

Lamp Letter

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February 2024

A Lesson In Giving

It started out as a simple act of counting socks, but it turned into a reminder of why we all need to be like little children.

Our school (Green Bay Adventist Jr. Academy) wanted to make a difference in the community. So, for our S.E.E. (Students Engaged for Eternity) activity for the months of September and October, we decided to team up with the Street Team ministry at our church and collect warm socks. We called our event “Socktober.”



Students and Teachers from Green Bay Adventist Jr. Academy with the socks collected



By the 2nd week of October, the socks had started piling up in our collection boxes. I had started counting the socks weekly, updating our collection totals, so we would know how close we were to reaching our goal of 500 pairs of socks.

On one particular week, I was going to again count socks to see how our total had grown. However, when I reached my hands into the bin, I found more than just socks. I found three silver coins! One quarter and two nickels. A small amount to most, that is unless you are in 1st grade.

I didn't know who put the coins in our box, but I decided that I would donate them along with the socks to our Street Team ministry. I set them aside so they wouldn't get lost. It was then that my 1st grader noticed the coins and asked me if they came from the box. I said, “Yes.” The boy quietly replied, “Oh, because I put them in there.” “You did?” I questioned. “Where did you get the coins from?” He looked up and me and stated, “I got them from my piggy bank, I earned them from washing windows. I wanted to give the money to the homeless.”

Here it is that I am reminded that all we need to do is trust God, give what we have so we can be a blessing to those in need, and He will take care of the rest.

Carmen Magray,
K-2 Teacher in Green Bay



Donated coins



From the President's Desk

Limit Negativity For Your Mental Health

Almost every news alert and breaking story is about wars, politics, and catastrophic events that happen around the globe, most from hundreds or thousands of miles away. Without even realizing it, too much bad news — promoted by various forms of media — bombards our brains which are not wired for so much negativity.

David J. Puder, MD, medical director of the MEND program at the Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center (BMC), states that the obsession with following the news can escalate people's panic and anxiety. "It can make it feel like it's happening right outside their front door."¹

The world has always been confronted with tragedies and problems. The major difference today is that we learn about everything that happens. We were created to care about each other and be emphatic with those in need, but there is a healthy limit of exposure to tragic events.

When Jesus was on earth, He cared for people and did everything possible to limit the poverty, suffering, and tragedies of humankind. But, as the Bible reports, He limited His direct interventions to His immediate physical environment, healing those who asked or had enough faith, occasionally feeding those who came to listen to His messages, and resurrecting only a few people. As the Son of God, He had unlimited resources and loved the entire world for which He came to die, but He limited His interventions to the daily plans initiated by the Father.

The apostle Paul advised his contemporary readers, as well as us today, to lean on the brighter side of life:

"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

The Spirit of Prophecy is evident in the very same aspect.

"Faith in God's love and overruling providence lightens the burdens of anxiety and care. It fills the heart with joy and contentment in the highest or the lowest lot. Religion tends directly to promote health, to lengthen life, and to heighten our enjoyment of all its blessings. It opens to the soul a never-failing fountain of happiness" (Patriarchs and Prophets, pg. 600).

I invite you to take a break from the negative news and reports. The world will continue to be the same without us knowing about everything that happens on all continents. Listen to some good music, call a friend or even someone with whom you've never spoken, and concentrate on the brighter side of life. There are church members and guests who are alone and isolated and need a listening ear and a caring heart. We are called to care about each other, starting with our families, neighbors, and others with whom we can be in contact.

1. <https://news.llu.edu/health-wellness/dealing-with-anxiety-mental-health-during-covid-19>

Titus Naftanaila

Wisconsin Conference President

President's Sabbath Schedule

February

3 Maranatha Hispanic
10 Green Bay
24 Wautoma

March

2 Reedsburg
9 Sparta
16 Waukesha Hispanic
23 Tomah
30 Wisconsin Rapids

April

13 Milwaukee Central
20 Green Bay

May

4 Hispanic Brotherhood
11 Shawano
18 Milwaukee West Hispanic
25 Durand

To request speaking appointments contact Titus Naftanaila at: titusn@wi.adventist.org

Madison Community Celebrates Baptism



On October 21, 2023 the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated the baptism of a very special 11-year-old, Te-jounie Wilson. Te-jounie loves to serve!

Pastor Rowell Puedivan has called him a “towering witness to Jesus.” The entire congregation is inspired to see Jesus shining through Te-jounie. They rejoice and praise God for Te-jounie giving his life to Jesus.

