



FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS

Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church

Pastor's Corner

By Pastor Phil Vasseur

September/October 2006

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Keys to Living the Guided Life:



Key #1

Dear Fellow Christ Follower,

Jacob never listened to God—or to anybody else, for that matter. He was what we would call a “con man,” guided only by his own guile. The name Jacob means “schemer.”

One night while Jacob was sleeping, God spoke to him. Jacob saw a ladder, with angels ascending and descending—a vision of the kingdom of God. In that moment God Himself promised to be present with Jacob, to guide him and protect him.

Jacob was shaken. “How awesome is this place? This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate to heaven” (Gen. 28:17, NASB). I think Jacob was staggered by his mindlessness. God was right there, speaking, and Jacob had not even known it. Jacob named the place Bethel, the “House of God.” He took the stone he had used as a pillow and set it up as a pillar, an altar, to help him remember how close God was and how much he needed to listen.

“Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it” (Gen. 28:16, NASB). Mindlessness is like that, not fully aware of what is happening in the present. Mindlessness is our mind's tendency toward mental drift. You know you've experienced mental drift when

you're driving in your car and you don't remember how you got from point “A” to point “B.” You're not sure how it happened. You just know you've missed something.

This can also happen in life; we go through life on autopilot. When we do, it becomes more likely that we'll miss God's leading, God's presence. Like Jacob, we experience mindlessness and fail to realize that the “LORD is in this place....”

The first key for living the guided life is to grow more attentive to God's presence. To help us, perhaps we could use a page out of Jacob's play-book. Remember what Jacob did? The Bible says “So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top” (Gen. 28:18, NASB). In other words, to help him remember God's presence, he sets up a pillar as a reminder of how God had led him, and that He will lead him in the future.

We would be wise if we did the same. Whatever shape our pillar takes, may it serve as a reminder that we want to be able to say in more and more moments of life: “This is the house of God! This is the gateway to heaven!”

With love,
Pastor Phil



Happy Family Life Seminar

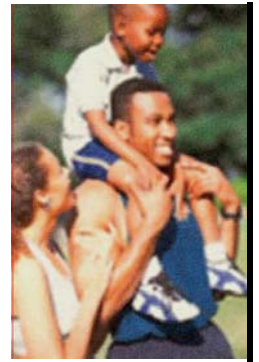


*You are invited to join us for a life changing, family changing event!
Discover "The Four Big Secrets of a Happy Family" and
"The Three Essentials of Effective Communication!"*

Date: September 29 & 30
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Contact Person: (603) 429-2410
Location: Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church
 408 Broadway Road
 Dracut, MA 01826

Visit our website at: www.mvsda.org

Free Children's Program!



Pathfinders' Corner

King's Kids Pathfinder Club

Submitted by Rita McCall

The staff and pathfinders are looking forward to the 2006 – 2007 Pathfinder year. Registration will take place on August 27 and the fall schedule is already full of exciting events. The Pathfinder Club is for all boys and girls age 10 – 15. We have a TLT (Teen Leadership Training) program this year that is geared towards the young people in grades 9 – 12. The teens are still part of the Pathfinder club but are trained in areas of leadership and must attend staff meetings and leadership training programs sponsored by the conference.

Some of the events coming up in the next few months include a campout at South Lancaster camp meeting campgrounds in September. We will be going on a hay ride and apple picking in the fall. We also have an ice cream social planned. There is a Bible costume party planned for all ages with games and light refreshments. What kind of games would biblical characters have played? An RSVP will be required for planning purposes. More information will follow in the weeks before the event. Watch the church bulletin. We are planning a kids Christmas party this year. We will do the Christmas story and play some interesting games like follow that star! This is a party that we will invite the kids from VBS to also. More information to come on this event and this will require an RSVP. In addition to all the fun events planned, we will be doing some community service projects such as can collection for food baskets, helping out with the Happy Family Seminar, and joining the nursing home visitation group on a few occasions.

As you can see we have a pretty full schedule lined up for the fall. All of the above is in addition to our regular meetings that are scheduled twice a month. Our full fall schedule is posted on the church calendar on the church website.

Come join us for a fun and spiritually filled exciting year. Registration will be on Sunday, August 27 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Anyone wishing to attend the September campout must register by this date.

We are looking to increase our club membership this year. We pray that if this happens that more adults will be willing to help out with the club. At present we have me, as the director and Michael Casadine as a counselor. Bob will not be part of the staff this year but will be available to help with teaching honors and he will cook for us at campouts.

