

northpoint

NORTH NSW CONFERENCE NEWS



Wishing you a joyous and blessed Christmas

DEC
09

GO LIGHT YOUR WORLD

On Saturday, 14 November, Avondale College Church hosted 270 students who gathered together for the third annual Combined Schools Choir Day. This year, the combined choir included students from Avondale School, Central Coast Adventist School, Macquarie College and, for the first time, Toronto Adventist Primary School.

The worship service commenced with a song from the combined secondary choirs who were then joined by the combined primary choirs who stood in the aisles to sing "Go Light Your World", with each student holding a candle throughout the song. The voices of over 1,000 people in the congregation joined with the students to sing songs of praise in a powerful and vibrant corporate worship experience. The service also included performances from each of the schools, with songs chosen from a variety of Christian artists.

A challenging presentation, including a science-based object lesson from Pastor Bevan Craig encouraged young and old alike to look for ways that they could be a light in their community. He also reminded everyone of the great strength we have in our diversity and that this should be appreciated.

The program concluded with a moving song, "A New Hallelujah", presented by the 270 voice combined choir, which was conducted by Avondale School teacher, Benton Craig.

"Over the past three years this event has grown into a wonderful opportunity for the community to experience the combined talents of our students," he said. "My dream is that this will become an opportunity for all Adventist schools across the country to join together for a combined choir event such as this."



Go Light Your World

Words & Music by Kathy Troccoli

VERSE 1

There is a candle in every soul
Some brightly burning, some dark and cold
There is a Spirit who brings a fire
Ignites a candle and makes His home

CHORUS

So carry your candle, run to the darkness
Seek out the hopeless, confused and torn
Hold out your candle for all to see it
Take your candle, and go light your world

VERSE 2

Frustrated brother, see how he's tried to
Light his own candle some other way
See now your sister, she's been robbed and lied to
Still holds a candle without a flame

CHORUS

So carry your candle, run to the darkness
Seek out the helpless, deceived and poor
Hold out your candle for all to see it
Take your candle, and go light your world

VERSE 3

'Cause we are a family whose hearts are blazing
So let's raise our candles and light up the sky
Praying to our Father, in the name of Jesus
Make us a beacon in darkest times



INTRO SUBMERGE IT'S TIME TO GO DEEPER

I work all week for the church, however as Saturday rolls around each week I can honestly say I have not been to church regularly in years. While I do love God, I have not felt a need for church in a long time.

From November 13-15 I attended a weekend event in the CBD of Sydney called Submerge::Intro. It was an initiative created by a group of people with a passion to help people their age (25-40 or thereabouts) get to know God on a deeper level and

share this faith with their friends. There were no other agendas — which I loved! Like me, over 70 people attended and seemed to really enjoy the relevant talks and authenticity of the weekend.

I related most to the testimonies that were shared from people who had grown up in the church knowing about God — but not really knowing God. These people had to discover their own picture of God from what they had been given as a

child. Their stories were not always 'thunderbolt' conversions, but were soft, gentle messages from a patient, loving God.

I wasn't prepared for how much the workshops would affect me. The presenters shared their personal experiences and also some practical tools that would help us go deeper in our relationship with God. Through topics such as God's will, Salvation, Identity and Adventism, I began to understand these issues and noticed the emphasis on practical application. For instance, instead of a talk session about Service, a group went out to Redfern and served!

Where am I at now the weekend is over? I met up with some other people from Newcastle at Submerge::Intro, and was invited along to their Bible study group. It starts next Friday!



Billy Otto shares his testimony (Photos by Ben Beaden)

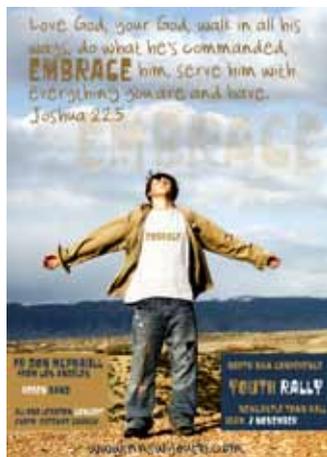
The writer of this account would prefer to remain anonymous. It is exciting for us to see an example of someone from our generation who's been stuck in a rut, take the next step in their journey and go deeper with God. This was our aim and God's desire!

The Submerge Team



Pr Grenville Kent engages attendees at the Submerge::Intro event

EMBRACE YOUTH RALLY



WHO?

