy a razor blade to prepare her for delivery as they don't have them at the hospital! When we later returned to pick up the nurse and the cousin, we found the young woman had had a caesarean and both baby girl and mother were fine, but we had to go and find a chemist open to pick up some solutions for the IV, which the hospital didn't have.

The children are a great joy and very loving and lovable. It touches my heart when they run to greet me as I get out of the vehicle, "Aunty Margo, Aunty Margo!" and cling to my legs. They love being cuddled, and I love doing it.

I'm so glad Paula will have Roland's support when I leave and others during the next several months from the prospective volunteers. It is truly

a stretching experience to see how people live in such abject poverty and suffering from illness, especially AIDS, and to realize one can have a part in improving their lives, especially Paula, who lives out here, but even those of us who come and participate for however much time we can.

Living out here in the rural area and seeing the day-to-day suffering of the people, basic foodstuffs going up in price or just being unavailable, school fees being raised, exercise books going up from \$130 when I arrived in September to over \$1,300 now, makes one long for the day when Jesus returns to take us home and put an end to it all, when there will be no more suffering, only rejoicing.

I join with Paula in thanking you all for your prayers and support, which really bolster our spirits when we think of prayers ascending around the world for this project.

Thank you, dear friends.
Margo Rees
Florida AAW

AAW Conference Sequel

Was it just coincidence or providence that last fall I happened to look at *The Adventist Woman* advertising the upcoming AAW conference, *Globalization and the Adventist Woman*, in Seattle? Since I had been to Rwanda a few months earlier, I was intrigued to see that three of the women to be honored were working in Africa. And besides, the theme for the year at Glendale City Church, where I am a member, is "A Year of Service!" After visiting Rwanda, I was impressed to open myself to all possibilities of service to others.

After hearing Paula Leen's [WOYA 2006] story and her testimony at the conference, I came away with a determination to help in whatever way the Lord would lead. Only a few weeks later, I had the opportunity to share Paula's story and her segment of the Woman-of-the-Year Award video with my congregation. At the end of the presentation, the pastor offered that, should any feel impressed to go to Zimbabwe and help Paula, the church would cover their airfare costs. The members were so inspired by Paula's work and challenged when they saw her attempt to



stand at the end of the video and struggle to walk, the feeling was, if she can do it, why not me? Ten people indicated they would like to be a part of helping with Paula's ministry.

This began a ministry of service that is still building. As a result of sharing and networking, we were able to connect with Global Health Public Health students at Loma Linda University who, as part of a class assignment, wrote grants to support the needs at the orphanage. We also have students from La Sierra University who are committed to going over and working at the orphanage.

We have recorded the journey of our first volunteer who went to help Paula. You can see that story on our Web site at www.reellifemedia.org. It is under the media tab and then Zimbabwe project. Three other volunteers are waiting their turn.

I am so delighted to help coordinate the volunteers going to visit the orphanage so that Paula can have a steady stream of volunteers. God is good! Coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous! AAW
Sandra Rifembark Schultz



courtesy Robert Aichinger

DONORS to AAW

The AAW is immensely grateful to the following donors, whose generous gifts make the ongoing activities of the AAW possible. The contributors are designated here by the ancient order of angels:

Supernals (Angels of radiant energy): \$2,000 +
Association of Adventist Forums, Inland
Northwest Chapter
Elly Economou
Green Lake Church, Seattle
Verla and Alvin Kwiram

Celestials (Angels of connections): \$1,000-\$1,999
Rhona Kwiram
Carolyn Lacy
Roger Phillips
Mary and Carlos Schwantes
Marta Teel

Seraphim (Angels of love, light, and fire): \$500-\$999
Bonnie Dwyer
Betty Howard
Mildred Stilson
Phyllis Tribble
Yvonne Wyer

Cherubim (Reminders of joy, happiness): \$200-\$499
Glenna and Alan Eady
Alleta Figoni
Merikay McLeod
Lyla Neumann
Darilee and Elmar Sakala
Dana Waters

Thrones (Bringers of justice): \$100-\$199
Lucille Bertholf

Karen and Jon Cole
Betty Cox
Hurda and Julio Duran
Eugenia and Oscar Giordano
Stella and Josef Greig
Karen and Thomas Kotoske
Stephanie and Jeremy Mays
Juli Miller
Carmen Seibold
Penny Shell
Thais Thrasher
Helen Zolber

