# Alberta Conference Avents News

A window of information for Seventh-day Adventists in Alberta



# Inprecedented REAKTHROUGH in Church Tradition

onference administration, in reponse to the Governance Committee study, announces a major re-definition of the role of church and pastor.

In a recent press release, the Alberta Conference administration announced a dramatic restructuring of the management process of the Conference. Dale Kongorski, Conference President, stated that these actions are being taken as a result of the Governance Committee recommendations, Executive Committee actions and a series of consultations with clergy and lay members in Alberta.

These changes were summarized by Conference Secretary, Norman Yergen, in three points. First the changes would shift greater responsibility to the local churches. Second, the changes would create greater accountability of the clergy and lay persons. Finally, this change in structure would give better definition to the role of conference, church and members.



This Alberta Adventist News - Special Edition outlines a dramatic departure from a historical conference driven model of leadership to one with a framework that integrates the efforts of lay men and clergy. It is our desire to see the local churches become the driving force of God's work in Alberta, unleashing the awesome power of lay ministry.

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#### Alberta Conference Directory

#### **Executive Committee**

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8:00 to 8:30 a.m.

**Business hours:** Monday - Thursday

8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

\*Conference resource room open during business hours.

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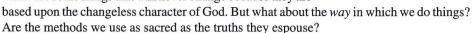
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#### From the President ...

#### **Changing Paradigms**

t has jokingly been said that Seventh-day Adventist's have eleven commandments. The eleventh reads, "Thou shalt not do it because we've never done it that way before." While it is said in humor, like most jokes, there would be no humor if there were not at least some truth in it.

Have you ever noticed how resistant to change we are within the church? It's not all bad, you know. When it comes to guarding principle and truth we can afford no compromise. There are some things that will never change because they are



In recent days I've been thinking about the beginnings of the Christian church. As I have reviewed those beginnings I have realized that from its very inception the Christian church has been prepared to adapt its methods to the needs that exist in order to fulfill the mission Christ has given it. Early in His ministry Jesus sent His disciples out on their first missionary trip. "He told them, 'Take nothing for the journey – no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic" Luke 9:3 NIV. They were to depend upon the kindness of the people to whom they ministered. Yet just before His crucifixion as Jesus looked to the future mission of His church, "He said to them, 'But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag..." Luke 22:36 NIV. The conditions had changed. The paradigm had shifted. The needs were different now and the church adjusted.

The apostolic church demonstrated that same flexibility. At first they worshiped publicly in Jerusalem. "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts..." Acts 2:46 NIV. God blessed the church and it grew. But then persecution came. The church eventually had to drop its public presence at the temple and worship in house churches. People fled from Jerusalem to surrounding towns and cities. The methods, by necessity, changed but the mission remained: to make disciples. Further changes came as Jewish Christians recognized that Gentiles too could have salvation. Missionary teams were formed to fulfill the promise of Jesus: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" Acts 1:8 NIV.

Before His departure from the earth, Jesus stated the mission of the Christian church in unequivocal terms: "... All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18 - 20 NIV. The mission is clear. The message is changeless: disciples are to be taught to obey what Jesus commanded. But the methods will vary according to the time and place the church is making disciples. Perhaps Paul best articulated the flexibility required in fulfilling the gospel commission when he wrote, "Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews.... To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some" 1 Cor.9:19 - 22 NIV.

In this issue of Alberta Adventist News we are introducing something new in the organization of the church. We are doing so, not to be different, but as a first step in an effort to find more effective ways of fulfilling the mission Jesus has given to His church. In other articles you will read about the reasons for the change. It is new and different and at first will probably seem uncomfortable to all of us. For too long we've clung to methods and structures that no longer work because "that's how we've always done it" and it is comfortable to us. But the paradigm has shifted. The needs of people are different than they were when I was growing up. As God's remnant people, we need to return to the traditional flexibility that God's church has always shown in adapting its methods and structures to meet the needs of the people so that we may accomplish the mission we have been commanded to fulfill.



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### **Unleashing the Awesome Power of Lay Ministry**

... all of us feel the conviction of the Gospel commis-

sion, yet we feel trapped in a system that began as

an honest attempt to fulfill the commission but now

seems to stand in the way.



Revival fires! How the church longs for the Holy Spirit to enliven it for the final accomplishment of its mission!