Sue Martin
Madison Community Church

Janesville District Celebrates Baptisms



On December 30, 2023, two precious individuals were baptized by pastor Abraham Swamidass in the Janesville District. Jess Stewart is joining the Delavan Church and his wife says, “There were many years of praying on my part for Jess’s heart to be touched by God. Never give up on praying for those you love!”

Alex Messer is joining the Beloit Church and says, “I want to see my Savior, Jesus, when He returns! Then along with my family, I will spend eternity with Him.”

2024 Wakonda Work Days

February 18

March 10

April 14

Focus is on remodeling/
construction and preparations
for new Medical Building.

Work begins at 9:00am.
Lunch will be provided.

Call or Text Elgin at 920-737-0500
or Becky at 920-737-0679 to let
them know you are coming.

Building Our Future: Projects Update

In the process of finalizing building plans at Camp Wakonda, the Camp Facilities Management Committee and the conference Executive Committee has made the decision to move the Camp Store to the east end of the bookstore building allowing the medical facility full use of the new building.

The Camp Store will now be where the Snack Shack has been and the conference committees are working on plans for a new Snack Shack location.

Some renovation has already been done on this area of the bookstore and we greatly appreciate all our volunteers! We are looking for help to finish this project during the Wakonda Work Days scheduled for February 18, March 10 and April 14.

We are grateful for your continued prayers and financial support for these large projects

at our camp. Together, with God’s blessing, much has been accomplished!

We still have a few things left to finish, the largest of which is the new medical building. We are needing about \$60,000 to complete this project and funding is needed now to purchase materials in order to have them in place for building to start in the spring.

Would you prayerfully consider what you can give to help reach this goal?



Mark your
gift “Building
Our Future”



Together, with God’s blessing, we can build our future!

Tree Removal at Camp Wakonda



“Why are so many trees being cut at Camp Wakonda?” We are glad you asked!

A few years ago a Forester came to assess our trees here on the property. Management was told that for the health of the trees, they should be thinned. Over the years there has been some effort to do this, but with only volunteers it has been difficult to keep up with the need. We were advised that due to the condition of our trees, they are approaching the end of their life cycle. This is the case for many of those being removed.

Some trees are being removed to protect RVs, cabins and other structures from falling branches. Red Pines with split tops are especially dangerous as these are prone to breaking in the storms.

Other trees are also being removed due to diseases such as “Pine Wilt.” The trees between the entrance driveways at camp had to be removed for this reason so it would not spread throughout the campground. Oak Wilt has also taken the majority of the Oak trees on the property. The oak grove that was removed to make way for the new Junior Pavilion was also infected with this disease.

Aside from the reasons mentioned above, there is no plan to clear cut the trees. Recently a tree spade was purchased so that smaller healthy trees can be transplanted into areas where older trees have had to be removed. It is hoped that this will help to preserve the beauty of our forest at Camp Wakonda for generations to come.

Full report at: <https://wi.adventist.org/wakonda/trees/>

Becky Ziesmer
Admin. Assistant for Camp Wakonda

Green Bay Hispanic Church Celebrates Official Organization



On December 30, 2023, the Green Bay Hispanic Seventh-day Adventist Company celebrated their organization as a Church. The service took place in Green Bay, WI.

Wisconsin Conference Administrators were present for this special occasion: President Titus Naftanaila gave the organization message and Secretary/Treasurer Dr. Amir Gulzar, oversaw the organization process to change from company to church status. Also present were Pastor Evelio Miranda, Hispanic Ministries Coordinator, and district pastor

Cristofe Guzmán, each with their respective families.

It was a joy to see not only fellow church members but also friends and visitors praise God and rejoice in this historic moment for the congregation.

After the ceremony, all enjoyed a delicious meal prepared to celebrate the church organization. May God bless the new Green Bay Hispanic Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Evelio Miranda
Hispanic Ministries Coordinator

Hmong Women’s Prayer Conference

Over 50 Hmong women from California, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin gathered together at Camp Wakonda from August 10-13, 2023 for AHA Women’s Ministry’s first Prayer & Revival Conference. The theme was “Ignite Our Hearts.” It was our goal to give a spiritual boost to those in attendance and encourage them to learn about outreach, and the power of having a prayer life.



A baptism was the highlight of the weekend

The conference ended on such a high note. The women were truly blessed and felt it was a much-needed renewal of their faith. The women want to continue the conference for many more years. This event helped them draw closer to God.

