

# the Adventist Woman

VOL. 1, NO. 3, JULY 1981

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT WOMEN

## INTERVIEW



Betty Stirling

### Betty Stirling—Educator

As long as ordination is a requirement for many jobs within the Adventist Church, qualified women will be excluded and will look to the outside for employment, Betty Stirling, provost at the University of Baltimore told *The Adventist Woman* in an interview.

Stirling who previously served as director of institutional research with the Board of Higher Education of the General Conference currently holds the position of provost of the University of Baltimore—a position she described as “second officer of the university—directly under the president” and . . . “sort of like an executive vice president.” She has both the academic and student service areas reporting to her among other responsibilities.

Before her term with the General Conference’s Board of Higher Education, she spent ten years at Loma Linda University in the School of Medicine and in the graduate school. Before leaving, she was the director of faculty for the Family and Community Studies which was an umbrella department that had the program

on marriage and family counseling as part of it. She also edited *Medical Arts and Sciences* during the latter part of her stay at Loma Linda.

Stirling is a sociologist and served on the sociology and the psychiatry faculties, also. For two years she taught at San Jose State University and also served as an adjunct faculty member of the University of California at both the Riverside and the San Francisco campuses.

Married, with five children, she completed her college education when her fourth child was four years old, and had her fifth child while she was working on her doctorate. She went back to school because “I had enough energy that . . . just keeping the home wasn’t enough”—and having already written about nine or ten books, she decided to take her undergraduate degree in journalism.

When she first went back to school she exchanged babysitting with a night nurse, an arrangement that worked out for a while. Stirling’s husband was most supportive throughout her educational process. When she obtained her undergraduate degree and wanted to do graduate work, he encouraged her to go ahead and he waited until she got her doctorate before finishing his own graduate studies.

Her children were also supportive; “they thought that this was great—that mama went to school.” Because of her family support she never found it a conflict “although to be sure there were times when we had to sort of juggle everything to make it all work because it was pretty busy.” Stirling feels her children never felt that they had to take second place; it was just a matter of “juggling what was most important at any given moment.”

In answer to a question about how church leaders justify saying that women should stay at home and mother—when Ellen White, a woman, and a church leader, certainly did not follow that path—Stirling noted that Ellen White is “not looked upon as a woman. We are trying to get back to the fact now that she

was a woman,” but the church has historically viewed her not as a woman but as a “bunch of writings that you can quote from and they don’t quote the whole thing. They quote certain things about woman’s place in the home and neglect the ones about women’s place somewhere else.” She thinks that the trend to begin to view Ellen White as a woman will help. “Sometimes I think that there would be more resistance to a modern language version of Ellen White than there is to the Bible,” she added in response to a question about the position of authority the church has placed Ellen White’s writings in.

Stirling noted that during Ellen White’s lifetime women held many more positions of prominence within the Adventist church, than they hold today. There was even a woman treasurer of the General Conference when White was living. These women definitely were pursuing careers and some of them were married and some were not. Since the 1930’s and 40’s—during the depression years—the labor force of the church has changed, as did the labor force in the whole country. Whenever economic times are bad,

*continued on next page*

### Wanted!!!

We want to hear from you! If you have ideas for topics, stories, people to interview, etc., please let us know. We are still waiting to hear your comments on menstrual experiences; we are planning a special issue on menstruation for the fall, and we would like your contributions. Future issues will include topics on health professionals, homemakers, women in the arts, aging, and many other interesting themes. If you are interested in contributing, please write to Karen Ott-Worrow, Editor, 8522 14th Ave., Adelphi, Md. 20783.

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women or other minorities are affected—and the “last-in-first-out” sentiment grows. Stirling feels however that while that sentiment would pervade again today during difficult economic times it would not be “too successful,” even though the numbers of women in the work force probably would go down.

The church would probably be affected even more in such a situation, “because you have a much more circumscribed number of jobs.” The sentiment would be: “look here are these men—they need to feed their families and put their children in church school and here are these women out there taking jobs. Get them back home where they belong.” Stirling pointed out, however, that paying church school tuition would be much more difficult for many families if women were not able to work.