Archangels (Carriers of God's will to humanity): \$50-\$99
Beverly Habada
Constance Johnson, in memory of Wildred E. Osgood
Jean Hardt Mautz
Alyce J. Pudewell
Lorelei and Doyle Saxby, in memory of Gayle Saxby
Lottie Ziprick

Angels (Guardians of humans): \$0-\$49
Norah Bagarinka
Wendy and Sergio Hernandez
Ellen Miyoung Park
Linh Tran
Hedwig and Donald Wharton

Help Us Locate Past Woman-of-the-Year Awardees

AAW is eager to contact former Woman-of-the-Year awardees for the 25th anniversary conference in October. We have no contact information for the women listed below:

Mary Elizabeth Henderson, 1991
Judy Lovett, 1988
Anita MacKey, 1984
Irene Osborne, 1986
Carol Porter, 1994

Please forward mailing address, telephone number, or e-mail address to carolynlacy137@verizon.net, or mail to AAW, P. O. Box 25025, Seattle, WA 98165-1925.

Lost and Found

Found at conference: Fuchsia-colored Prospirit jacket, size L, knitted cuffs and bottom, zippered front, with embroidered flower at left front near shoulder.

Renew Your AAW Membership

Renewing your membership helps keep AAW alive. The preferred method is to go to the Web site at www.aaw.cc, and register for another year. Because you will be entering your information personally, this will result in more accurate data.

If you do not have access to the Internet*, send your name, address, and phone number along with the membership dues (\$30/yr) to the following address:

AAW
PO Box 25025
Seattle, WA 98165-1925

*Correspondence by e-mail saves the AAW money.



Association of Adventist Women

Mission Statement

The Association of Adventist Women seeks to develop and promote women as leaders in Seventh-day Adventist organizations, congregations, and communities.

Goals

The image of God, as embodied in the skills and insights of women, will be more fully reflected in our churches and communities as we achieve our goals:

To create significant opportunities for women to be full partners at all levels of church life.

To promote leadership skills among Adventist women of all ages and backgrounds.

To highlight Adventist women's opportunities, contributions, and achievements using print, electronic, and personal communications.

To establish a network of Adventist women leaders who can inspire and mentor other women.

To demonstrate open and collaborative models by working in complementary ways with other church organizations.

Revised 10/17/04

E-mail news, article, and photo* submissions to Carolyn Lacy, Editor, at carolynlacy137@verizon.net.

*Photos must have a resolution of at least 350 dpi. If you are unsure of the resolution or dpi of your image, you can view its dpi setting in the image's properties. When scanning your images, set your image size to 350 dpi. When taking a photo with a digital camera, be sure to set the image quality indicator to the highest quality setting. If you are mailing a photo print or CD-ROM, send it with a return address to Carolyn Lacy, *The Adventist Woman*, 13406 S. Echo Lake Rd., Snohomish, WA 98296-5419.

The Adventist Woman

The Adventist Woman is the official newsletter of the Association of Adventist Women and is published four times a year. Members of the association receive the newsletter as a benefit of membership. To join the association, go to the Web site at www.aaw.cc. Or write to the AAW at PO Box 25025, Seattle, WA 98165-1925. If questions remain, e-mail Verla Michel Kwiram at vkwiram@aaw.cc.

AAW Staff

President

VERLA MICHEL KWIRAM

Immediate Past President

PATRICIA J. FOSTER

Editor

CAROLYN LACY

Web Site Technical Architect

WILLIAM NORDGREN

Webmistress

ELIZABETH MURRELL RICKABY

Graphic Designer

BRUCE FENNER

Membership and Circulation

CAROLYN SLEPNIKOFF LACY

Accountant

GAYLE TERAMOTO

Senior Advisor

HELEN THOMPSON ZOLBER

Resource Development Coordinator

AMY WORRELL KNELLER

Not-for-Profit Oversight

RHONA KWIRAM

Contributing Authors

VERLA MICHEL KWIRAM

KAREN KOTOSKE

ROSE MUSEO

Association of Adventist Women

PO Box 25025

Seattle, WA 98165-1925

Fax: 206-542-8886

Email: vkwiram@aaw.cc

Web Site: www.aaw.cc



25th Annual Conference
of the



Association of Adventist Women
Returning home to AAW's beginnings

October 24-28, 2007

Hilton Hotel • Silver Spring, Maryland



For more information, keep checking our Web site at www.aaw.cc.

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #66
NAMPA, ID

ASSOCIATION OF ADVENTIST WOMEN
PO Box 25025
Seattle, WA 98165-1925
Address Service Requested