Contact Rita McCall evenings at 978-667-6670 or e-mail at ritalmccall@comcast.net if you want additional information or have any questions.

Kids' Korner



Here's a challenge for the kids. In this newsletter is hidden a bee. See if you can find it.

This happy little bee could be on any of the pages and could be in a different color or size.

Happy hunting!
This is the object that you will be looking for:



"The MOST Amazing Prophecies"

Doug Batchelor will present a 10-part satellite series, *The MOST Amazing Prophecies*, September 15-23, available on The Hope Channel or 3ABN.

Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist

408 Broadway Road
 Dracut, MA 01826

Phone: 978-454-9226
 www.mvsda.org

September 2006

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

October 2006

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

September Calendar of Events

- 1–7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- 6–6:00 p.m. Adventurer Registration
 7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, “How to Study your Bible”
- 8–7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- 9–1:00 p.m. Fellowship Dinner
 2:00 p.m. Women’s Bible Study
 4:30 p.m. Adventurer Club Meeting
- 10–3:00 p.m. Pathfinder Meeting—Full Dress Uniform
 5:30 p.m. Pathfinder Staff Meeting
- 12–7:00 p.m. Church Board Meeting
- 13–7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, “How to Study your Bible”
- 15–7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
 ~ Pathfinder Camporee ~
- 16–4:00 p.m. Men’s Ministry Meeting
 ~ Pathfinder Camporee ~
- 17
 ~ Pathfinder Camporee ~
- 20–7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, “How to Study your Bible”
- 22–7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- 23–1:30 p.m. Nursing Home Ministry
 4:30 p.m. Adventurer Club Meeting
- 24–12:00 p.m. Pathfinder Apple Picking & Hay Ride
 3:00 p.m. Pathfinder Meeting—Field Uniform
 ~ Adventurer Fun Day—SNEC ~
- 27–7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, “How to Study your Bible”
- 28–7:30 p.m. Elders Board Meeting
- 29–7:00 p.m. Happy Family Life seminar
 7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- 30–1:30 p.m. Nursing Home Ministry

October Calendar of Events

- 4–7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, “How to Study your Bible”
- 6–7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
 Pathfinder & Adventurer Leaders Training Weekend
- 7–Pathfinder & Adventurer Leaders Training Weekend
- 8–Pathfinder & Adventurer Leaders Training Weekend
- 10–7:00 p.m. Church Board Meeting
- 11–7 p.m. Mid-week study, “How to Study your Bible”
- 13–2:00 p.m. Women’s Bible Study
 7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- 14–1:00 p.m. Fellowship Dinner
 4:30 p.m. Adventurer Club Meeting
- 18–7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, “How to Study your Bible”
- 20–7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- 21–11:30 a.m. Pathfinder Induction Ceremony
 1:30 p.m. Nursing Home Ministry
 4:00 p.m. Men’s Ministry Meeting
 4:30 p.m. Adventurer Club Meeting
- 22–3:00 p.m. Pathfinder Meeting—Full Dress Uniform
 5:30 p.m. Pathfinder Staff Meeting
- 26–7:00 p.m. Elders Board Meeting
- 27–7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- 28–1:30 p.m. Nursing Home Ministry
- 29–3:00 p.m. Pathfinder Meeting—Field Uniform
 6:00 p.m. Bible Character Costume Party—sponsored
 by the Pathfinders



Southern New England—Calendar of Events 2006

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Event</u> | <u>Place</u> | <u>Contact</u> | <u>Phone Number</u> |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Sept. 1 - 4 | Portuguese Family Retreat | Camp Winnekeag | Nahor Muchiutti | 978-368-8205 |
| Sept. 4 | Office Closed - Labor Day | Conference Office | | |
| Sept. 10 | Lay Evangelism Training | | Linda Tooley | 978-365-4551, Ext. 21 |
| Sept. 10 - 12 | ABC Fall Open House | Adventist Book Center | ABC | 978-365-6376 |
| Sept. 15 - 17 | Pathfinder Fall Camporee | SNEC Campgrounds | Carol Cabrera | 978-365-4551, Ext. 20 |
| Sept. 22 - 24 | Youth & Youth Leaders Spiritual Retreat | Camp Winnekeag | Carol Cabrera | 978-365-4551, Ext. 20 |
| Sept. 29 - Oct. 1 | Spanish Elder's Retreat | Camp Winnekeag | Jose Alarcon | 978-368-6321 |
| Oct. 6 - 8 | Pathfinder & Adventurer Staff Training | Camp Winnekeag | Carol Cabrera | 978-365-4551, Ext. 20 |
| Oct. 19 - 21 | AU Master Guide Convention | Lake George, NY | Carol Cabrera | 978-365-4551, Ext. 20 |
| Oct. 20 - 22 | Woman's Ministries Retreat | | Linda Tooley | 978-365-4551, Ext. 21 |



