

California alumni gatherings

PALM SPRINGS

This year Andrews University was well represented at the annual Palm Springs Winter Campmeeting Jan. 30 & 31. **DWIGHT K. NELSON** (M.Div. '76, D.Min. '86) was invited to be the weekend speaker, preaching Friday night, Sabbath worship sermon, and Sabbath evening vespers. His topic was "America Adrift: The Impending Moral Armageddon." President **NIELS-ERIK ANDREASEN** (MA '65, BD '66) was invited to teach the Sabbath School lesson for the campmeeting. Several Andrews alumni were on the platform, including **WARREN MINDER**, former dean of the School of Education, and **GEORGE ARZOO** (BA '51).

LOMA LINDA

On Sabbath, January 31, nearly 100 alumni enjoyed a potluck Sabbath lunch together at the Drayson Center on the



Shelley (Trubey) Higgins (BSLED '01) and Rebecca May

campus of Loma Linda University. **KIMBER** (BA '67) and **LOUISE** (BA '73) **SCHNEIDER** were instrumental in organizing the dinner. A large number of young alumni showed their enthusiasm and support by joining the lunch.

Alumni enjoyed seeing slides of the campus, including the new Howard Performing Arts Center, and pictures of the campus blanketed in snow.

SAN BERNARDINO

COREY (BS '93) and **KIM (MEDINA)** (BS '88, MSPT '89) **KNOWLTON** organized an alumni brunch for a few friends on Sunday, February 1, at Guadalaharry's Restaurant in San Bernardino.

The young gathering included lots of little "future alumni" to swell the crowd.

LaSIERRA

The hale and hearty braved the rainstorms and gathered for soup and salad at the LaSierra University campus on Monday evening, Feb. 2. LSU President **LARRY GERATY** (MA '63, BD '65), shared some memorable moments from his time as a student at Andrews.

NAPA VALLEY

Napa Valley alums gathered on Feb. 4 for dinner at Marie Callendar's Restaurant. Dr. Andreasen shared campus news and answered questions. More than 40 alumni hope to meet again next year, and plan to bring more alumni friends with them.

SACRAMENTO

Paul (member of the Board) and Shelly Stokstad graciously hosted a catered meal for Sacramento area alumni. Thanks also to **DON AMMON** (MBA '67), President of AHS, for making the headquarters atrium available for our alumni dinner. Dr. & Mrs. Andreasen were warmly received by alumni in the area.



Young alumni group at Guadalaharry's

First-ever Twin Cities alumni gathering

DONOVAN DAVIS (BA '81, M.Div. '83), pastor of the Southview SDA Church in Minneapolis, Minn., noticed the pictures in *FOCUS* of alumni gatherings around the country and wondered how to get something started in Minneapolis. So he



L-R: Donovan Davis, Niels-Erik Andreasen and Rebecca May

contacted the alumni office and started the ball rolling. He offered the pulpit at Southview to Dr. Niels-Erik Andreasen, which NEA accepted, and started spreading the news throughout the conference about his special guest, and the alumni gathering to follow. So on Feb. 21, Pastor Davis welcomed Dr. Andreasen, filled out the platform participants with other alumni, and pro-



OLDIE-GOLDIES: A lively group of Andrews alumni met at the home of Royce and Elaine Thompson in Redlands, Calif., in November. Herb Pritchard noted they had a splendid time talking of times past and getting reacquainted.

Pictured: Vertical rows, left to right: **ROYCE THOMPSON** (BA '51, MBA '61). Second row, going up the stairs: **BEATY ERHARD** (att.), **STEW ERHARD** (BA '52), **EARL ADAMS** (MA '61), **HERB PRITCHARD** (BA '52), **ELAINE THOMPSON** (BA '52), Marie Adams, **JIM ZACHARY** (BA '52, MAT '61, BD '67) and Jean Zachary. Third Row: **JOSEPH KRPALEK** (BA '53), Anne Krpalek, **JUDY PRITCHARD** (att.), **RALPH STARK** (BA '53), Anna Stark, **THELMA KNUTSON** (BA '52), **BOB KNUTSON** (BA '52). Fourth Row: **DICK KOOBS** (BA '50).

moted a ministry close to his heart—Adventist education.

On Saturday evening, Dr. Andreasen hosted a dinner for 32 alumni at a Holiday Inn in Minneapolis. **JOSE VEGA** (BA '68), one alum who attended, later wrote: "Dr. Andreasen's perspectives on the future role of Andrews as an institution positioning itself for a global mission were insightful. As a student in the mid-1960s, I felt that Andrews University exuded a cosmopolitan aura where ethnic and racial diversity was the norm and not the exception. I feel that a lot of my education occurred as a result of my contacts with students from many parts of the world, and not totally from the course of study I undertook. My hope for the future of the university in the Midwest of this nation is that it simultaneously addresses the needs of two populations: American youth of all social and ethnic groups and the youth of the nations of the world."

We may have a new annual gathering on the calendar of the alumni office!