"Adventism was born as a dynamic, mission-centered movement. Passion for sharing the message reigned in the minds and hearts of the early pioneers. They labored until bone weary; they sacrificed health and possessions in attempting to reach the world with the saving news

of Jesus Christ and the third angel's message. Mission drove them! Mission motivated them! Mission was the flame that burned within them!

"Nearly 150 years later, the Adventist church prepares to enter the third millennium of the Christian era. What

has happened to mission? Where are the revival fires of the first-century church and early Adventism? Are they still burning? If one examines world-wide Adventism today, the answer is an unmistakable 'yes.' Adventism is alive and well and growing at an astounding pace in the third world. Yet in North America, Western Europe, and Australia, we find a different story. As Adventism burns with intense heat in the third world, it barely flames in its homelands.

"At times, North America appears to retreat rather than advance. Financial difficulties have led to cutbacks in ministerial personnel, dissident groups on the fringes of Adventism have wrought havoc in many local churches, and indifference has dulled the minds of many members. 'Cultural Adventism' allows them to enjoy the Adventist life-

style and associate with their Adventist friends but to have little or no apparent concern for mission.

"Yet, beneath this pessimism, there burns still in the Adventist psyche a tremendous desire to see the work of God finished. The dynamic explosion of evangelism in the former Soviet Union has captivated the Adventist mind. Perhaps even in North America similar results might be seen.

"Desire is one thing; action is another. Some feel that all we can do is to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Yet few even realize what that entails. Others seem satisfied with small accomplishments, hoping that someday the real break-

A consensus seems to have emerged that there is a deep frustration by all parties in the local church and the denomination as a whole: that the church as we know it needs fixing. Members are troubled by the lack of support, nur-

ture and attention from the organization

through will occur."1

they most depend on to fill these needs. Pastors seem caught between calcified bureaucracy and a militant congregation. Denominational leaders struggle to equitably distribute limited resources by maintaining dying structures while nurturing ideas that will create the future—yet they fail to successfully do either one well.

The system seems to have more power to control and maintain the status quo than any separate entity has to change it. The system chews up and spits out anyone trying to modify or alter the system.

On the one hand, all of us feel the conviction of the Gospel commission, yet we feel trapped in a system that began as an honest attempt to fulfill the commission but now seems to stand in the way.

Most end up in the blame game. It's the pastor's, laymen's or conference leader's fault. You choose who is at fault depending on the position you hold.

"The tragedy of the church in North America is that it has copied much of its way of doing things from surrounding

popular Protestant churches. But God intends that the Adventist Church function in a totally different way. Hiring pastors to do the work of the ministry while the laity pay, attend, and observe is not God's plan for the Adventist Church. In fact, this practice has resulted in the present Laodicean condition.

"We need to witness a rebirth of the laity concurrent with a wholehearted preparation for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Laity must once again become 'the church.' Likewise, pastors need to revise

their church role and return to their biblical job description—as a trainer of the laity. Until this happens, we can pray endlessly for the latter rain, and it will not fall. There must be action as well as prayer to restore the church to its biblical base, with laity and clergy work-

A major objective in establishing a new model for ministry is to re-establish the separation of pastoral responsibilities from managerial responsibilities at all levels.

Managerial ministry, on the other hand, is con-

cerned with complementary support for pastoral

ministry. Plant development, plant maintenance,

managing finances, chairing committees and

boards, taking care of the minutes and membership

records, bulletins, news letters are examples.

ing together as a team."2

The work of God in the earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.

Gospel Workers, pp. 351, 352

This new model attempts to bring each party to the table as equals. Together we work as a team sharing leadership, responsibility and power—making decisions by consensus—our best alternative under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

A major objective in establishing a new model for ministry is to re-establish the separation of pastoral responsibilities from managerial responsibilities at all levels. This is not to cause division since the integrating of the two functions takes place at the local church board, the Regional Management Team, and the Conference Executive Com-

mittee. The motivation is rather to get the pastoral function into primary focus and emphasis, and to allow the managers in the congregations an opportunity to do what they can do best. Separate leadership needs to be provided for these two functions to prevent the pastoral ministry

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#### **Regional Management Teams**

s a church family, Seventh-day Adventists believe in the soon coming of Christ and accept as their commitment and responsibility the task of seeing the message of His love and grace shared with all humanity. We are challenged by this momentous task and recognize that we need strong, dedicated, spiritual leadership to respond to this mission. In an effort to create a leadership environment that is driven by mission, the Conference Executive Committee has responded to the call of the last Triennial Session and adopted a new model of governance in which members of that committee accept the responsibility to create the overall vision and objectives of the church in Alberta/NWT rather than in being limited to giving assistance in management decisions.