Over 1,000 young people from across the Central Coast, Lake Macquarie, Hunter, Port Macquarie, Kempsey

and beyond attended the event. Students from Macquarie College, and Avondale College shared their musical and dramatic talents, as did youth from the Samoan Multicultural Church, along with a performance from Ali and Leighton Heise. And we can't forget Pastor Don McPhaul who flew all the way from Los Angeles to speak at this event.

WHAT?

An awe-inspiring Youth Rally that threw out the challenge to embrace God, embrace the God-life and embrace God service. "Love God, your God, walk in all His ways, do what He's commanded, **EMBRACE** Him, serve Him with everything you are and have." Joshua 22:5

WHEN?

From 10:00am until almost 1:00pm on Saturday, 7 November 2009

WHERE?

The Newcastle Town Hall was the auspicious venue for the final Youth Rally for 2009.

WHY?

Well, we can tell you it's a time for young people to catch up with old friends, meet new friends and be inspired by worship that really touches their soul. We can also tell you that Youth Rallies are events that supplement the local church and school youth program and are designed to lead teenagers (and those a bit older) closer to God and to make commitments to God. And

we can explain that they are also an avenue for peer-to-peer ministry, as young people use their talents in creating special worship moments. But it's the comments from those who attended that probably answer that question the best:

"We're from a small church and we hang out for these events."

"It's awesome to be able to worship God with music that is meaningful to me."

"I was challenged to get out of my comfort zone."

"I love being able to be involved in the program and do stuff even though I'm still learning."

OUR TESTIMONIES

A re-commitment at sunset

At sunset on Friday, October 31, Sandy Lewis from Hillview Adventist Church demonstrated to her friends and family gathered at Shingle Splitters Point, New South Wales that she was a new person in Christ's love.

Originally baptised into the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the age of 13, she attended church in New Zealand for a number of years, but did not feel that the decision had been entirely her own. Following the breakdown of her marriage she turned to God in desperation — hoping for help in desperate circumstances. During this time her sister gave her a copy of Philip Yancey's book "What's So Amazing About Grace" that lay unread for over a year.

One night, when very frightened, Sandy picked up the book and started reading. She knelt and

asked God for help, but really expected nothing from Him because she had not been following Him. A series of miracles followed — including provision of food on more than one occasion when the cupboards were bare and her four children were hungry — combined with further reading, amazed her and she wanted to know more. Over the next two years Sandy read more of Yancey's books, and during this time she heard God's voice tell her to go to Royal Oak Adventist Church in New Zealand.

Following a move to Australia, Sandy attended churches in the Cooranbong area and it was while listening to Leo Schreven's messages on church doctrine that she made a re-commitment to Jesus Christ and the doctrines of the church. Sandy's childhood had been difficult but following the death of



Sandy Lewis and her son Daniel prior to her sunset baptism

her mother earlier this year, she finally felt that God had renewed her. When speaking to the group gathered at by the water's edge for her re-baptism, performed by Pastor Leigh Rice, she said "God has

restored me. I am not the woman I used to be. It has been an eight year process, but I now feel that He has given me a new identity."

Sue Blyde

A double blessing

Penny played badminton at competition level in Melbourne for many years, and enjoyed this sporting outlet as part of a balanced lifestyle. On moving to the Lake Macquarie area to marry Bruce Baker, she looked around for a badminton club of similar standard. At this time she met an Adventist lady, Kath Kelly, who had two similar interests — she sang in the Avondale Memorial Church Choir and played badminton at competition level. Kath forfeited many medals by not playing on Sabbath.

These two ladies sought others who might like to compete in the Australian Masters in February 2009. They contacted the organiser and asked if it was worthwhile Adventists entering as they would not play on Saturday, their Sabbath.

"No problem" was the reply, as this man's son was an Adventist chaplain in Victoria and they would be accommodating him to enter the Games and play at suitable times also. So Penny and Kath rounded up a team of seven and headed to Geelong to compete, with many a prayer on their lips that the Lord would guide.

Miracle Number One: When the draw for the competition times came out, no games or finals were scheduled for Sabbath. The team came home with silver medals, the ladies' double, silver and Penny a silver in the mixed doubles. They gave God the glory.

As a result of their success in the Australian Masters, other competent players who were not Adventists invited Penny and Kath to join them and for a team to enter the World Masters Games, which they did. Our two stalwarts faced difficulties this time. Unlike the previous organiser, this one was not sympathetic to their desire not to

compete on the Sabbath day. Much prayer ascended to the Lord to sort it out. When the draw came out, the first two games were scheduled for Sabbath. Now they would have to face the fury of their team members if they did not compete. So the organisers were approached again with a request to reschedule their games to Saturday night or onwards. Late Friday afternoon, the day before the games were to start, the times had been changed to Saturday night and onwards — Miracle Number Two. The teams played and won bronze medals.

