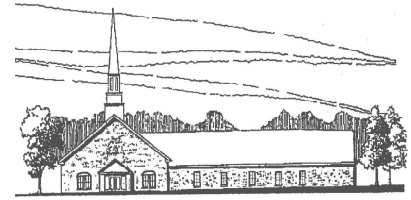

FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS

Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church Newsletter
May/June 2005



Casting Vision

To Our Church Family

By Pastor Dan Martella



After much prayer and reflection on God's leading in our lives, I have made the difficult decision to accept the invitation of the Northern California Conference to pastor the Healdsburg and Cloverdale churches. These churches are located about an hour north of San Francisco, and are surrounded by beautiful vineyards. The people are warm and the churches are bright with potential. These are hurting churches with great needs. They need to be loved, organized, united in purpose, mobilized for effective ministry and outreach, and set free from the difficulties of the past.

Why are we making the move at this time? Because our families need us, especially as our parents grow in age. Because these churches need us and the Merrimack Valley/Billerica blessing that we will bring with us. Because Linda needs new work. Because the Merrimack Valley Church needs new leadership that can take it to the next level in life and ministry for Christ.

Our last Sabbath here will be June 11 and we plan to head west during camp meeting. In the weeks to come the conference president will meet with the Billerica and Merrimack Valley church boards to process the selection and placement of a new pastor. Each of you will have a vital part to play in those decisions. I encourage you to make this a matter of special prayer.

In the few weeks we still have together, I want to revel in the gift of friendship God has given us. My family and I will always be grateful for your friendship. God brought you into our lives when we needed you the most. You have loved us. You have believed in us. You have prayed with us and worked with us. You have shared in our journey and blessed us. We will always hold you close to our hearts.

In the few weeks we still have together, I want to delight in the miracles that God has bestowed on this church during our

years together. In love He has brought a once hurting and divided church into health and unity. He has given us a vision for ministry and governing values to guide us. He has given us a way to worship together each Sabbath that is biblically sound and special to our congregation. He has blessed us with a beautiful new church home. He has brought us significant growth, both in numbers and in spiritual maturity. And He has set us on a course to win our valley for Jesus Christ. This is truly a circle of friends helping friends become fully devoted followers of Christ.

We love you and look forward to future opportunities to share friendship. We are eager to hear the stories of how God will advance this church. And we ardently want Jesus to come. We want to go home where we will spend eternity with our friends and never again have to say goodbye.

The Road Ahead

By Steven Donich, First Elder

None of us are ever prepared for the news our pastor will soon be leaving. Throughout our church family there are feelings of regret that the relationship we have known and loved for 7 years will come to an end. There is an anxiety about what will come next. This is all a natural part of separation and departing. Many of us have experienced this kind of goodbye before, but it never gets easier to endure. I can still remember when our family returned from mission service 29 years ago. We said our goodbyes and left the college campus that had been our ministry. I turned for a last look at the sign that greeted students and visitors, realizing that I might not see it again. As the campus passed from view I turned to face the road ahead and the rest of my life.

We are not designed to go through life looking back. The Bible is filled with reminders to focus our attention on what lies ahead. Sometimes it is harsh and judgmental as with Lot and his wife. Jesus was inspirational as He told the disciples "Let not your hearts be troubled" and described what would be

Continued on Page 2

The Road Ahead continued from Page 1

prepared for them in heaven. Paul told the Philippians that he wanted to “forget the things which lay behind, and reach forward to what lies ahead.” We too must not dwell on our fond memories from the past 7 years. We have to put aside the things which are behind us, and “press on to the high calling of God in Jesus.”

We will take the time to reflect, and celebrate the ministry of Dan and Linda here at Merrimack Valley. We will also turn our attention to what lies ahead, and prepare for the next phase of church life here at Merrimack Valley. Your thoughts and ideas and concerns are important. Talk to one of the elders, or a church board member. Each Sabbath through this period of transition, we will share the things that are happening. In exchange I ask you to share with your church leaders the questions and concerns that have not yet been addressed. Together we will celebrate the story of the past 7 years.

Together as friends we will turn our gaze to the road ahead. Together as family, brothers and sisters, we will reach toward the mark of the high calling of God.

The Martella family will soon be leaving us for their new field of service. Our tears, regret, and feelings of sorrow are important to acknowledge. Because they are symbols of what is to come. The prophet Isaiah and the apostle John knew about exile and separation from those they loved. And they both painted word pictures of a heaven where sorrow and tears will be no more. Please remember these three thoughts in your personal prayer life: Pray for a spirit of thanksgiving for the past 7 years of ministry together. Pray for a spirit of courage to face the road ahead. And pray for a spirit of hope that will keep us faithful until that time when sorrow and tears will be no more.