As we review and reflect on methods for implementing the ends and outcomes established by the Conference Executive Committee in their visioning role under the new governance process, we have realized that we also need a new management system to work alongside the governance model. This management system must provide opportunity to link local church leadership with conference leadership in specific visions and plans as they relate to the fulfillment of the mission God has given to His church. Communication at this management level must be two-way.

We have recognized that an environment needs to be created that encourages openness, dialogue and innovation—an environment that rewards risk taking and increases productivity. The basic building blocks of that environment include shared planning and visioning, participatory decision making, joint ownership, team assessment, empowerment, shared responsibility, group alignment, individual excellence and continuous learning. In the interest of greater accountability and connectedness among congregations and pastors, the churches and pastors will be organized into geographical units called Regions. These geographical units will be managed by regional teams made up of pastors, members, and conference executive officers. A Region is a grouping of churches who find it convenient to work together for the greater benefit of all concerned. Regions are deter-

mined by the Conference Administrative Committee. At present there are six Regions in the Alberta Conference.

The primary motivation for establishing Regions is to place the responsibility for Kingdom Building (evangelism) at the grass roots level. The primary business of the church is Kingdom Building and this change is seen as making it possible to do what we want and need to do. Church leadership is far more difficult than business or political leadership. There are few short-term benefits or incentives a church leader can offer. A church leader has no disciplinary clout. Leadership is entirely dependent on the desire of the participants to be part of the Kingdom of God. Many members are becoming increasingly accustomed to being part of the action in their business and social lives and they also want to be a meaningful part of their church organization. If we catch their imagination and empower them to be Kingdom Builders, we will have succeeded in being the leaders God wants us to be.

The regional team concept reflects a thoughtful and intentional change of vision regarding the purpose of church organization. Under the regional team concept, the emphasis is on congregational life and pastoral functioning. It acknowledges the great diversity that exists at the local church level—a diversity that often makes office-based resource ministries and conference-wide programming and planning strategies ineffective, inefficient, and almost unavoidably unresponsive.

Regions will have from 5 to 15 churches. The actual configuration will depend upon church membership, number of pastors and geography. Each region will have its own management team. The Regional Management Teams should have 15 to 30 members, with representation from each church and company in the region. Members of the Regional Management Team will include the senior pastor of each church, one church board member from each church (selected annually by that local church board), the Conference Executive Committee member(s) from that region, conference executive officers and one additional church representative from each church with more than 300 members.



- 1. All Regional Committee members are accountable to their church board.
- 2. All Executive Committee members are accountable to their Regional Teams.
- 3. Structure provides that regular two-way communication becomes normative.



#### **Conference Committee Impacted**

One of the major effects the Regional Management Teams (RMT) will have on the conference is how the Conference Executive Committee will be formed and the communication that will flow from the conference to the churches through the RMT. At the present time, the Nominating Committee at the Triennial Session presents a list of names to the constituency for approval. This list of names, while trying to be considerate of geography, gender, and culture, is usually generated from the members of the Nominating Committee. Voted members are then asked to serve, but really have no accountability to anyone but the committee itself. At the next session some of the members are changed, and the process continues.

With the RMT's in place, each Region will make a recommendation to the Nominating Committee for the person or persons selected to represent that Region on the Conference Executive Committee. That makes up 12 out of the 20 positions that comprises the committee, along with three conference executive officers, bringing the number to 15. The Nominating Committee will then fill the remaining positions with people to balance out the needs listed above. Those five members will then also be a part of the RMT for the area in which they live.

These Conference Executive Committee members would then be in a position to communicate their actions to the RMT meeting, and be accountable to them to attend and participate in the business of the committee. Information would be passed on to the churches through the local church members who are members of the RMT. This will produce a committee accountable to someone other than themselves and will create a much stronger tie between the local church and the conference office.

#### **History of this Model**

In the fall of 1993 the Executive Committee established the Governance Committee which began its work at the beginning of 1994. A final report was delivered to the Conference Executive Committee on February 26, 1995. The Conference Executive Committee subsequently voted to accept the report in principle and voted to proceed with the implementation of its recommendations. At the 45th Session of the Alberta Conference, the constituency voted approval of the Governance Report and the implementation of the recommendations.