Now the third hurdle had to be faced as the finals for the mixed doubles were scheduled for Friday night and Sabbath. Sadly, Kath had to forfeit her chances for a gold medal as she hurriedly left for England when her mother took ill. So now Penny alone had to face her non-Adventist partner and the uncooperative organisers. The players in the opposing team were willing to change days, but the organisers would not relent.

Much prayer followed and early on Sabbath morning, Penny received a text message from her mixed partner to say "we are playing off for bronze on Sunday morning." Yes, you guessed it — they won bronze! God really blessed the stand Penny and Kath took for the Sabbath and they gave Him the glory.

Jean Rigby

SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY

In Revelation 12:11 it says "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony."

In 2010, we'd love to share what God's doing in your life and to help inspire others in their journey with Him.

Email your testimony to northpoint@adventist.org.au or write to us at:
NorthPoint Testimonies
NNSW Conference Office
PO Box 7 Wallsend NSW 2287

OUR CHURCHES

A Coming of Age for Murwillumbah Church



(L to R) Singers Andrew North, Barry Butler and Leanne Hutcheson
(Photos by Adrian Bailey)

November 7, 2009 marked the 20th anniversary of the dedication of the Murwillumbah Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was a special day with people reflecting on God's guidance and leading as the church was built largely with volunteer labour and dedicated debt free. Many returned to enjoy the memories and the church was almost full.

Pastor Clive Butcher, the pastor of the era, reminisced on the way God protected as everybody got involved. We saw photos that reminded us how the building landscape has changed with OH&S regulations now so different to that era. In fact, Neville Southon observed, "It would be impossible to build this today with the OH&S regulations and building regulations eliminating many volunteers now".

God blessed in the practical skills of numerous builders and volunteers of the time with Neville supervising the construction and Kelvin Dobson costing and then drawing the eclectic ideas as they poured in from

observations from other churches. Malcolm Graffin expressed, "It was a great time and brought the whole church family together as we worked on the project".

David North stated, "This church was erected and completed for \$600,000 but should have cost over \$2 million". The generosity of people like Mrs Hawkins who left the proceeds of her house sale to the church, like Norm Hendra who donated the blinds, and the volunteers who gave unstintingly of their time and talents was very inspiring.

Songs from the various eras were shared by three different singing groups during the program, with two former pastors, Craig Vanas and Jeff Poots involved in our music groups. Current Pastor, Brett Townend reflected "The focus of the day was not really on the building, but on the fact that we are the bricks that make up God's building, His temple — where His presence dwells by the Holy Spirit, enabling the community of believers to impact others".

David McClintock



(L to R) Malcolm Graffin and David North reminiscing

Coffs Harbour Pathfinders

During the July school holidays, the Coffs Harbour Pathfinder Club were able to catch up on plans from earlier in the year which were not realised due to the excessive rainfall.

Most of the Club and their families were able to join in a combined field trip, campout and adventure time. This included a three day campout at the woolshed in the Warrumbungle National Park with a visit to the Siding Springs Observatory and also the completion of the 13km Grand Tops bush walk.

A visit to Dubbo Zoo was a highlight for many and grateful thanks to Dubbo Church for allowing our accommodation in the Church Hall. Some families had to return home from there but the remainder went on to Lightning Ridge. An interesting

exploration of an underground mine and scratching around for an elusive opal was a new experience for most.

After sampling a swim in the hot springs at Moree, the next stop was Narrabri to check out the cotton industry and the deep space communication centre. Sabbath on Mount Kaputar proved a real cool experience given it had snowed just prior to our visit — a great addition to our trip.

The Conference Rally and Fair Day saw our Pathfinders rewarded for their efforts over the previous months. Our Club scored consistently highest throughout the day, only beaten in the chariot race. A well deserved A Grade pennant was awarded. Well done Coffs Pathfinders!

Eric Dorman

Ballina Still Cooking

The vegetarian cooking class at Ballina wound up on November 5 with a sit down dinner attended by 28 people, with most of the food being provided by class participants.

The classes each month were attended by an average of more than 20 people and were taught by Pauline Prior, the local health leader, supported by other church members.