Alumni night owls

Why do more than 60 alumni volunteers stay up past midnight on Friday night? A night otherwise known in our Adventist subculture as a quiet night at home with the family, maybe getting to



Students enjoying hot chocolate and cookies at 'til Midnight Café

bed a little early? The answer is, they love the chance to rub shoulders with current Andrews students at the 'til midnight café, held for 10 Friday evenings during the winter. In its (11th) season, the Alumni House is opened to Andrews students from 8 p.m. 'til midnight (hence

the name) to enjoy the cozy, homey atmosphere of the Alumni House, and alumni volunteers cheerfully volunteer to serve the students hot chocolate.

It takes a minimum of six volunteers to staff the café, because the average crowd on a Friday evening is well over 100 students. "I did nothing but mix hot chocolate from 8 p.m. to midnight but we had fun" says **BRENDA SIEBOLD** (att.) "It's so nice to see students enjoying the beginning hours of the Sabbath together." **SARAH FUSTÉ** (BA '00, MAT '02) says, "The best part of volunteering was being able to provide a cozy place for students that might otherwise not have a "home" to go to on Friday night. Working the café was more fun than being a waitress would be and I loved that the volunteer kitchen staff got to drink as much hot chocolate and eat as many cookies as we wanted!"

"I'll Come Back"

RUIMAR (BA '85), **MARGARETH** (att.), Larisson, and Melissa DePaiva were excited about becoming missionaries. Originally from Brazil, they had spent almost five years living and studying at Andrews University. After attending Mission Institute in June 2002, they headed for the island nation of Palau, where their years of study could be put to good use. From August 2002



Larisson, Margareth & Ruimar DePaiva

to December 2003, Ruimar pastored the Koror Church and Margareth taught church school in Palau. The family earned the love of the church members and was befriended by the queen of Palau and many others in the wider community.

On the night of December 22, 2003, an intruder broke into their home intent on theft. One by one, as the family was aroused from sleep, the robber attacked them until all were dead except ten-year-old Melissa. Abducted by the attacker, Melissa was released after a harrowing twenty hours and told the story to the police. Within a few hours, the perpetrator was in custody.

The entire nation of Palau was shaken by this horrendous tragedy. The government ordered the country's flags lowered to half-mast and a state funeral to be held on Monday, December 29. As the news flashed around the world via e-mail and phone, Adventists everywhere joined in prayer for the bereaved, especially for Melissa. The General Conference sent **ANN HAMEL** (MA '94, PhD '97), former missionary and licensed psychologist, from Berrien Springs, Michigan, to support the grieving family and other missionaries on Palau. The remarkable story of the funeral is best told by one who was there—John Rutledge, an attorney with the State Government of Koror. Following are excerpts from his e-mailed report.

*The memorial service was held yesterday at 4:00 p.m. The ceremony was long but remarkable. Just as I was about to stand and yell "enough already!" (the thing ran 4 hours!), Ruimar's mom (**RUTH DEPAIVA, MAT '80, MA '84, PHD '98**) did something so intensely selfless that I simply broke down and wept.*

She took the microphone without warning or announcement and showed us a level of forgiveness we'd all do well to strive for. In the week she was here in Palau, she met with Justin Hirosi, the man who murdered her son, daughter-in-law, and only grandson. She prayed with him. And she let him know that she'd already forgiven him.

Then, having just learned that Justin's mother was at the service, she asked Mrs. Hirosi to join her. Mrs. Hirosi, unable to walk on her own, was aided to the stage by her brother and several neighbors. Ruimar's mom hugged her so warmly that the casual observer might have believed the two were long-lost friends. Together, they stepped to the microphone and Mrs. DePaiva announced that they were "both mothers grieving for lost sons." You could have heard a pin drop.

Mrs. DePaiva went on. She implored the Palauan community to remove any shroud of blame that might otherwise cover Justin's family. She declared that the DePaivas do not blame Justin's family for the tragedy (and that no one else should either). "We raise our children; we educate them," Mrs. DePaiva said. "We teach them right from wrong. That is all we, as mothers, can do. They have their own minds."

The high chief of the island where the tragedy occurred came to the microphone. He expressed shame, regret, and sorrow on behalf of Justin's family, his clan, and his entire tribe. The high chief explained that Justin's family and clan, though of meager means, had sold many of their belongings and now desired to deliver \$10,000 in cash to Melissa for her college education.

Melissa has been so extraordinarily strong throughout this process that it's left us all in awe. When asked where she'd like to go to live, Melissa said: "I'd like to stay here in Palau." Imagine everyone's surprise. Her grandmother then explained that staying here wasn't possible. "Okay," Melissa said. "But I'll be back someday; I'll come back as a missionary."

A memorial service was held at Pioneer Memorial Church on Monday, Jan. 12, 2004. Melissa is currently enrolled in the fifth grade at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School and living with her paternal grandparents, **RUTH** and **ITAMAR** (MA '80, DMin '83) **DEPAIVA**. Donations to assist with her educational expenses may be sent to:

Melissa DePaiva Trust Fund
c/o Institute of World Mission
Seminary S-203
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0220.