One of the major issues addressed in the report was the role of the Conference, the pastors, and the lay people. Among the recommendations of the Governance Committee the following stand out:

- 1. Members want better communication between the officers and churches.
- 2. Members want a system that gives them a more "visible" sense of participation.
- 3. The pastor is the direct facilitator and trainer of the members.
- 4. Lay members will share in planning and will direct local programs consistent with goals of local congregations.
- 5. Pastors will divest themselves of major administrative responsibilities.
- 6. Members will have greater say in programming.

Over the past two and a half years the Conference Executive Committee has been putting in place the recommendations of the Governance Committee. The last recommendations to be established are those in the list above. After much discussion with lay members, pastors and administrators, a structure was conceived that we believe moves us towards the model envisioned by the Governance Committee.

Change comes too slowly for some and too fast for others. The Conference Executive Committee and administration hope we have struck a balance that has taken enough time to gather as much support as possible while at the same time keeps us moving toward the goals established by the Governance Committee.

# Regional Management Team's Role

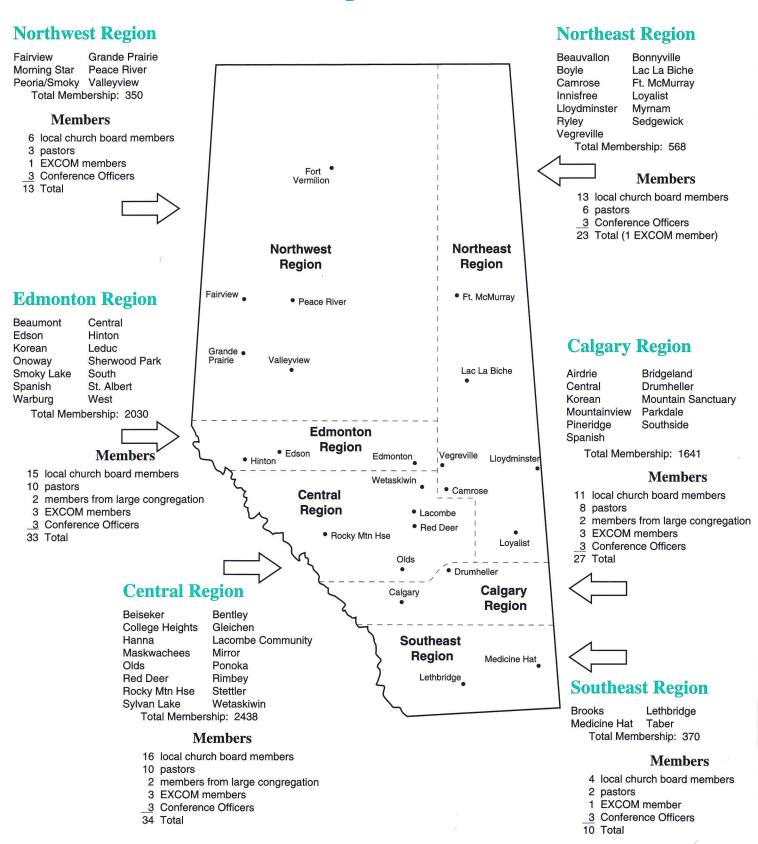
The Region's role will be to:

- 1. Develop goals and plans consistent with the outcomes selected by the Conference Executive Committee.
- Assure that appropriate care is given to local congregations and to encourage and facilitate proper pastoral and managerial leadership.
- 3. Plan and implement joint outreach and nurture activities between churches such as rallies, regional camp meetings, training seminars, etc.
- 4. Provide church ministries regional planning. Leaders for every facet of church ministry need to be identified and empowered to serve within the Region.
- 5. Provide nurturing support and consultation for pastors.
- Encourage and monitor self-evaluation of the different functions and levels of ministry in the congregations. Develop instruments for this purpose and audit their use.
- 7. Develop a consensus on the roles of pastors and members.
- 8. Make recommendations from among themselves for individuals to serve on the Conference Executive Committee and pass those recommendations to the Conference Nominating Committee.
- 9. Monitor and assure that the Conference Executive Committee representatives from the Region fulfill their responsibility for voicing the concerns of the Regional Management Team to the Conference Executive Committee and report Conference Executive Committee decisions back to the Regional Management Team.
- 10. Meet at least every second month to review progress in the Region and to make Kingdom Building plans for the Region.