She feels that the top leadership of the church is aware that there are problems for women in finding adequate jobs within the church, but feels that at the lower levels of the church structure there would be more resistance to change because the women would be viewed as “too much competition” for the men.

In the world divisions there are some cultural problems and she noted that in Spanish-speaking countries many of the leaders feel that “no woman in a Spanish-speaking country would want anything to do with work or the like.” For these people, she asserted, they will “someday wake up and discover that the revolution has passed them by. But right now they seem to feel that only the Anglo women are brash and want to go out and do anything” . . . a view that she emphasized is not accurate. “There is a woman’s . . . movement in Spanish-speaking countries and our church leadership . . . simply have blinders on. Someday they are going to wake up and it may be too late,” in terms that they may lose the women that have something to offer to the church.

Black leaders are more open to having women in key positions than white ones are, Stirling noted. “There are many well-educated black women—probably as many as there are well-educated black men. But many of them have jobs outside the church.”

The trend that seems to exist—where professional Adventist women are pursuing careers more often outside the church rather than within it—is aggravated by the ordination prerequisite for many jobs where it “should not be a qualification at all,” she added. “There is no reason,” she stated, for a treasurer of the General Conference or of any other church institution to have to be ordained. The ultimate effect of that requirement is that women will be excluded from that or any other position that requires it. “So if a woman has an MBA, business training, and the like, she is going to have to go outside the church.”

Stirling feels that Adventist hospitals, because they are more community-oriented are doing a little better than other church institutions with regard to placing women in positions of responsibility. But their influence on the rest of the church is somewhat limited because she said, “I don’t think that there is that much communication between the hospitals and the schools or the conferences . . . because the hospitals tend to sit off by themselves, being community-oriented rather than church oriented.” She feels that church members and even ministers are probably not aware of the changes that are taking place.

Some church leaders that Stirling has talked with, “recognize that there is no reason why ordination should be a requirement,” but she feels it will take some time to get the policy changed. Stirling is in favor of getting women ordained, but feels “that may take a while, too.”

She feels that women need to continue “knocking on the door” and “making known that they are out there and that they intend to be recognized.” The church needs to be made aware” how many of our women in the church—the highly educated ones, professional ones—are working outside the church and what they’re doing out there.”

She feels that the shock value of that will be rather important and that the leadership will “begin to recognize” that there are more of them out there than they thought there were and “we’re losing them.” “They will get a little worried” that some of them really will be lost to the church she said. Stirling feels that some of them will leave the church—“if they’re rejected time and time again.” Women could serve on boards of the different Adventist institutions, she suggested. She acknowledged, however, that because of how the membership on those boards is set up there are only “a small block of seats that women would qualify for.”

Stirling feels that the system will change but that it is going to take some time.

She made mention of the psychological effect of consistently being passed over for a job and how a person eventually begins to lose confidence in their own abilities. She was passed over for certain jobs—when she was employed by the church—that she knew that she was qualified for and “it finally got to the point that I wondered—maybe I’m wrong, maybe I couldn’t do it.” The affirmation that she has received in her present position has, she admitted, made her “feel kind of good.” She feels that if she had stayed longer in the employ of the denomination she would have become bitter and that “it restored my morale and my confidence in my ability to do something and because I’m enjoying it—its a challenge—I won’t have any time to get bitter.”

Stirling’s recommendations to church leaders to get women more involved in the church include surveying the positions that require ordination and removing that requirement where it isn’t a necessary one. They need to make an effort to meet with groups of women in order to get to know what women are available and with what qualifications. They need to get to know more of the young women attending college and perhaps become role models for them. And when there are openings in mid-level jobs make more of an effort to get women into them and then to make sure that the job is not a “dead-end”.

Men and women have to be educated so that when an opening becomes available their first thought is not to find “a good man” for the job but a good person. She used to tell a faculty member at Loma Linda to say a “good person” because as “long as you say ‘good man’ you will never think woman.”