This is the third year for these classes. Interest is raised early each year by a week-long health age assessment program in nearby Ballina Fair, with several hundred people of all age levels having health checks. Some expressed an interest in the Adventist lifestyle, and came to the cooking classes to learn more.



Dorrigo Ramps Up

For many years, Dorrigo Adventist Church has needed and planned for a wheelchair access ramp into the church hall. This year it came to fruition thanks to the hard work of Brad and Rosalee Lohmann, Barrie Tasker and Don Whittaker.

Dorrigo Church holds annual functions for the senior citizens of the town so the ramp will be an asset to both church members and the community.

Our membership is temporarily down here at Dorrigo, however we believe that God will help us to increase. We invite you to visit us one Sabbath to swell the numbers and encourage the members by your presence.

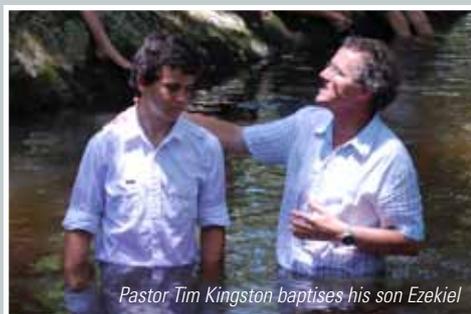
Graham Chesher

Bush Baptisms at Alstonville

The morning of November 21, 2009 was a significant time for four youth from the Alstonville Church, as it was a day of baptism and church fellowship with 140 church members. Pastor Tim Kingston baptised his son Ezekiel as well as Sophie Husband, a relative newcomer to our church community. Kirsten and Jared Hughes were baptised by Pastor Beth McMurtry who ministered to their parents, Glen and Yvette Hughes before the children were born. The baptismal service took place in a delightful creek setting on the Hughes' Alstonville property. Strong supportive influences of the home, Adventist

school, Pathfinders and local church combined to encourage these four young people in their decision for Jesus. The church services included a lively Sabbath School catering for adults, youth, teen, junior, primary and Kindy and Cradle Roll groups all meeting on a grassy verge near a babbling Chilcott's Creek. Following the baptism and a combined lunch, the Pathfinder Investiture for the Alstonville Club concluded a special Sabbath in the natural beauty of a sub-tropical rainforest. Praise God for a wonderful creation and the beauty of Church fellowship.

Lionel Hughes



Pastor Tim Kingston baptises his son Ezekiel



Jared & Kirsten Hughes baptised by Pastor Beth McMurtry



Alstonville Pathfinder Club march to their investiture

'Love & Respect' in Coffs

Coffs Harbour Family Ministries Department recently facilitated a Relationship Enhancing Workshop for both couples and singles from the Coffs Harbour and Coffs Coast Seventh-day Adventist churches.

The workshop was based on the book 'Love and Respect', along with the 'Love and Respect Workbook' by Dr Emmerson Eggerichs. The key concept is that "A wife has one driving need — to feel loved. When that need is met, she is happy. A husband has one driving need — to feel respected. When that need is met, he is happy. When either of these needs is not met, things get crazy. Love and Respect reveals why spouses react negatively to each other, and how they can deal with such conflict quickly, easily and biblically".

Two half-hour video presentations by Dr Eggerichs were each followed by small group discussions, where various questions were addressed and individuals were given opportunity to respond and to share their own experiences.

The workshop ran for two hours on Sabbath afternoons for four weeks in August and September. Those who attended found the materials covered captivating, simple, yet revolutionary. Some commented that it would be great if all young people heard the presentations before establishing their homes, the principles were so basic yet vital.

We are hoping to facilitate another such workshop early in 2010. At that time we plan to open it up to the wider community.

Ruth Stilinovic

Sev-Ad Placed in Recession

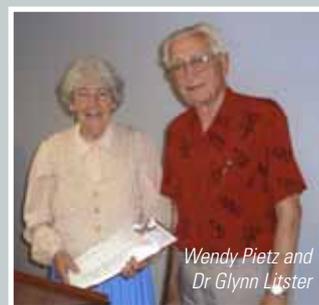
After 15 years of recording stories of the past, Sev-Ad Historical Society, at a special General Meeting held at the Alton Villas on November 1, 2009 was voted to go into recession and assets placed with the Adventist Heritage Centre at Avondale College. Hopefully in the near future, some younger person will be able to accept the challenge of reviving the society and record the stories of God's leading in the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific.