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#### **Conference Regions and Members**



Because of its geographic isolation, Yellowknife will work directly with the Alberta Conference Office and not be part of one of the Regions.



R	egional	Team	Meetings
Feb. 24	7 pm	SE	Lethbridge
Feb. 25	7 pm	NE	Vegreville
Feb. 26	7 pm	NW	Grande Prairie
Mar. 3	7 pm	Central	Lacombe Community
Mar. 4	7 pm	Calgary	Calgary Central
Mar. 5	7 pm	Edmonton	<b>Edmonton Central</b>
Mar. 31	7 pm	SE	Lethbridge
Apr. 1	7 pm	NE	Vegreville
Apr. 2	7 pm	NW	Grande Prairie
Apr. 7	7 pm	Central	Lacombe Community
Apr. 8	7 pm	Calgary	Calgary Central
Apr. 9	7 pm	Edmonton	Edmonton Central
May 25	7 pm	SE	Lethbridge
May 26	7 pm	NE	Vegreville
June 1	7 pm	NW	Grande Prairie
June 2	7 pm	Central	Lacombe Community
June 9	7 pm	Calgary	Calgary Central
June 10	7 pm	Edmonton	Edmonton Central
Aug. 24	7 pm	SE	Lethbridge
Aug. 25	7 pm	NE	Vegreville
Sept. 1	7 pm	NW	Grande Prairie
Sept. 2	7 pm	Central	Lacombe Community
Sept. 8	7 pm	Calgary	Calgary Central
Comb O	7	E.1	F1

Edmonton

		Dateline
Feb.	11 - 14	Master Guide Convention, LA
	13 - 16	Adventist Singles, Rocky Mountain Cross- country ski weekend
	16	OFFICE CLOSED, Family Day
	17	Evangelism Committee, 9:00 am, Red Deer
	19	Personnel Committee, 9:00 am, Red Deer
	22	Executive Committee, Red Deer
	25	Sherwood Park Care Center Board - 2:00 pm, Red Deer
	27 - Mar 1	Pathfinder Winter Retreat, Foothills Camp
	27 - Mar 2	SDACC Board, Oshawa, Union K-12 Board,
		Oshawa
March	6 - 8	Men's Retreat, Foothills Camp
	12	Personnel Committee, 9:00 am, Red Deer
	13 - 15	Marriage Encounter, Calgary
	20 - 22	Women's Retreat, Foothills Camp
	26	PAA Board, College Heights
	27 - 30	CUC Board, College Corporation, Red Deer
	29	Native Ministries Committee, 1:00 pm, Red Deer
	31	P.R.E.A.C.H. Satellite Seminar
April	5	Daylight Savings Time begins - 2:00 am
	5	Alberta Conference K-12 Board
	8	Evangelism Committee, 9:00 am, Red Deer
	8	Sherwood Park Care Center Board - 2:00 pm, Red Deer
	13	OFFICE CLOSED, Easter Monday
	16	Personnel Committee, 9:00 am, Red Deer
	19	Executive Committee, Red Deer
	26	Canadian University College Graduation

#### Lay Ministry/continued from page 3

7 pm

Sept. 9

from being lost in the necessary management ministry. This is a paradigm shift. It recognizes the managerial ministry as complementing the pastoral ministry. The traditional head elder's role mirrors that of the pastor and, as such, is supplementary. The treasurer's role, on the other hand, is an example of a complementary role.

**Edmonton Central** 

Pastoral ministry consists of primary Kingdom Building activities such as visioning the future, preaching, teaching, visiting, nurturing, educating both members and non-members, and evaluating the effectiveness of the pastoral ministry.

Managerial ministry, on the other hand, is concerned with complementary support for pastoral ministry. Plant development, plant maintenance, managing finances, chairing committees and boards, and taking care of the minutes and membership records, bulletins and news letters are examples. At present these functions are generally taken care of at the congregational level by some combination of the following: pastor, secretary, bulletin secretary, treasurer, head elder, etc. The secretary, treasurer or a member with managerial ability could take responsibility for seeing to it that this ministry is accomplished. (It is essential that the leader of this ministry have the gift of administration.) The key issue is that this complementary ministry be performed by someone other than the pastor whose responsibility it is to do the pastoral ministry of Kingdom Building. Evaluation of the efficiency of the management functions would also be included in this ministry.