Women have to be educated also because some “women are scared to do a job themselves and in order to hide their own fear” say—“well that’s for a man to do,” and therefore they won’t let any one else do it. As journalist Louis Lomax said, women have to “knock on the doors with one hand and with the other hand we’ve got to be pulling people up and getting them ready to go through the door.”

The women that sincerely think that men are supposed to be the leaders need to be reeducated. “The one’s that are careful, we’ve got to reassure, and if they want to continue being careful well, OK, let them stay back and be careful . . . there’s some careful men too. But that should not make them say the rest of us can’t try something.”

When asked about recent studies that show that working women are beginning to experience some of the problems that men have in regards to stress and stress-related problems, she replied that “if women do the same stupid things that some men have done” they will have ended up with the same problems. The workaholics, and those that do not take time for “health and hobbies” will have similar problems, regardless of sex. “But there is no reason that either men or women ought to behave that way.” She did point out that in cases where a man was holding down two jobs to make ends meet and his wife begins working, allowing him to drop back to one job—“the woman may save a husband.”

Ellen White gave equal treatment and equal emphasis, Stirling stated, to the role of fathers that she gave to that of mothers and Stirling says that White counsels “if a job keeps them away from them too much that they should quit it and get another one.”

In closing Stirling gave this advice to women: “Don’t give up on the church. It’s a little hard to make the statement at times, but at the same time, if we are

going to get anywhere we have to keep trying. We can't give up—if for no other reason than for the sake of our daughters.” She hopes “that at least in my daughter's time” and, . . . she hopes “not in my granddaughters time, that there will be full equality in the church. I'd like to see it in my own day. But its important that the women in the church who are my age try to be role models to the next generation coming along and if we give up—well . . . what will they do?”

—Karen Ott-Worrow

## Women in Administration: Looking Both Ways

If one were to use Seventh-day Adventist elementary classrooms as a guide, one would get the distinct impression that Adventist education is female-dominated, and such a conclusion would be partially correct, because there is a preponderance of female teachers at this level. Beyond this point, however, the presence of women in Adventist education begins to diminish, and when one looks at higher education, one finds a disproportionately small number of women academics compared to men. The situation worsens and becomes alarming when women in administrative positions are considered.

These observations on the diminishing presence of women in Adventist education may be illustrated with a few details gathered from the 1980 *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*. One Adventist institution which provides education from elementary through graduate school was examined. At the elementary level, 66% of the teachers are women. In the academy the number decreases to 33%. In the College of Arts and Sciences women faculty comprise 28% of the instructional staff. The thirty-seven-member Board of Trustees of this institution includes one woman who also serves on the Executive Board of sixteen members. The General Administration listing includes no women on its roster of eight. Three women are among the thirteen individuals who are involved in Financial Aid Administration. All nine offices in Development and Public Relations are filled by men, and of the eleven managers of industries, two are women.

Recent investigation of women who hold administrative posts in Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions was conducted by Patricia Habada and Beverly Rumble.<sup>1</sup> Their findings portray a bleak picture of existing opportunities for qualified women to hold administrative

posts in Adventist education. They report that of the 86 secondary schools in the North American Division only three have women principals. The study also notes that currently there is one woman union director of education, a first since 1916. Since 1930, three women have surmounted the difficulties to become local conference superintendent of education; two hold that position at present. As far as the General Conference Department of Education is concerned, no woman has ever headed that body; however, five women have served the Department in assistant and associate positions.

From the Habada and Rumble study one can conclude that women in denominational educational institutions are not making headway in administration, but what of the greener grass on the other side of the fence? Are Adventist women faring better in non-Adventist institutions? Has it been easier for qualified Adventist women to move up through administrative ranks outside of denominational employment? No compilation of statistics on the number of Adventist women who hold high ranking positions in non-denominational institutions is now available, but a look at the circumstances of women in administrative positions in education in general may throw some light on these questions.

