



FOCUS | Fall 2010

**Excellence—
in teaching and
service, research
and creative scholar-
ship, years-of-service
...Every year at awards
time we are reminded
anew what amazing and
dedicated people work at
Andrews University.**

Heartbeat of Adventist education

This is my first-ever letter to the Andrews University Focus editor since I graduated in 1984 from the Seminary. I'm disappointed as I read an important piece in the fall 2010 edition of Focus, "Are We the Head or the Tail?" by distinguished AU President Niels-Erik Andreasen. I know Dr. Andreasen is a great leader, and I'm proud of AU.

Here's my disappointment: We have the very troubled education world beginning to look at Adventism as an example of appropriate education reform, as Andreasen noted. It reminds me of four "Adventist" Hebrew boys who were stepping into a Babylon spotlight with testing scores that catapulted them above and beyond the rest....

And what were these stellar results to be credited to, according to Scripture? According to inspired counsel?

Andreasen calls out preliminary contributions (reasons why Adventist education is better than) in paragraph three. Class size. Close interaction between students and teachers. Passion for learning. Parental commitment. That's his list—four items. Not a bad list. Clearly these are contributing factors. I get it.

I am now a college parent with two of my own in college. If Andreasen's list was the major and primary reason to select Adventist education, I would never do it. I can get similar, possibly even better scores at institutions with world-renowned credentials for my sons, and in many cases due to the taxes we all pay, far cheaper. Andreasen concludes, "if parents want their children to exceed national norms, Adventist schools are good places to achieve that." Our good President Andreasen has omitted the very heartbeat of Adventist education in his analysis and write-up.

As a paying parent, and former AU student, I would like to see the heartbeat of true education put in its rightful place. Here it is:

*"In acquiring the wisdom of the Babylonians, Daniel and his companions were far more successful than their fellow students; but their learning did not come by chance. They obtained their knowledge by the faithful use of their powers, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They placed themselves in connection with the Source of all wisdom, making **the knowledge of God the foundation of their education**. In faith they prayed for wisdom, and **they lived their prayers**. They placed themselves where God could bless them. They avoided that which would weaken their powers, and improved every opportunity to become intelligent in all lines of learning. They followed the rules of life that could not fail to give them strength of intellect. They sought to acquire knowledge for one purpose—that they might honor God. They realized that in order to stand as representatives of true religion amid the false religions of heathenism they must have clearness of intellect and must perfect a Christian character. And **God Himself was their teacher**. Constantly praying, conscientiously studying, keeping in touch with the Unseen, they walked with God as did Enoch." CSA 55.5 [emphasis supplied by writer]*

Ken L. Wiseman (MDiv '84)

President's response

Thank you for your thoughtful response to the editor. Your reference to the story of Daniel and his three friends says it well. They asked their superintendent for permission to honor their faith and maintain their religious practices while in Babylon getting training for high office. The superintendent was reluctant, for he feared they would fail in their exams and he would be punished by the king, yet he relented.

You can only imagine his happy surprise and satisfaction when these four young students did



Thanks for writing

Letters to FOCUS are always welcome. To ensure a range of viewpoints, we encourage letters of fewer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for content, style and space.

By mail: Editor, Focus
Andrews University
Berrien Springs MI 49104

By e-mail: focus@andrews.edu

Opinions expressed in letters are not necessarily shared by the editors, university employees, officers and administrators.

better than all the other students in the final exams.

Similarly Adventist education directors, superintendents and principals reported happily and enthusiastically that students attending Church schools and academies learn their “three Rs” better than students in other schools, even as they also hold firm to their faith. I am glad of that and I am sure you are too.

President Niels-Erik Andreasen

Recognition due

I've appreciated reading *Focus*. You highlight well the contributions of your alumni. However, I noticed you don't have anything about **John M. Fowler** (MA '66, EdD '77).

He studied at Andrews University twice, once for his MA (after an MD from Syracuse) and then again for his doctorate. He was featured in the *Adventist Review* during the General Conference Session and that piqued my curiosity. My interest grew after he co-led the second Sabbath School study with Lisa Beardsley and Clifford Goldstein. Apparently, he has written a couple of Sabbath School study guides and is currently writing a future one. What caught my attention during the last Sabbath at the GC Session was the recognition of his 52 years of service in God's ministry. 52 years! Wow! I believe that's a testimony to the educational contributions of Andrews to Fowler, don't you? He retired this year after 53 years of service; 20 of which have been at the world headquarters.

I have also discovered another tidbit about John Fowler. He, George Knight, Niels-Erik Andreasen and William Johnsson all graduated in 1966. Four influential educators, writers, theologians of the Adventist church—produced by one institution.

Thank you again for producing an excellent magazine.

T. C. Rusty

A note about jazz

It is now publicly known that jazz is a part of Andrews University and Southern Adventist University music programs. In the fall issue of *Focus*, page 10, it shows a picture of a jazz group with the caption “Opening Night 2010! with J.C. Rodriquez [sic] & Lake Effect Jazz.”

Also, in reference to the back cover ad of the December 2010 *Ministry* magazine—“Southern Adventist University hosts events for you!” This is the quote: “Southern Wind Symphony and Jazz Ensemble will perform a potpourri of Christmas music.”

When I attended EMC, now Andrews University, we were taught about jazz music and its evil influence on anyone who listens to or performs jazz.

If we were misinformed that jazz is not an acceptable type of music, then we need to be informed with updated information that jazz is now acceptable to listen to and also to have it a part of Seventh-day Adventist education curriculum. An article in the *Focus* should help us to understand this change.

I am including excerpts of a chapel talk given at Andrews University about jazz. [*Editor's note: The excerpt was too lengthy to be included.*] If this was true then, please explain the acceptance of the change in today's Adventist education.

Lyle Hamel (BS '49)

European Tours

Alumni and friends of Andrews University are invited to join one of the following 2011 tours offered by Merlene Ogden, dean emerita of Andrews University:

Portugal, Spain and the Douro River Valley Cruise

September 14–25, 2011

Pre-cruise extension to Spain September 6–15, 2011

The cruise features two days in Lisbon followed by a coach tour through Coimbra to Porto to board our cruise ship, The Duoro Spirit. The next eight days visit charming Portuguese cities and enjoy beautiful scenery in this picturesque river valley. In Spain visit Madrid, Avila, Segovia, Toledo, Granada, Cordoba and Seville, ending in Lisbon. Full information available upon request.

Danube Holiday Markets—Passau, Germany, to Budapest, Hungary

December 4–12, 2011

This cruise during the Christmas season features visits in four countries—Germany, Austria, Slovakia and Hungary. Enjoy holiday decor and the sights and sounds of Christmas, as well as the Old World atmosphere during this festive time of year. A pre-cruise, three-day extension to Salzburg, Austria, and a post-cruise, two-day extension to Budapest, Hungary, are also offered. Full information is available upon request.

For information, please contact:

Merlene A. Ogden
4683 Timberland Drive
Berrien Springs MI 49103
Phone: 269-471-3781
E-mail: ogden@andrews.edu