As a first step toward reaching the objectives outlined above, the concept of Regional Management Teams is being implemented. Additional steps toward the objectives will be identified and implemented as these Regional Management Teams begin to function and communicate with the Conference Executive Committee.

#### Summer Employment Available

#### Foothills Camp Cook

Applicants must have experience cooking for large groups, and proven ability to manage a team. This position provides a positive summer atmosphere, as well as a major ministry contribution. Room and board is supplied and standard wage is \$350 per week. Time of employment is approximately June 22 to August 24. Please feel free to contact and/or send resumé to Todd Miller, Conference Youth Director.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Revolution In The Church, pp. 11, 12

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 12, 13

#### **Church Leaders Satellite Training Events**

February 14 **Especially for Church Elders** "Handling Conflict Constructively"

4-6 p.m., ET, Galaxy 9 Channel 1

March 14 Especially for Church Elders

"All in Favor, Say I"

4-6 p.m. ET, Galaxy 9 Channel 22

March 14 Especially for Community Services/Personal

**Ministries Leaders** 

"Tutoring Underprivileged Children" 6-8 p.m., ET, Galaxy 9 Channel 22

March 28 Especially for Sabbath School Leaders, Youth

Pastors, Teachers

"Empowering Youth for Ministry"

**April 11** Especially for Elders and Visitation

**Coordinators** 

"Let's Do Lunch"

4-6 p.m., ET, Satellite TBA

Phone 800-ACN-1119 to register and receive participant's guide or to receive technical support.

#### Plan Ahead to Attend Alberta Conference Camp Meeting

July 3 - 11, 1998 @ Foothills Camp Accommodation still available Please call Penny @ 403-342-5044, ext. 201

#### **Attention All Former Pioneer Valley Academy Students and Faculty**

Whether you attended one month or four years, please contact Alumni Association Officers Helen and Jerry Kuntz, 1978, sparkyb2@juno.com, 20 Salisbury St., Holden, MA 01520, Phone 508-929-0657. Please provide current data such as address, phone number, fax number, and email address if you have one. Additional information such as occupation, recent family news, etc., is always appreciated. If you did not attend or teach at PVA, but know someone who did, your help in contacting those individuals will also be appreciated. Thank you.

Do YOU have what it takes to be a

#### FIRST CLASS MALE

Do something nice for your wife ...

leave home and come to camp for the weekend

March 6-8 @ Foothills Camp Fee \$75

Speaker: Marvin Wray, Pastor/Author Call 342-5044, ext. 210 to register

# ARCH 6 - 7 ANADIAN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

#### THIRTY YEARS PLUS

"Adventist Faith in a Secular World"
Guest: Jon Paulien

- Professor of New Testament at Andrews Seminary.
- Internationally acclaimed speaker and author of many books including: Present Truth in the Real World.



In the ongoing struggle between Christianity and Secularism, who's winning? Is the world becoming more like the church, or is it the other way around? And what of Adventism? Can a church founded in the 1860's reach out effectively to meet the needs of today's secular person? Dr. Paulien will present the Adventist struggle to keep and share faith in a secular society. You won't want to miss his presentations.

#### COLLEGE HEIGHTS CHURCH

Friday - 7:30 p.m. "The Problem of Secularism"

Sabbath - 9:15 a.m. "Keeping Faith in a Secular World"

10:50 a.m. "Raiders from the Lost Abyss"

3:00 p.m. "Sharing Faith in a Secular World"

#### YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT

"Pigs, Prostitutes, and Prodigals Guest: Karl Haffner

Believing in grace is one thing. Living it is another. Join us and experience the liberating grace of God in your life. Through the story of pigs, prostitutes, and a prodigal, you will come face to face with the scandal of grace. You will relive this classic parable. And revel in God's consummate pardon.

#### P.E. COMPLEX

Friday - 7:30 p.m. "Sex, Drugs, Harleys, and Grapes" Sabbath - 10:50 a.m. "God in the Box" 3:00 p.m. "The Gospel According to Manure"



- Senior Pastor, Walla Walla College Church
- Author of several teen devotionals: Peace Like a Spider, I'd Rather Kiss a Catfish, and Diaper Unviersity.

EVERYONE WELCOME: AGES 9-99, BRING THE KIDS TO CHILDREN'S CHURCH SABBATH MORNING.