Power of Prayer

By *Gustav Mergenthaler*

What we Seventh-day Adventists have known for years about the healing power of prayer seems to now find recognition by the medical community as a powerful tool. We can read something about this in the April 2005 issue of Reader's Digest. Here are some excerpts from this article.

“In a 1997 study of older adults by Harold Koenig, those who frequently attended religious services were less likely to have undesirable high levels of interleukin-6, a protein involved in immune response and inflammatory factors, signaling healthier immune systems, than those who did not attend. In a 1998 study of 4000 adults, Dr. Koenig found that those who prayed daily and attended religious services weekly had 40% less hypertension than those who didn't pray or go to services. A

2004 study at the University of Iowa linked church attendance with living longer.

In a 2001 study of women with metastatic breast cancer, S.E. Sephton, found that the women who rated spirituality as important had greater numbers of circulating white blood cells and total lymphocyte counts, reflecting stronger immune systems, than those who did not.

A 2002 study of AIDS patients published in the Annals of Behavioral Medicine found that the most religious patients had the lowest levels of the stress hormone cortisol, and that frequency of prayer was significantly related to longer survival”

Someone said, “when we have nothing left but God, we discover that God is enough”.

Prayer of Hope

*Dear Master, take me by the hand, and guide me through this day;
The path ahead is rough, oh Lord, and painful is the way...
Dear Master, take me by the hand, and fill me with Thy peace;
Uplift my heart and soul, oh Lord, that I may find release...
Dear Master, take me by the hand, and give me strength to cope:
Protect me from the care of life, and bless me with new hope...
Dear Master, take me by the hand, and keep me close to Thee;
Release me from all doubt and fear, and set my spirit free!*

Festival of Faith

Camp Meeting 2005

Date: June 17-25, 2005

Where: Campgrounds, South Lancaster, MA

Speakers:

Frank Gonzalez, LaVoz de la Esperanza Speaker/Dir.
 Van Hurst, Dakota Conference President
 Mike Tucker, Faith For Today Speaker/Dir.

Plus:

- Children and Youth meetings and activities planned for the week.
- Adventist Book Center Sale, Sunday morning 10:30 a.m.
- Great music! Great Fellowship! Great Worship!

Sabbath Lunch

Join members of the Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist church for a fellowship dinner each Sabbath across from the Junior tent. Bring enough food for you and your family.

**Southern New England Conference
 Camp Winnekeag Summer Camp Schedule 2005**

Wake Board Camp (High School & College)	June 5-10
Staff Training Week	June 10-19
Teen & Youth Adult Extreme Camp (Ages 13+ & 18+).....	June 19-26
Teen Camp (Ages 13+)	June 26 - July 3
Blind Camp (Ages 10-60)	July 3-10
Junior Camp (Ages 10-12)	July 10-17
Junior Xtreme/Adventurer Camp (Ages 8-9 & 10-12)	July 17-24
Family Camp #1	July 24 - 31
Family Camp #2	July 31 - Aug 7

<http://www.campwinnekeag.com/> or 978-827-4455

BIRTHDAYS

MAY

- 1 Tom Reuther
- 3 Lance Forrester
- 4 Pedro Campbell
- 4 Edward Lee
- 7 Jose Mortimer, Jr.
- 7 CJ Candelario
- 8 Ray Lewandowski
- 10 Jay Wiacek
- 11 Laura Moynihan
- 12 Jennifer Holliman
- 12 Ricardo Rocha
- 13 Kristina Walker
- 14 Brenda Candelario
- 15 Kellywan Kan
- 18 Jenn Watson
- 19 Michael Casadine
- 19 Steven Dovich
- 19 Lizbeth Martinez
- 20 Annette Campbell
- 23 Norman Round
- 26 Shawn Crowley
- 26 Ashley Moynihan
- 27 Isabella Rocha
- 28 Alloys Gomwe
- 28 Jean McKillop
- 29 Reina Buruca
- 30 Rufaro Gomwe

JUNE

- 4 Monique Forrester
- 4 Ron Holliman
- 7 Benjamin Esmeal
- 9 Bob Moynihan
- 10 Matt McClendon
- 12 Brian Mergenthaler
- 12 Jim Reiss
- 19 Jenna Crowley
- 24 Vivian Irrgang
- 25 Linda Martella
- 25 Chan Chou
- 26 Juanita Ortiz
- 29 Stefanie Holliman



Nature's Whey

Merrimack Valley SDA
 Church health food store is

open for business. The order forms are located on the Community Service cabinet in the fellowship hall, and should be returned to Joan Reiss with your payment. Payment for bulk orders of herbs and grains may be paid after delivery. **Don't forget, the church building fund receives a percent of your purchases.**

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

Love is still the greatest cure the world has ever known—no matter what the problem. The love of a friend makes you feel totally accepted, just the way you are. The love of a friend asks how you are and really listens for an answer. The love of a friend touches you—even though she knows all about you, she loves you anyway. The love of a friend stays with you when others desert you. The love of a friend is a gift from God.

