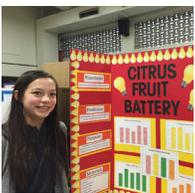




FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT
RON AGUILERA

FYI (For Your Information...)

A weekly e-newsletter for employees and friends of the
Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists



March 27, 2019



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Father who is full of mercy, the God of all comfort. He comforts us every time we have trouble so that when others have trouble, we can comfort them with the same comfort God gives us.” 2 Corinthians 1: 3-4

Recently, I had a friend who lost a loved one. These is a tough thing. What do you say to someone who is hurting, to someone dealing with grief, and loss? How do we as Christians encourage and support someone who’s genuinely struggling or in pain?

When there is pain or loss, the inevitable question of WHY appears. I think the best response is to respond honestly with, ‘I don’t know.’ Because we don’t really know. We don’t have God’s full understanding. In those moments, the best thing we can do is simply show up. Hopefully, they will begin to see the love of God in you by how you love them in their pain.

Secondly, rarely has anyone ever turned down my offer of prayer during an intense personal crisis. How do you pray? Start by admitting your confusion at the WHY question, then ask for God’s comfort, strength, peace, and help for the person or family facing the crisis.

One more thing, opportunities for encouragement often show up a bit after the initial crisis hits and requires incredible discernment to know how and when to point them towards God’s promises and hope. It’s always a good idea to follow their lead and answer questions as they are raised. And always be sure to pray that you would be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit to know what to say.

No one will ever be able to adequately answer the question, “Why?” But



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the God who loves us, the God who sent His Son to die for us, understands ALL of our pain and suffering. He wants everyone to experience the same strength and peace that comes from knowing the God of comfort, who will be right there with us every step of the way.

CHURCH VISIT

This past Sabbath, I had the privilege of speaking at the North Aurora church. What a joy to see how God is blessing the church and school there! Many thanks to Pastor Voigt for the invitation and his leadership.

CAMP AKITA

As I mentioned last week, the delegates sent from each church to our past October Constituency Meeting voted to approve three capital improvement projects to develop Camp Akita. The building of such projects was subject to the raising of the funds necessary to build them.

Project 1 - A Pathfinder Pavilion. Cost? 450K. I am glad to report that the funds are in hand and that project is well under way, and to be completed in May.

Project 2 - An Equine Center. This facility will have 15 stalls for our horses, a covered riding stable, bleacher seating, etc. The cost? 1.2 million.

The next step is raising the funds. Please check out this video that explains what's next:

<https://youtu.be/Z1N4q2lzdds>

To our pastors and head elders, please show this at every church and church board meeting. Let's see what God wants to do through us to develop Camp Akita, and minister to our children.

NEWS

The Illinois Conference Science Fair was held at North Shore Adventist Academy on March 14th. The gymnasium was packed with all kinds of experiments; from using lemons to generate energy, to discovering what chromatography is, to making liquid glow and connecting it with them being the "little light of God". Students explained why Mars was red, how to make tuning sounds with bottles of water, how to graft plants together, and which cereals contained the most iron.



After the students had a chance to explain their hypotheses and conclusions and then see the other students' demonstrations, they were able to hear a presentation on Dinosaurs. This was presented Rich Aguilera, "The Mud Guy" who writes for Guide Sabbath School Magazine and tours around the country presenting on how science aligns with the Bible.

It is a wonderful experience when the small schools in the Illinois Conference can come together and put on a big school science fair. Thank you to Yanina Jimenez for coordinating and Walter Turner for hosting this event this year.

RESOURCES

☞ Steps to a Vibrant Church, by Brad Cauley

Are you serious about fulfilling the mission of Christ? Do you wish to see more people accept the fantastic truths God has entrusted to Seventh-day Adventists? If you want to be a part of a happier, healthier church where one can see God moving, check out this guide for congregations wishing to grow. Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/y6zkdzfn>

☞ Free Webinar on March 28: Search Engine Optimization for Church Websites

Would you like your church website to show up first in search engine results? There are specific steps you can take to boost your search engine rankings! Join this webinar featuring the Center for Online Evangelism on Thursday, March 28 at 8 PM EST to discover the best practices to ensure search engines give your site priority.

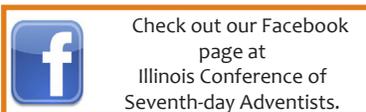
Sign up at: <https://register.gotowebrinar.com/register/1111045901746750221>

DID YOU KNOW...

...the Bible was written in three languages? Those languages are Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Most of our Old Testament was written in Hebrew. A few bits of the Old Testament were written Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek.

“The word of God is the seed. Every seed has in itself a germinating principle. In it the life of the plant is enfolded. So there is life in God’s word.”

Ellen G. White, Christ’s Object Lessons, p.38



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