Come, Little Leaves

*Come, little leaves, said the wind one day,
Come over the meadows with me and play;
Put on your dresses of red and gold;
Summer is gone, and the days grow cold.
- George Cooper*

Imagine a perfect autumn day! It is truly a magical time of year with trees dressed in their finest array of colors – gold, green, orange, and red. There are so many things to be thankful for. The changing seasons help us to evaluate where we have been, what we want to remember, and how we plan to grow.

As I watch the dance of the falling leaves, I think of how short their lives are – perhaps 6 months. The sun is playing hide-and-seek with them, peeping in and out of billowing clouds in a bright blue sky. It's like life – sun and shadow, happiness and sadness, strength and weakness.

But right now as I walk over the farm, I throw back my head with happiness in my heart, and as I always do every fall, I repeat the “Come, Little Leaves” poem that I had to memorize in second grade. I have many thoughts as I watch the leaves. To me, they are so much more interesting than when everything is just green. I like to think that all the spectacular colors represent the people of the world. We all have different wants and needs, opinions and cultures, but we all come from the same root of humanity, the trunk of the tree of life.

Then I ask myself, *Do the leaves know how it feels to bid farewell to the warmth of the sun? Do they realize that as they fall, they mingle with the earth to nourish the tree that has been their mother?* Their lives have a purpose, just as our lives do. Leo Buscaglia wrote a touching book for all ages about this subject called *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf*.

Autumn also is a time to prepare for an inward journey and give time to personal reflection. I like to think that, just as the leaves fall, our own regrets and sadness can fall away from our inner trees, which are really ourselves, and be swept away by the invigorating breeze of renewed hope. We can feel lighthearted and happy again as we move forward toward the new year to come.

Remember the dance of the beautiful falling leaves and the lessons they teach of uplifting the spirit so that you can paint a picture of their glory to hold in the center of your heart all year long.

—Ardath Rodale

Ardath Rodale is Chairman of the Board of Rodale, Inc., and the author of Reflections, Gifts of the Spirit: True Stories to Renew Your Soul, and Climbing Toward the Light.

Viva VBS



Dateline Chilipeppers

Vacation Bible School was enjoyed by all who attended. The theme for the entire five-night extravaganza was a Mexican Fiesta. Vivian Irrgang, this year's Director, told MVSDA News that more than 41 boys and girls attended. This included 9 in the first ever preschool age group.

Each of the five evening programs followed a Biblical theme. The Sing and Play Ole, dramatic Bible stories, games, crafts, snacks, songs, Bible lessons, and Grande Finale all followed the theme of the evening.

Pastor Phil led out in the opening exercises where the theme of the day was introduced. He was assisted by Rita McCall who was known as "Freda" and Sherri Dovich who led out in the musical part of the exercise. The lively music and motions really kept the attention of the children. Each night the previous themes were reviewed. The overall theme was our relationship to Jesus.



The crafts were wonderfully organized by Lizbeth Martinez. Rena Forrester led out each night assisted by Nancy Jacobson, Margarita Santana, Dale Cady, and Polina Kadatska. The VBSers were enthralled with the crafts, which were always in line with the theme of the day. It was hard work to keep up with

50 crafters who needed help, but worth every minute of it.

The Snacks were organized by Joanie Reiss and her team of helpers and food providers. Her natural creativity was expressed each night. Everybody could hardly wait to see what was next from her team of food artists.



Ingrid Mergenthaler and Alice Jacobson were responsible for the Bible drama for each evening; known as the *Hot Bible Adventures*. The attendees loved the dramatic Bible stories that the "actors" brought to life each night. The actors included Eric Patch, Warren and Nancy Saxton, and Dale Jacobson.

The Bible Workbooks, again on the same theme as the rest of the night, taught Bible lessons and was directed by Jean McKillop and assisted by Gilda Newell.



The Preschool program was directed by Sherri Dovich. She had a larger than expected group that kept her crew leaders busy.

Even the Games, which were led by Bob McCall, worked in the theme and certainly locked in the attention of the children and even some of the adults.