A vote of thanks to the Secretary-Treasurer Mrs Wendy Pietz and President Dr Glynn Litster was passed for their leadership for the entire 15 years the society has been in existence. Each monthly meeting either had an invited guest speaker present a talk on family history or history of an institution they had been involved in within the church. Members were always invited to ask questions or add points of historic interest.

A book has even been written from information gained from one meeting of the commencement of our Adventist Church work in the Coal fields and Lakes area of the Central Coast.

Our hope is that many young people will be strengthened in their walk with God as they discover God's leading in the past.

Ken A. Boehm



Wendy Pietz and Dr Glynn Litster

OUR MINISTERS

Marriage Enrichment for Pastoral Couples

During November 1–3, six pastoral couples from the North NSW Conference met at Noonaweena, an ultra modern facility set high on a ridge, commanding majestic views of the Yengo National Park north of Sydney. This was the first of two Marriage Enrichment events run for pastoral couples this year. Two such events have been run annually for the past seven years.

Facilitators Peter and Meredith Cousins led a warm, intimate and nurturing time of sharing and marriage enhancement. Couples had time to practise meaningful conflict resolution management through dialogue and parroting. They were given opportunity to discover more about their spouses make-up, desires and needs, as well as reflecting on the value they place on one another. Time was given for creative graphical expression for couples to define themselves, as well as for meaningful affirmation. A fun evening was had when all the males

stepped into the 'fish bowl' and shared what they consider romance to be and how romantic they perceived their wives to be. Of course, wives got their turn also. Couples particularly appreciated the together time given for enjoying swimming, walks in the bush, or the outdoor spa with spectacular views. There was an excellent blend of sharing, reflection, and togetherness.

What topped it off so beautifully, were the restaurant-style meals, prepared superbly by Annette Lamplough from Avondale High School. The care and creativity she brought to the preparation and presentation of each meal was greatly appreciated by all. That, combined with the beauty and appropriateness of the venue, set the tone for an incredibly refreshing time. Many thanks go to Peter and Meredith and the North NSW Conference for making this event possible.

Ruth Stilinovic



PHOTO: (L to R) David & Marsha Kosmeier, Ray & Inkeri Dabson, Sally & Kent Watson, Peter & Meredith Cousins, Danny & Jasna Milenkov, Mike & Jeanette Robinson, (Front) Ruth & Miroslav Stilinovic

New Youth Pastor at Lakeside Church



Matt Pearce, a third year theology student at Avondale College, has just accepted the position of Youth Pastor at Lakeside Adventist Church for 2010. Matt and wife, Jody, have been attending Lakeside for the past year and Matt has already been assisting with the youth program.

Matt and Jody both come from the north side of Brisbane, but they actually met at Townsville Camp about 13 years ago.

Before coming to College, Matt worked as a groundsman for Northpine Christian College, while Jody pursued her nursing career. However, he had a desire to work for the Lord full-time and to share his love of Jesus with people. Because of the uncertain times in which we live, he wants others to know that Jesus loves them.

Matt wants to work with the Lakeside youth to help them become a light on a hill for the Lakeside area. He hopes that he, and his team for 2010, will be well equipped to make a difference in the community. As the youth get involved in outreach he believes their lives will change and grow for the Lord and they will have an impact on the community around them. May God richly bless Matt as he pursues his goals.

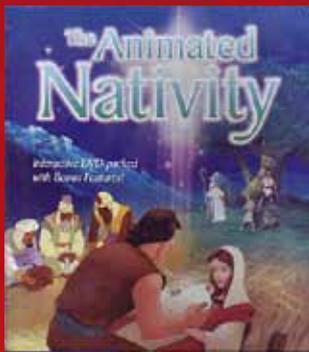
Scripture Teacher Retires

On Monday, November 30, Mrs Elva Litster (a member of Hillview Adventist Church) received a special presentation and a huge thank you from the children of Wyee Public School for her long-standing commitment to teaching scripture at their school. Mrs Litster who is now retiring due to ill health has taught consistently at the school for 20 years. When asked, all of the children put up their hand to say that Mrs Litster had taught them and their brothers and sisters over the years. "It was inspiring to see how much of an evangelistic impact one person can have on so many lives just from teaching scripture in our local state primary schools," said Pastor Daron Pratt, NNSW Conference Children's Ministries Director. "These children have been impacted by Elva's long-term commitment and this might be the only opportunity they have to be exposed to Christianity."