Full report at: <https://wi.adventist.org/uncategorized/hmong-womens-conference/>

Hmong Ministries



Delayed Gift Brings Continued Blessing



During the Wisconsin Academy Alumni meeting held back in 2013, alumni and friends were made aware of the dire need to replace the aging sewer system at the academy. Present during that meeting was a doctor from Michigan who promised to give \$500,000 to the academy for the replacement of their sewer system.

Due to the dire situation the academy was facing, the Wisconsin Conference moved forward with funding the project in good faith that the donation would come through to cover the cost. It has taken a number of years for this money to be disbursed to the conference, and as of this past August the money was received.

Even though the conference had already funded the academy's project, the conference Executive Committee has voted to invest \$500,000 for the academy which will receive yearly proceeds from the investment to be used for their operating expenses. The Wisconsin Conference is committed to Adventist education and is glad to be able to continue supporting Wisconsin Academy through this investment.

Health Immersion Program: Racine



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease remains the #1 Killer!

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church has been blessed with a message to restore human beings into His image – physically, mentally, and spiritually. This is available to all! Cardiovascular disease is reversible when we follow Ellen G. White's blue print on health.

The Rice Lake Seventh-day Adventist Church is planning to conduct a Health Immersion Program and Training in October, 2024 under the supervision of Dr. John Kelly, lifestyle medicine physician and Founder of American College of Lifestyle Medicine. Start a new healthy you through lifestyle changes and overcome disease! Watch for registration details.

Full report at: <https://wi.adventist.org/health-ministries/rice-lake/>

Yin Schaff
Health Ministries Coordinator



A Word From our Treasurer

Challenges and triumphs have marked the past year, and through it all, your steadfast support has been a beacon of strength for our church community. As I reflect on the incredible journey we've had together as the Wisconsin Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, it is with a heart full of gratitude that I write to you on behalf of the Conference Financial team.

Your unwavering support has been instrumental in sustaining the various ministries and activities that define our mission as a Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Your dedication to tithing and giving has allowed us to continue spreading the message of love, compassion, and hope. Your financial stewardship has enabled us to embark on new initiatives in evangelism, pastoral support, renovations at Camp Wakonda, continued support for Wisconsin Academy and the overall Adventist Education in the conference, plus many others.

As we look ahead to the opportunities and possibilities that the new year brings, I want to express my sincere appreciation for your continued dedication. Your generosity has allowed us to navigate the past year's complexities and thrive as a faith community.

In the coming months, we aspire to deepen our spiritual connections, foster a sense of unity, and extend our outreach to those in need. Your financial stewardship is vital in making these aspirations a reality, and we are truly grateful for it.

May the new year be filled with God's grace, love, and abundance for you and your families.



Amir Gulzar
Executive Secretary/Treasurer

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT			
	2023 (52 wks)	2022 (52 wks)	% Change
December Tithe Income:	\$1,438,660	\$1,622,008	-11 %
YTD Tithe Income:	\$9,047,528	\$8,597,528	5 %
December WI Budget:	\$127,902	\$66,189	48 %
YTD Wisconsin Budget:	\$395,530	\$339,256	14 %



WISCONSIN ACADEMY

From the office of Development:

It seems like only last week I was looking out my office window watching as the Schroeders' helped the Student Association set up for the Soap Slide. Now I look out at a beautiful white blanket of snow, wondering how we are already this far into the school year. Planning for Alumni Weekend is well underway and will be held April 19-21. It will be here before we know it! The honored classes this year are 1954, 1964, 1974, 1984, 1994, 1999, 2004, and 2014. We are looking forward to seeing many of you back on campus.



Looking ahead to Alumni Weekend 2025, we will be celebrating 125 years of secondary education in Wisconsin and 75 years of Wisconsin Academy! This milestone is worth celebrating. To help ring in this celebration, I am asking for 125 Alumni and friends of Wisconsin Academy to pledge a donation of \$50 a month for a year, starting April 2024 and ending April 2025, raising \$75,000 for the school. As with all donations, you get to choose where your donation goes. Whether that be one of our campus improvement projects, or Worthy Student Fund, this money will be greatly appreciated and will help our students and campus immensely. If this is a commitment you feel impressed to be a part of please contact me, LeAnne Baptist, at leanne.baptist@wisacad.org or by phone at 920-626-4176. Donations can be made via cash, check, or even PayPal.