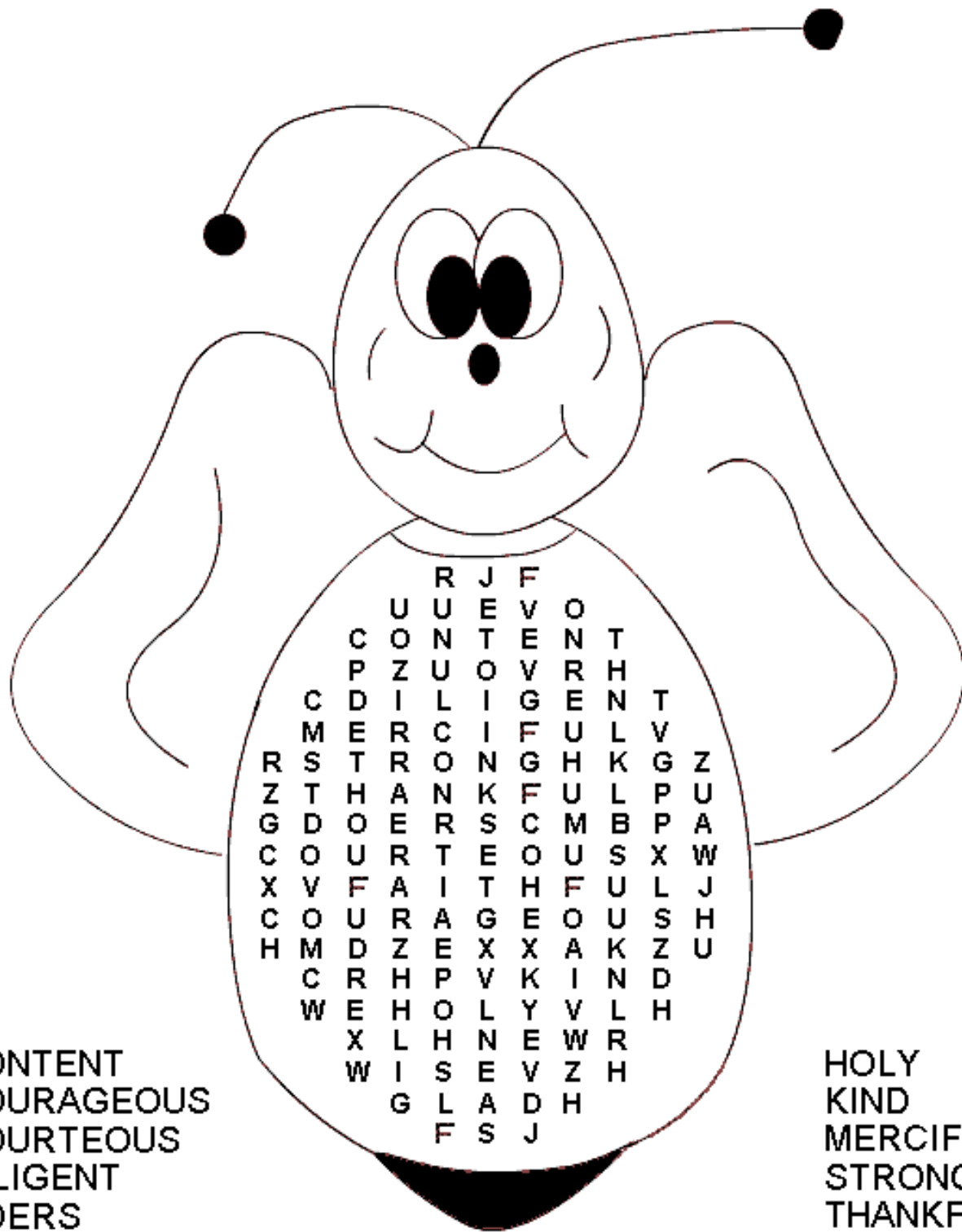


The Grand Finale wrapped up the evening with the theme of the day and used music and drama to drive home the lesson for the day. Rita McCall and Pastor Phil were the hosts for the Grand Finale each night.

Many more faithful helpers worked diligently to make this VBS a very successful missionary outreach in our community. It was gratifying to see the children make commitments to follow Jesus in their lives. Vivian Irrgang and Alice Jacobson, the co-leaders of VBS, would like to thank all those who worked so hard, both in front of the kids and behind the scenes, to bring a quality program to the members and friends of our church.