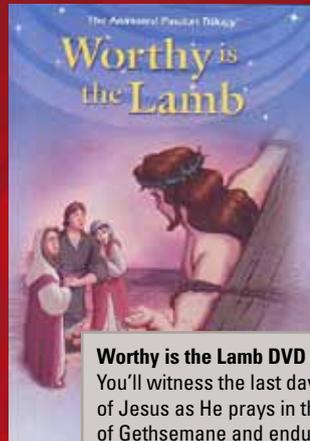
There is always a need for scripture teachers. Curriculum and training are provided and all it takes is a commitment to be there each week. It is also essential that each scripture teacher is authorised and accredited by the Conference. If you would like to learn more about teaching scripture in schools, please contact Bob Dale at the NNSW Conference Office for further information. Tel: (02) 49518088 or email bobdale@adventist.org.au



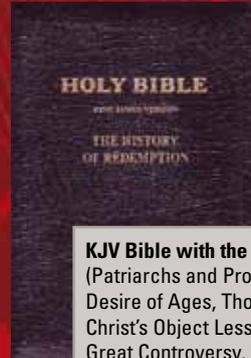
MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE ABC



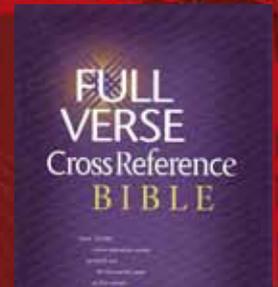
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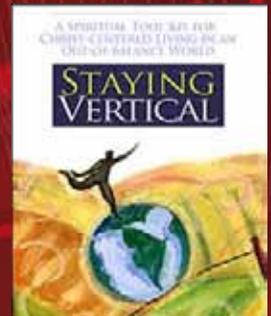
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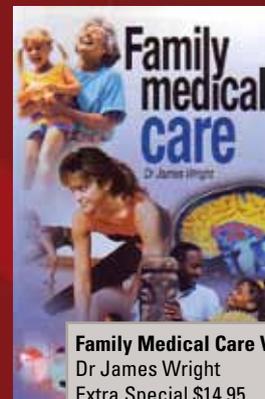
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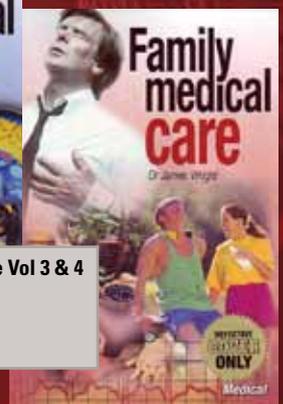
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ADRA Australia Launches National Survey

For the first time, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia has launched a national survey to gather the opinions and feedback of Adventists in Australia, and needs them to respond by 31 December 2009.

The survey will be available in churches on December 12 in the RECORD, or can be accessed online at www.adra.org.au or by calling 1800 242 372. The first 50 people that respond to the survey will receive a free 'Be the Change' t-shirt.

For more information contact Alexandra Marek on:

Tel (02) 9489 5488

Email news@adra.org.au



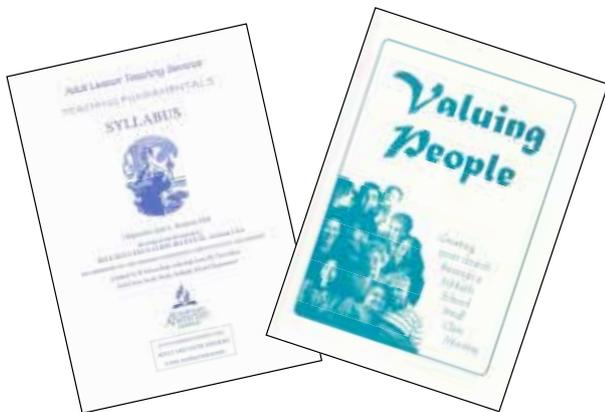
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A Christmas Journey

13 - 15 December

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from 23 November

Telephone bookings taken from 3 December

POSITION VACANT:

Secretary to NNSW Conference Youth Department

The North NSW Conference is seeking the services of a Secretary to the Youth Department. This is a busy department involving planning for Summer Camps, Pathfinder and Adventurer events, STORMCo, and Youth Rallies. The successful applicant will possess the following attributes: be well organised and self-motivated, willing to participate in youth events, have well developed people skills — particularly with young people, and be committed to the teaching, values and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The successful applicant will be proficient in Microsoft Office and preferably have a knowledge of InDesign.

For further information contact the Youth Director, Pr Jeff Parker, PO Box 7, Wallsend NSW 2287; email jeffparker@adventist.org.au or phone (02) 4951 8088. Applications close December 14, 2009.



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