Wisconsin Academy is a special place for many of us. To quote alumnus Linda Rosen (class of 1970) from her alumni letter in 2010, "The education we received, the friendships we made, and the teachers that guided our paths have left an indelible imprint on our lives. The opportunities we have had at Wisconsin Academy have helped us become the people we are today." We are one of the blessed boarding academies who are still open today. And we are praying that we will be open for many more years to come so that other generations have the same opportunity of Adventist education that we have had. To be educated in an environment with other students who share your belief system is invaluable and leads to building friendships that last a lifetime.

We thank you for your continued support of Wisconsin Academy as we work together to be the best stewards we can be over the school God has blessed our conference with.

LeAnne Baptist, Development Coordinator





On Sabbath afternoons, we have been fortunate to have a Sunshine band go to local nursing homes to visit and to sing hymns. It is all student volunteer, led by our music director, Davina Fingerson, and other support staff. It has been a blessing to our students as well as the residents.



Students are actively leading out in church services. The student body is divided into 3 groups and they take turns once a month leading out in all aspects of Sabbath School and Church services. Pictured is senior Lamar Taylor giving a sermonette during Student Led Church.



We have kept our Friendship Games going this year and have enjoyed getting together with Green Bay Adventist Junior Academy and Milwaukee Seventh Day Adventist school. The games have been exciting to watch!

UPCOMING EVENTS

**School
Choice**
W I S C O N S I N

Wisconsin Parental Choice open enrollment starts February 1. Sign up for the Wisconsin Parental Choice program and you can enroll at Wisconsin Academy tuition free. Your only expense will be room and board. Open enrollment ends April 18.

We also accept Youth Education Scholarship (YES!). YES! is a 3 way financial assistance matching program. The funds a local church gives (up to \$2,100) will be matched by Wisconsin Academy and the Wisconsin Conference, yielding up to \$6,300 per student (\$4,200 for non-WI churches). For more information, and to apply for Choice and/or YES! visit wisacad.org.

Our mission:

Developing leaders today who will walk with Jesus into eternity.

www.wisacad.org

Wisconsin Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists
PO Box 100
Fall River WI 53932

Return Service Requested

Calendar of Events

February

3	Pathfinder Area PBE	10-12	Pathfinder Fair
9-11	Pathfinder Winter Retreat	10-12	Volunteer Lay Pastor Training
16-18	LUC Youth Congress	12-16	Wakonda Work Bee
18	Wakonda Work Day	14	Board of Education
19	Office Closed	18	Hispanic Brotherhood Day
20	Board of Education	22	Executive Committee
24	Hisp. Children's Min. Training	24-26	WA Graduation
26	Pastors & Teachers Meeting	27	Office Closed
28	Executive Committee	30	Teacher In-Service
29	Office Closed		

March

1-3	Volunteer Lay Pastor Training
2	Conference Level PBE
10	Wakonda Work Day
15-16	Global Youth Day
29-31	Women's Empowerment Weekend @ Wakonda
30	Union Level PBE

April

4-6	Music Festival @ WA
9	Board of Education
14	Wakonda Work Day
14	Executive Committee/ Statistical Review
19-20	North Am. Divison PBE
25	Science Experience @ WA
26-28	Hisp. Men's Retreat @ Wakonda
27	Adventurer Fun Day

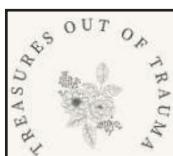
May

9	Pastor's Meetings
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On October 20, 2023, Maurice R. Valentine II, a dedicated servant of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, passed away, leaving a legacy of unwavering commitment to his faith and an impressive career of leadership within the Adventist church. He was 63.

Women's Empowerment Weekend



March 29-31, 2024
Camp Wakonda

Early Bird Rate Thru
February 17!

Guest Speakers:
Melinda Skau, M.D. and
Arlene Hendriks

More information and registration form available at: <https://wi.adventist.org/ministries/womens/>

Jim Johnson Passes Away



It is with sadness that we share the news that Jim Johnson, former Ranger at Camp Wakonda, passed away

unexpectedly on November 28, 2023. Jim served as Camp Ranger at Camp Wakonda from 1994-2013. His wife, Linda, served along side him in this role. Jim also served as a construction worker for the Wisconsin Conference from 1967-1972. In between these years, he served as Caretaker at Camp Au Sable in the Michigan Conference from 1976-1984. His life of service to God and man is a blessing and inspiration to all who knew him. Please join us in praying for the Johnson family.



The special offering for the Maui fires raised \$4,596.41! Alice Garrett sends a special "Thank you to the Wisconsin

Conference members for their generous gift from the bottom of my heart. The generous support for Wisconsin ACS is so appreciated!"

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