At a large prestigious university, a recent report by the institution's affirmative action officer, listing the gains made by women in number and rank since 1971, found an overall gain in numbers of one-half of one percent and no gains at all in rank.<sup>2</sup> Psychology Professor M. Elizabeth Tidball, of the Georgetown University Law Center, states that according to data from the Women's Coalition, 71% of the academic deans in women's colleges are women.<sup>3</sup> This is an encouraging statistic for women in the profession. However, Tidball notes that, although exact figures are not available, administrative posts of all kinds in all institutions combined are “heavily dominated by men.”<sup>4</sup> She further states that there is “little forward movement in terms of selecting women for administrative positions by presidents who bemoan their inability to increase the number of women faculty.”<sup>5</sup> Habada and Rumble concluded from their study that “Adventist women are not alone at the bottom of the administrative totem pole.”<sup>6</sup>

Adventist women who work for institutions other than denominational ones do not seem to fare better than those who work for the Church as far as numbers are concerned. They are part of the general body of women who have not been elevated to top ranking positions basically because they are who they are: women in a male-dominated society. However, many Adventist women hold administrative positions of substance in non-church-related institutions. Here and

there throughout the nation one finds Adventist women filling positions in the upper echelons of public school systems as well as in higher education, including the provostship of a public university.

One such woman is Esther Ottley, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Administration of the Graduate School of the College of Arts and Sciences in a university with an 11,000 member student body. It might be worth mentioning that this same institution also boasts a woman Vice President of Academic Affairs and a woman chair of the Board of Trustees. Ottley does not believe that she could have achieved a similar position had she been employed by the Church. She states that many women who work in lower ranking jobs in the denomination now have more visibility than she had at the time when she was appointed to her present position, yet they are being overlooked. She points out that the denominational practice is to recognize women achievers with praise and congratulations but not to reward them with tangible evidences of success. The built-in ethic of reward for service and performance that one finds in secular institutions does not apply to the Church, Ottley notes. In a university, she says, the general practice is to promote from within, not to bring someone else in, unless no qualified person on the faculty is available to fill the position.

In this regard it is worth noting that Ottley was offered the position of Associate Dean; she did not apply for the job. In fact, she says that she was completely unaware of the existence of the opening, but having pioneered two areas of mathematics instruction on her campus—the laboratory method and large group instruction—she had built up a reputation for administrative ability. The two mathematics programs were funded by grants; their administration required managerial ability. When a position opened for which the combination of competencies which she had demonstrated were requisite, she was offered the job. Here is an example of a woman being treated with the same style of hiring practice that is accorded a large percentage of men who hold administrative posts.

What improvements in the present condition can women look forward to in the future? Janet Emig's pronouncement that women “will not prosper as academics in this decade,”<sup>7</sup> seems to be portentous pessimism, but the forecast is echoed by Habada and Rumble: “It is highly unlikely that circumstances will change much for the next two or possibly three generations.”<sup>8</sup> In response to the question, do you think that a climate for change exists in the denomination, Esther Ottley observes that the rhetoric has increased. More people are discussing the problem, but “there is no real movement toward implementation of change, no concerted effort beyond token appointments.”

Yet, Victor Griffiths, Ph.D., Associate Director of the Department of Education of the General Conference, sees change coming. As evidence, he cites the position of academic dean at Southwestern College which was for a while held by a woman, and adds that the current associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Andrews University is a woman. Griffiths sees a greater openness in the denomination toward having women in such positions but says that the difficulty lies in finding individuals to fill the jobs. There are qualified women, he affirms, but the Church looks for women with experience in the system, women who are familiar with the peculiarities of the denomination's administrative mechanism and how it works.

The forces that keep women out of administrative positions are many. Women are still being perceived in stereotyped roles. They are the nurturing roots of society; therefore, it is desirable to leave the woman with the young child. This in part accounts for the predominance of women teachers in the elementary grades.

Another drawback is the role women choose for themselves. Emig sees many women, especially the older ones in academia, trying to fulfill the roles of the Dutiful Daughter, and One of the Boys. When they attempt to combine these roles, they end up as non-introspective, non-self-analytical beings.<sup>9</sup> Women must know who they are and project a positive image of competence and success. This they must do without being either wishy-washy on the one hand or overly aggressive on the other.