You can view this newsletter on-line at <http://www.mvsda.org/?section=newsletter>

Thank you for . . .

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS



JOINING US FOR VESPERS ON THE OCEAN



SHARING THE GOSPEL IN CHARACTER



GIVING NEW LIFE THROUGH BAPTISM



HELPING WITH VBS DECORATING



BEING THERE FOR SUMMER PICNICS



Thank you for . . .

HELPING WITH BEGINNERS



YOUR COMMITMENT TO EACH OTHER



SINGING FOR TALENT NIGHT



BEING THERE FOR CHRISTMAS PARTIES



KEEPING US LAUGHING



YOUR FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE



SCHOOLPOP/SCRIP NEWS

Spring is finally here and it's time to think about those home projects we have all been putting off. By thinking and planning ahead, we can do all those projects **AND** support the church building fund at the same time. Doesn't get much easier than that.

Home Depot purchase cards are now available in a \$100 denomination at an industry best 3.5% discount; also available in a \$50 denomination. In other words, 3.5% of whatever you purchase at Home Depot comes back to the church! Not a bad deal.

There are many merchants that give discounts. Just go to the website below and you will find the merchant list. New merchants are being added weekly.

<http://www.schoolpopscrip.com/>

Just let me know what you want and I can order for you or you can do it yourself online. All cards need to be prepaid, or you may apply for the credit card that gives a discount on anything you buy, gas, food, etc. We all shop, so why not support the building fund at the same time.

Ingrid Mergenthaler
603-883-3587
imergen@aol.com

AFRICA



Meet: Rory, Elaine, Gigi, Lug, and Zeke

Vacation Bible School, August 1 - 5, 2005 Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church

<http://www.groupvbs.com/>

Calendar of Events

April

- 28 7:30 p.m. Elder meeting
- 30 Fellowship Dinner
Pastor selection meeting
Nursing home ministry

May

- 7 International Day
Fellowship Dinner
- 8 6 p.m. Martella farewell dinner
- 10 7 p.m. Church board meeting
- 14 VBS meeting
- 15 Secret sister brunch
- 21 Nursing home ministry
- 22 SNEC constituency meeting
- 28 Nursing home ministry

June

- 5 Yard sale
- 9 7:30 p.m. Elder meeting
- 11 Martella's last Sabbath at Merrimack Valley
- 12 GBA/SLA Graduation
- 14 7 p.m. Church board meeting
- 17-25 SNEC Campmeeting, S. Lancaster, MA
- 18 Fellowship dinner (Campmeeting)
- 25 Fellowship dinner (Campmeeting)
- 30 7:30 p.m. Elder meeting

July

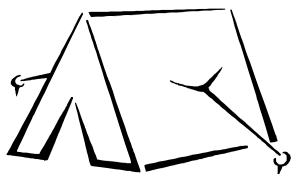
- 1-9 General Conference Session, St. Louis, MO

August

- 1-5 Vacation Bible School

****Watch the MVC bulletin or MVSDA.org for further information regarding up coming events****

Southern New England Conference Campmeeting



June 17 - June 25, 2005
Campmeeting grounds, South Lancaster, MA

Speakers include:

Frank Gozalez, LaVoz de la Esperanza Speaker/Dir.
Van Hurst, Dakota Conference President
Mike Tucker, Faith For Today Speaker/Dir.

Picture Gallery

JUNIOR SABBATH SCHOOL BREAKFAST



Clockwise from left: Rita McCall, Rejoice Asomugha, Celina Uy, Flor Portillo, Youda, Ly, Shayla and Jenna Crowley

SPIRITUAL BODY BUILDING SEMINAR



From left: Elizabeth de Jesus, Dennis Rodrigus, Evelyn de Jesus

SPIRITUAL BODY BUILDING SEMINAR



From left: Alice Jacobson, Nancy Jacobson, and Margarita Santana

Bible Word Search – Second Coming

All the words listed below are in the puzzle. Circle each word as you find it. After you have found all the words, put the leftover letters in the correct order to reveal the mystery word. Mystery word answer on page 2.