Bee-ing What God Wants Me to Bee



CONTENT
 COURAGEOUS
 COURTEOUS
 DILIGENT
 DOERS
 FAITHFUL
 GLAD

HOLY
 KIND
 MERCIFUL
 STRONG
 THANKFUL
 WISE

2006 CAMP MEETING
FESTIVAL OF FAITH
"Even So, Come, Lord Jesus"

June 16-17 Weekend:
Speaker—Hyveth Williams
Pastor, Loma Linda Campus Hill

June 23-24 Weekend:
Speaker—Alvin Kibble
Vice-President—NAD



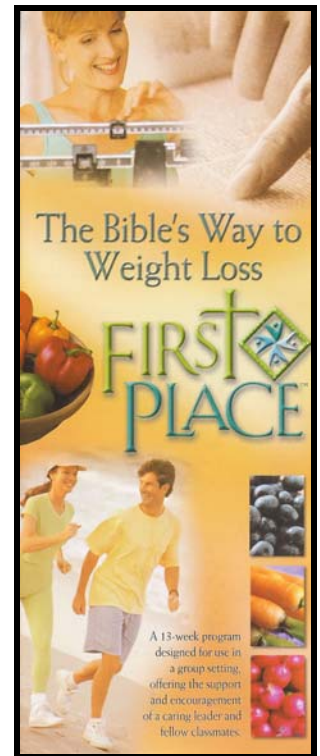
FIRST PLACE WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM

God has saved us from our sins and given us an abundant life, why can't we, as Christians, use that same power in the area of weight control? The First Place program is a Christ-centered weight-loss program. One participant has said, "The Lord used the First Place program to change my life. It has brought me back to the Word of God on a daily basis, renewed my prayer life and built my confidence....the education I received about the foods I eat, the calorie values and the nutritional information via the exchanges....will forever enable me to be successful in keeping the weight off."

This program involves weekly meetings, which offer instruction, encouragement and support to help accomplish this goal. It requires one to prayerfully consider and follow nine commitments. The program includes Bible study; group support and accountability; a proven, commonsense nutrition plan; regular exercise; daily prayer; and Scripture memorization. It will involve your time and moderate cost for the beginning plan materials (\$85-\$100).

The First Place program will begin in MVSDA Church on September 23 at 9:00 am Sabbath Morning. If you can be steadfast in a program of this commitment please contact Alice Jacobson for full details. It will be open to the public and will be advertised in the local papers, posters, personal contact, etc. It will be limited to 10 people to start. This program is open to men and women. It will help individuals live healthier, happier and more abundant lives with God as their first priority. May God always have first place in your life!

More information will be provided in a few weeks. If you are interested please don't hesitate to call (603-898-4075) and sign up for the program as soon as possible.



Edgewood Elementary/Greater Boston Academy News

Submitted by Rondi Aastrup, Principal

Edgewood Elementary/Greater Boston Academy is a PreK-12 Seventh-day Adventist school that serves the areas North and South of Boston along the 128/95/495 circle eastward. Over the past decade the once-separate schools have undergone dramatic changes and morphed into one school under the roof of the elementary school. While enrollment initially decreased, the commitment to academic excellence in a spiritual environment never ceased. Now, EW/GBA is on the rise again as *the* Adventist school to consider and support for dozens of churches in the greater Boston area.

Graduates from both Edgewood and GBA have done well, scoring high on national tests. At least half of last year's senior class is attending the college of their choice on sizable scholarships. A graduate of last year's 8th grade was accepted to Phillip's Academy in Andover on the strength of her test scores, but she has chosen to attend GBA instead, on the strength of its academically sound curriculum and its positive spiritual atmosphere.

The students and staff of EW/GBA are eager to share this good news and invite Merrimack Valley members to come visit and consider EW/GBA for your children. If you are graduates of GBA, Alumni Weekend is the 29-30th of September this year. Most services will be held in the Stoneham Memorial Church. Come for fellowship and inspiration! You are also invited to our Fall Festival on October 22 (from 11-3). There is always good food to eat and good bargains at our Flea Market.

Please keep us in your prayers this school year. You and your church are always in ours.



