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## Good News

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G O O D N E W S

A column for those tired of hearing bad news

**Operation Bearhug Pays Off**

In 1991 the North Pacific Union birthed Operation Bearhug, a loving outreach of gospel compassion intended to fill the enormous spiritual vacuum among the hundreds of millions of people in the nations of the former Soviet Union. Within weeks Bruce Johnston, President of the union and prime pusher of Bearhug, was himself in St. Petersburg, with a support staff from the Northwest, holding evangelistic meetings. Churches of the Northwest rallied to the challenge of Bearhug, contributing hundreds of thousands of dollars for evangelism,

construction of churches and the spiritual and physical welfare of some 7,000 converts.

Operation Bearhug has cost the North Pacific Union in excess of a million dollars—money that could have gone into evangelism within its own territory—and somewhere around a million personnel hours from within its five conferences. What has been the result? During the past two years alone, more accessions have come into Northwest churches than in any previous two years of the union's 90-year history. Offerings and tithes have shot up. Chalk up another one for that little



**ZAIRE: From America with love and high-revving engines! Seventeen motorcycles donated by Northwestern members.**

lady who faithfully communicated the Lord's assurance:

"To show a liberal, self-denying spirit for the success of foreign missions is a sure way to advance home missionary work; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off. It is in working to supply the necessities of others that we bring our souls into touch with the Source of all power" (*Gospel Workers*, pp. 465, 466).

Not that Eastern Europe is the only area Northwest Adventists have on their hearts. As the photo on page 90 shows and as *Gleaner* editor Edwin Schwisow says: "From America—with love and high-revving engines! Seventeen motorcycles donated by Northwestern members arrived in March in Zimbabwe, where they are being used by pastors as they visit far-flung membership."

### A Time to Heal

Thirteen months after their lives were blown apart, 22 of the child victims of the Oklahoma City bombing (most of whom had lost at least one parent) flew to Orlando, Florida, for a "week of healing." Their hosts? The familiar summer camp staff members of the Wewoca Woods (Oklahoma) Adventist Center.

Following the April 19, 1995, bombing, Jack Francisco, special project coordinator for the Okla-



homa Conference, worked with the Red Cross in arranging "Sooner Camp I"—a quiet week of crying and coping at Wewoca Woods. That camp went so well that many of the children requested a second one.

Sooner Camp II, funded by Florida Hospital, Continental Airlines, and Disney, included excursions to Disney World, Wet-n-Wild, Cocoa Beach, and the Kennedy Space Center—and continued counseling sessions.

Pictured above are Vanessa Thompson, 10, and Traci Pendergraft, an Adventist senior sociology major at Oklahoma University in Norman. Vanessa wears a ring in memory of her grandmother, a credit union worker at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building and the last victim pulled out. "Hopefully," says Pendergraft, "this trip will help the kids to have more faith in the people around them."

(See Andy Nash's "Suffer the Little Children," August 1995 NAD Edition of the *Adventist Review*.)