



It only takes a spark

The Focus office received a number of complimentary emails regarding our cover story in the last issue (“Lighting a Fusion”), particularly from Fusion leaders and participants who felt that Gillian Sanner really captured the essence of the innovative campus worship program... Generally speaking, however, we’ve discovered that if there is one thing you can count on, it is that readers are full of surprises. And this cycle of letters was no exception, with a wide range of responses and reactions to subjects as varied as weight loss, global warming and bungling satire. Enjoy!

Don't forget to write

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

Write: Editor, Focus
Andrews University
Berrien Springs MI 49104

E-mail: focus@andrews.edu

Weighty issues

The winter 2007 issue was such a blessing to me. At the University of the Southern Caribbean where my husband and I work, there are so many overweight students, and I was thinking of a way to address that problem without letting the students feel hurt in any way. The story on the “Biggest Loser” at Andrews was the ideal program I was looking for. Thanks a million! You may never know how many students will be blessed both physically and spiritually from this program.

Lois Baynes

Finding the balance

In a genre that often can be newsy or chatty, I found David Beckworth’s “A World Out of Balance” most insightful and helpful. So much so that I’ve scanned it into my computer for future reference. Thanks again!

Marlan Knittel (MDiv '88)

Cache out

The inside front cover [of the Spring issue] contained a well-written tribute to the 8.5 million gift by William and Bonnie Colson. The gift was a ringing endorsement of the stewardship of Dr. Niels-Erik Andreasen.

[When] I arrived at the inside back cover, to my horror, I found a poorly conceived satire of that monumental gift. Frankly, I lay the fault at your door. The word “editor” should mean something more than spelling and punctuation. It should mean culling the inappropriate!

The Colson gift gave equal emphasis to the front and back door[s] of Andrews and all things in between—from a front entrance to student nutrition. Why give space to trivial nonsense at a moment of great celebration?

Tom Zwemer (att.)

Taking flight

It was a pleasant surprise to read the spring issue and see the picture of Verlyn Benson.

As a hobby, I enjoyed flying and pursued my Commercial and Certified Flight

Instructor licenses. In the 1970s when I was teaching at Pacific Union College, one of my hobbies was teaching flying at the Angwin Airport. One of my flight students was Verlyn Benson, who progressed through his first solo and then on to his private pilot’s license.

I have wondered often about him and what he was doing. He was a perfectionist as a student pilot, and it was a joy to teach him.

Lyle Hamel (BS '49)

Science and stewardship

Eric Bates (“Pop-Culture Science,” spring 2007 Focus “Letters”) is seriously mistaken if he really thinks the jury is out on global warming.

Nonscientists may not fully appreciate the peer review process by which scientists scrupulously cross-check and test their conclusions against the data and judgments of others. This is a rigorous, thorough and reliable system, and from it has emerged a consensus among scientists that the warming of the earth is in large part due to human activity, and that the prospective changes could have catastrophic impacts on civilization.

Some say actions to diminish global warming will harm the economy, but it is hard to see how they could cost more than, say, building a seawall around Florida or Bangladesh. Scaling down the egregious overuse of energy by Americans by increasing the efficiency of cars and building a comprehensive high-speed rail system will hurt some sectors, to be sure, but will help others. Encouraging the use of family planning and stabilizing world population will have almost entirely beneficial effects, since most of the problems the world faces become more intractable in the presence of rapidly growing populations.

Despite our eschatological views, Adventists have not avoided involvement in the healing professions, even though these provide only partial solutions to the world’s ills. It would be unseemly to justify inaction on global warming by expressing our contentment with the belief that God is going to set everything right at the end.

Donald Rhoads (BA '58, former faculty)