September

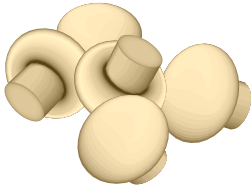
| | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|-------------------|
| 2 | Andreas Golzer | 24 | Clarice Reiss |
| 4 | JoAnn Artis | 25 | Bob McCall |
| 4 | Matt Heng | 25 | Margarita Santana |
| 5 | Dara Sing | 26 | Helene Gilman |
| 7 | Kate Saxton | 30 | Sue Reuther |
| 8 | Flor Portillo | 30 | Jeanette Voltaire |
| 9 | Jill Hodson | | |
| 11 | Ashley Reuther | | |
| 12 | Jason Bryner | | |
| 13 | Rena Forrester | | |
| 13 | Kudzai Gomwe | | |
| 13 | Nancy Jacobson | | |
| 15 | Jodie Masotta | | |
| 20 | Victor Berlus | | |
| 21 | Rosa Candelario | | |
| 24 | Mutsi Holliman | | |
| 24 | Duk-Mee Lee | | |



Happy Birthday!

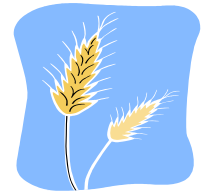
October

| | |
|----|--------------------|
| 1 | Abigail Martinez |
| 4 | Cindy Harris |
| 5 | Carla Conde Magda |
| 13 | Tom Sing, Jr. |
| 13 | Marianne Wiacek |
| 16 | Nancy Saxton |
| 20 | Melissa Candelario |
| 23 | Jim Newell |
| 26 | Andrew Lee |
| 29 | Dale Cady |

Mushroom and Barley Pilaf

Start to finish: 30 minutes Makes: 4 servings

- 2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 tsp. dried basil, oregano, or ½ tsp. of dried sage, crushed
- 4 green onions, sliced
- 1 6-ounce package frozen pea pods (I used fresh)
- 1 medium carrot, shredded
- ½ cup pecan halves
- 1 T butter, or margarine, or olive oil
- 1 14 oz. can vegetable broth
- 1½ cups quick-cooking barley
- 1 tsp. Vegex or George Washington Broth (2 packets)



In a medium saucepan cook the mushrooms, green onions, carrot, and garlic in hot margarine, butter, or olive oil over medium heat until mushrooms are tender. Stir in broth, barley, herb and Vegex if desired. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 15 to 18 minutes or until barley is tender and liquid is absorbed.

Meanwhile, place frozen pea pods in a colander. Run cold water over the pea pods for 1 or 2 minutes or until thawed. Drain. If using fresh, place pea pods in saucepan and steam for a few minutes.

Stir pea pods into barley mixture. Cover and let stand for 2-3 minutes or until heated through. Top with pecans.

Nutrition facts: 414 calories, 14 g. total fat, 0 mg. cholesterol, 480 mg. sodium, 67 g. carbs, 11 g. protein.

Submitted by Alice Jacobson, and taken from the cookbook "Easy Vegetarian Dinners."

If you have a favorite recipe that you would like to submit, please contact Cindy Harris at (978) 685-5905, or e-mail to cinlee4@comcast.net

POINTS OF INTEREST



From the Editor's Desk



Call Cindy L. Harris at (978) 685-5905, or e-mail at cinlee4@comcast.net to submit items of interest for the next newsletter.
Next Deadline: 9-8-06

● Shawn Boonstra will present a 5-night series beginning Sept. 29 on the Sanctuary, *The Presence*, presented in the context of last day events. This series will answer questions on the mind of people who have watched or read *The Da Vinci Code*. Available to satellite dishes that receive the CAN/Esperanza Cannel.

● *Network News*, from the Adventist Prison Volunteer Network of the NAD Adult Ministries Depart., is available at www.adadultministries.org.

● Loma Linda Broadcasting Network, or LLBN Christian TV, is now operating and is available on the same satellite dishes that receive CAN, ATN, Esperanza, Hope TV, 3ABN and others. Contact www.llbn.tv for more details or to catch a live telecast of an event if you don't own a satellite dish.

● Pastoral Changes:

- Willy Vazquez is the new pastor in the Lowell/Lawrence Spanish church district.
- Hector Emmanuelli has the responsibilities of the Boston/Stoneham Spanish church district.

RECOGNITION

Dale Jacobson, Photo Editor

Bob McCall, Photo Editor, Printer

Classifieds

Position Available: Executive secretary to the Conference President for the Southern New England Conference. Please submit résumés to the president's office. Current secretary will be retiring full-time employment on August 31st, but will continue working at the conference on a part-time basis.



Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church

408 Broadway Road Dracut, MA 01826
Dracut, MA 01826 www.mvsda.org

Friends helping friends

become

Fully devoted followers
of **Christ**

To:



Phone: 978-454-9226

www.mvsda.org