S K Y D S L E G N A T B E H E		
O S N S A C R I F I C E R T L		
N U T E L U D E S S E L B I T		
S D S N V U G R S N O I T A N		
I R S R A A F H S U S E J F E		
N O E N T V E R T S E V A R G		
N L N W I N R H E E S E D G T		
E E I W O A E E E D R R L N E		
R S P O N L T M S T N S R I P		
S N P R L M L N G I E O O Z M		
D U A S C I E O U D M R W A U		
O O H H K G F I F O U O N M R		
O C M I C H A E L G M J R A T		
L O N P S T E H P O R P N P L		
F D H O L Y C I T Y L I M A F		
	Almighty	Judgment
	Amazing	Kind
	Angels	Life
	Believers	Lord
	Blessed	Michael
	Counselor	Mountains
	Daughters	Nations
	Eternal	Promise
	Faith	Prophets
	Family	Sacrifice
	Floods	Salvation
	Followers	Servants
	Gentle	Sinners
	God	Sky
	Graves	Sons
	Happiness	Trumpet
	Heaven	Wonderful
	Holy City	World
	Jesus	Worship

Bible Quiz – The Kingdom of God

Select one answer for each question. Correct answers can be found on page 2.

- In the *Parable of the Sower*, Jesus tells of a farmer planting his seed. What did the seed that fell on rocky or stony areas represent?
 - People who hear the message of the kingdom of God, but do not understand it.
 - People who hear the message of the kingdom of God, understand it, and put it into action
 - People who receive the message of the kingdom of God with joy, but do not have the courage to persevere through trouble, peer pressure or persecution.
 - People who hear the message of the kingdom of God, but who let the worries of life and the lure of wealth become more important in their lives.
- In the *Parable of the Wheat and Weeds*, Jesus tells of a farmer who planted a wheat field. In the night an enemy came and planted weeds. The servants wanted to pull the weeds but the farmer said, "No, . . . let them grow together until the harvest." Who did the farmer represent?
 - God
 - Jesus
 - John the Baptist
 - Jesus' disciples
- What was the point of the *Parable of the Mustard Seed*?
 - The kingdom of God is the "spice of life"
 - Like a tiny mustard seed that grows into a huge tree, the kingdom will also grow large.
 - The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed – the rarest and most valuable of seeds.
 - The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed – the largest and most beautiful of seeds.
- In the *Parable of the Hidden Treasure*, why did Jesus compare the kingdom of God to a treasure hidden in a field?
 - We may stumble upon the kingdom unexpectedly.
 - The kingdom is worth more than all a man's possessions.
 - A diligent search is needed to find the kingdom.
 - Like finding a far away field, a long spiritual "journey" is required to find the kingdom of God.

Kids - get your crayons and color this picture



Daniel Prays to God
Daniel 6

Inside this Issue

Article	Page
Casting Vision – To Our Church Family -----	1
The Road Ahead -----	1
Power of Prayer -----	2
Festival of Faith -----	3
Camp Winnekeag Summer Camp Schedule -----	3
Birthdays -----	3
Nature’s Whey -----	3
Love and Friendship -----	3
Picture Gallery – Thank you for -----	4-5
Schoolpop/Scrip News -----	6
Vacation Bible School 2005 -----	6
Calendar -----	7
Advertising -----	7
Picture Gallery -----	7
Kids page – Word search -----	8
Kids page – Bible Quiz -----	8
Kids page – Coloring -----	9
Web resources -----	10
Contacts -----	10

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****If you do NOT wish to receive this newsletter in the future,
please contact Sherrri Dovich****

Web Resources

<http://www.mvsda.org/> - Merrimack Valley SDA Church
<http://www.mvsda.org/?section=newsletter> - MVC online
newsletter
<http://www.adventist.org/> - SDA World Church
<http://www.sneonline.org/> - Southern New England
Conference
<http://www.plusline.org/> - Adventist resources
<http://www.pathfindersonline.org/> - NAD Pathfinders
<http://www.twopaths.com/wordsearch.htm> - Bible Word
Search Puzzles
<http://www.adventistyouth.org/> - Center for Youth
Evangelism
<http://www.christianitytodaymovies.com/> - Biblical
perspectives on contemporary cinema
<http://www.adventistbookcenter.com/> - Adventist Book
Center (ABC)
<http://www.dayspring.com/ecards/index.asp> - Christian e-
cards by DaySpring
<http://www.adventsource.org/cgi-bin/start.cgi/start.html> -
AdventSource provides resources for the local church

Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church
408 Broadway Road
Dracut, MA 01826

To: