

# Conference

July 2009

# Priorities

Southeastern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

SECC Newsletter

## Orange County Outreach Integrates Evangelism, Sabbath School *By Jocelyn Fay*

For many years Rudy Bermudez, conference Sabbath school director, has been promoting outreach as one of the four goals of Sabbath school.

"When I thought about it," he said, "I realized that the Year of Evangelism and the outreach goal of Sabbath school fit together perfectly."

This idea prompted him to answer Yes when three Filipino Adventists from Laguna Woods asked him for help implementing an outreach program in their community.

After asking for God's guidance and gaining the approval and support of SECC's Filipino pastors, Bermudez and the members, Ben and Rhodelle Martinez and Jocelyn Sonsona, planned weekly health and wellness presentations at a local golf clubhouse. These began the first Sabbath of March. About a dozen people have been attending



*Levi Pagunsan, a physician, gave health lectures on Sabbath afternoons during March, April, and May. At a social gathering on May 17 he invited those who had been attending the health lectures to attend weekly Bible studies beginning in June.*

the presentations regularly, including eight who are not members of the Adventist Church.

"We spent three months focusing on physical health and building relationships," Bermudez said. "We opened the program with a birthday celebration, music, and a health lecture by Levi Pagunsan, a physician. Then we served refreshments to continue the fellowship."

After several Sabbath afternoons of health lectures and social interaction, several people asked where the nearest Adventist church was located. They were directed to the Orange Coast, Laguna Niguel, and other nearby Adventist

churches, and they have started attending Sabbath worship services.

As part of the ongoing program, a social event was held at the clubhouse on Sunday, May 17. About 100 people attended, 70 of whom were from the community.

"We began with six couples renewing



*At a Sunday afternoon social event in May, it was announced that weekly Bible studies would begin in June and all were welcome to attend them.*

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*To promote social interaction after the weekly health lectures, the Adventist hosts provide refreshments.*

## Conference Announces

## All New Website

Southeastern California Conference launched its new website May 1. We invite you to check it out at [www.seccadventist.org](http://www.seccadventist.org), but please be patient as we continue the development process.

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their wedding vows,” Bermudez said. “Several non-Adventists participated, including a pastor who offered the opening prayer and a guest singer. An Adventist family string ensemble also performed. After the health lecture by Dr. Pagunsan, we had delicious food, coordinated by Rhodelle Martinez and brought by several families, and Jocelyn Sonsona led us in playing some games.”

Before Pagunsan offered prayer to end the event, he invited everyone to continue to attend the ongoing weekly health lectures, which would be followed in June by Bible studies.

“I noticed a feeling of bonding, of family, as the people who attended went their separate ways,” said Bermudez. “I believe this approach will have a positive result and we will be able to replicate this program with

our outreach ministries. We continue to pray that through this ongoing ministry, many people will adopt a lifestyle of physical, social, and spiritual wholeness and above all, will be prepared for God’s kingdom.” □



*Rudy Bermudez, right, introduces four birthday celebrants during the opening of a community outreach program in Laguna Woods.*

## Loma Linda Academy *Begins Gym Construction* By Mary Morgan

After months of planning, working with the city of Loma Linda, updating plans with the architect, building committee, and physical education staff, a construction crew is hard at work laying footings and preparing the foundation for the new junior high gym at Loma Linda Academy. Contractor Fred Simental can be credited with much of the success of the project moving forward.

While the downturn in the economy has created some challenges for moving ahead with this major project, it has also brought the blessing of a decrease in building costs. A year ago the gym was estimated to cost \$9 million. Now,



*Loma Linda Academy has begun a major building project—a junior high gym. Construction costs are anticipated to be less than \$5 million, which is \$4 million less than the project was expected to cost a year ago.*

department and our PE staff are thoroughly excited with the progress being made on the new junior high gym right before our eyes. The completion of this building means safe and adequate space in which to conduct our PE classes and extra facilities in which to practice for and hold athletic events. We can hardly wait!”

For almost 40 years the existing high school gym has served the needs for seventh- through twelfth-grade students. Currently 750-800 students use the facility each week. The new gym will provide much-needed additional space for classes in the junior high and relieve the overcrowding.

The new facility will include a full-sized basketball court, volleyball courts, locker rooms, staff offices, a fitness and weight room, a multipurpose room, a serving kitchen, and classrooms. The new gym will also provide additional space for varsity and junior varsity after-school games.

“Our plan is to have the new gym ready for students to begin the 2010-2011 school year,” reported L. Roo McKenzie, head principal. “It is an exciting time for Loma Linda Academy and our sports program.” □



*Loma Linda Academy’s new junior high gym will relieve overcrowding in the high school gym and provide additional classroom space.*

That is a saving of \$4 million from only last year.

Gary Eggers, athletic director, states, “The LLA athletic

## Gym Floor Lives a Second Life

*at San Diego Academy*

*By Julie Savino*

As the vice-principal of San Diego Academy stood at the corner of the volleyball court during the team's first home game, she couldn't stop smiling. In fact, all day long she found herself wandering back to the gym to admire the shiny, newly recycled wood floor that had received its final touches that very day.

This wood floor has a unique, faith-filled story.

Earlier in the previous school year, when the school's coaching team, Bud Schaffner and Richard Hebbel, and the vice principal, Julie Savino, were together, Hebbel brought up an idea. When Escondido Academy moved into its new facility in the next few weeks, its gym, with its wood floor that was only four years old, would be demolished. Hebbel wondered what the chance would be for San Diego Academy to obtain that beautiful floor. San Diego's students had been playing on concrete since 2005, the year they moved into their new school building.

This newly formed committee of Schaffner, Hebel, and Savino met with Mervin Kesler, principal of San Diego Academy, to present a proposal: Escondido would be offered a donation for their wood, Paradise Valley Credit Union would make a donation for the removal and storage of the wood, and the committee would begin a campaign to raise money for the laying of the floor. It was their hope that ten interested alumni and friends of the academy would donate the \$70,000 it would require to install the floor by graduation day 2008.

The money was donated to Escondido Academy, and the wood was stored in a warehouse in National City, but there it sat. The first third of the necessary pledges came quickly. Raising the rest seemed questionable. The committee began to get discouraged, but God showed them He wasn't finished yet.

Out of the blue, several individuals offered their services. Although none of these offers panned out, they gave the coaches hope. Before too long other money-saving options were brought to the table. Even the final quote

dropped \$5,000 and would still include adding new wood to make up the gym size difference, striping, and a beautiful Cavalier logo for the center of the floor.

To make the story even sweeter, the academy's donor list was broadened to include parents, interested organizations, alumni, churches and supportive friends. The enthusiasm spread like wildfire, leaving them more than enough money for the additional purchase of an upgraded scoreboard.

What began as a dream back in November 2007 was completed in September 2008. Even though they missed their graduation deadline, the school was ready for their Lady Cavaliers' first home volleyball game.

And who would they play? The Escondido Lady Hawks. Both schools enjoyed "home court advantage" that day. They celebrated with a simple ribbon-cutting ceremony at the gym entrance and a cake reception at the end of the game.

The Bible cites several occasions when the Israelite leaders left stones or monuments as a memory of God's leading. Near the southeast

corner of the gym floor there is a small patch of red paint that somehow missed the sanding machine's touch. That Escondido Academy Hawk red will always remain as a memory of San Diego Academy's faith to let God lead.

The new floor has brought great joy to the students and constituents of San Diego Academy. Varsity basketball, K-12 physical education classes, and local church groups use the revitalized gym regularly. It's been amazing to see the reaction when other schools arrive for games. They walk in and ask, "Didn't this used to be concrete?"

San Diego Academy students feel proud that they have such a nice floor for their home games. What a blessing it has been to share this gym floor with others. ▢



*Cutting the ribbon at the beginning of the first game on the new gym floor are Bud Schaffner, coach; Julie Savino, vice principal; and Mervin Kesler, principal.*



## Palm Springs Pathfinders *Step Up to the Plate*

By Lyle Burke

Pathfinders from the Palm Springs church are stepping up to the plate in a literal way this year.

Their much-anticipated Pathfinder Camporee will be held next month in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, a long way from home. They are excited about the chance to get away from home and meet 35,000 other Pathfinders with the same interests. Just think about it: 35,000 Pathfinders, all in one place at one time. Forget about any ideas of rest and relaxation.

When the Palm Springs Pathfinders attended the camporee in Oshkosh in 2004, funds were raised and matched by Palm Springs church members, club members boarded a chartered Celebrity Tour bus, and off they went to Oshkosh, tents and all.

This year, with economic challenges on every front, the youth and their leaders, Bobby and Jeremie Wilcox,

assumed responsibility for raising approximately \$3,000 to finance their Oshkosh adventure.

As they say, necessity is the mother of invention. Put a bunch of kids together, give them guidance from creative parents

and leaders, and you have a force to be dealt with. They conducted a car wash on April 5 and a garage sale on April 26. But nothing compares to their well-orchestrated Mexican dinner on April 19.

With their menus printed, tablecloths selected, table decorations in place, and appropriate music playing, the "El Pathfinder Restaurant" opened for business. One by one church members entered, were politely greeted by a young host, and seated.

Immediately the hosts asked, "What would you like to drink? We have horchata and juice."

With perfect timing they inquired, "Would you like to see a menu?" and "While you are making your selection, here is your beverage." Having had restaurants of my own in Palm Springs in the past and being critical of service, I found it refreshing to see the Pathfinders providing better service than many well-known restaurants.

Try walking away from excellent service, good food, and children "giving their all" without leaving a rather substantial donation. This is what life is about—children learning to meet their needs through innovative ideas, working to achieve their goals as young Pathfinders.

The Palm Springs church's Pathfinder Club meets regularly with activities designed to develop youth into responsible adults. For more information, call the church office at 760-327-5112. □



*Discussing the menu at their fund-raiser are Palm Springs Pathfinders Rachael Lopez and Nayeli Alvarez.*



*Diners at "El Pathfinder Restaurant" facing the camera are Patricia White, Sue Deatherage, Vira Armstrong and (side view) Christopher Schurch.*

## Coming Events

**Pathfinder Camporee** (Aug. 11-15) Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Info: 951-509-2265.

**Other Youth-related Events.** Info: 951-509-2260.

Worship at the Beach, Coronado Island (July 10).

Magic Mountain Day (July 19).

Bible Quiz-o-Rama Grand Championship (Aug. 1).

Youth Pastors Grief Training Workshop (Aug. 13) SECC Assembly Room.

### Miscellaneous Conference Events

SECC office closed for Fourth of July holiday (July 6).

SECC Evangelism Power Hour (July 8) 12 noon, SECC Assembly Room.

SECC Evangelism Power Hour (Aug. 12) 12 noon, SECC Assembly Room.

Hispanic Family Ministries Retreat (Aug. 21-23) Pine Springs Ranch. Info: 951-509-2333.

Retirees Retreat (Sept. 21-23) Pine Springs Ranch. Info: 951-509-2287.

Indonesian Convocation (Oct. 17) Chaffey High School, 1245 N. Euclid Ave., Ontario. Info: Praban Agussaputro, 909-653-5720; 909-246-1909.

### Southeastern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

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