Then, too, as Ottley observes, within the Church there is a hierarchy of prestigious positions. Heading this hierarchy is the ministry from which women are virtually excluded. Often times ministers are promoted to serve in administrative positions such as union or conference superintendent of education when all the qualification they seem to have for the job is their ministerial credentials. "Qualified women at every level," state Habada and Rumble, "are being passed over in favor of male applicants."<sup>10</sup>

One would not be correct in concluding that Adventist women find more acceptance and success in administrative positions outside of denominational service. There is no evidence to support this, even though many Adventist women hold substantial leadership positions outside the Church. What one finds is that, as in the secular work world, there exists in the Church the need for a reversal of the exclusionary treatment of women in the upper levels of educational administration. Doors must be opened for those with the talent and desire to succeed. Church leaders should creatively seek ways to give women exposure and visibility so that they can build up the background necessary to

move into administrative leadership. Women may be invited to be guest lecturers and commencement speakers. They should serve on boards of directors where their contributions and capabilities can be observed and utilized to form the basis for references for positions with rank. As Griffiths observes, the weakness in the Adventist system is that there is no planned effort to build up women.

Finally, Adventist women must begin to work together to support one another and to transform whatever frustration and latent bitterness they might harbor into joint creative action for change.

—Judith Nembhard

<sup>1</sup> Patricia Habada and Beverly Rumble, "Women in Adventist Educational Administration," *Journal of Adventist Education*, Vol. 43, Feb.-Mar. 1981

<sup>2</sup> Janet Emig, "Journal of a Pessimist: Prospect for Academic Women in the Eighties," *Journal of Education*, Vol. 162, Sum. 1980, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> M. Elizabeth Tidball, "To Use All Their Talents," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, Vol. 46, April 1, 1980, p.381.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p.381

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p.381

<sup>6</sup> Habada and Rumble, p.46

<sup>7</sup> Emig, p.55

<sup>8</sup> Habada and Rumble, p.48

<sup>9</sup> Emig, p.54

<sup>10</sup> Habada and Rumble, p.48

## Circumstances and Pomp

The 1980 commencement exercises at Columbia Union College on August 2 did not appear to have singular significance. In previous years, I had watched as two daughters, one son, one son-in-law and numerous friends had taken this same journey down the aisle of the Sligo Church to receive their "sheepskin." Yet, as the twenty-nine graduates filed in, urged on by the grand music of Van Knauss at the organ, my heart had trouble containing itself under the somber black robe, for I walked in that group of distinction.

When I finished high school at the age of sixteen, I little dreamed that so many miles and years would elapse before I could claim the written declaration that I now possessed, a baccalaureate degree.

I married at the completion of my junior year at Atlantic Union College. I felt that Christ's coming was imminent and so set about preparing my own "little heaven to go to heaven in."



Jane Doswell Darby

Time elapsed as earth conditions demanded and my 'cherubs' grew and progressed from grade school through high school, college and graduate school. Those were busy, bustling years for I held full time employment as a secretary in the Allegheny conference office. However, my quest for knowledge was never totally buried beneath the stacks of unwashed dishes and soiled laundry. Neither was it forgotten at quiet times by the fireside or in times of family joy. During that period of nearly four decades I managed to get in a few college courses. My educational pursuits led me to a number of institutions of higher learning. I took courses at Albright College, Kutztown State College, West Chester State College, University of Pittsburgh and Loma Linda University to name a few.

Here I should add that these courses proved to be a delight to me. I am sure that I benefited more at my advanced age than I had as a restless teenager. Surprised at the knowledge I had gained in my "ordinary" world, I also did better scholastically. Old mothers can learn new tricks!

Unfortunately, all of my campus-hopping, while toting up the credits was bringing me no nearer to a bona fide degree. My answer lay in the Columbia Union College External Degree Program. I plunged into this new venture with eagerness and high hopes. I soon found myself floundering at snail's pace through volumes of material.

It seemed again that time was to be the main factor in my undoing. At this particular period in life, my energies were being expended in local church work. It appeared that my obligations were being multiplied in direct ratio to the difficulty of my various courses. (The local church was vigorously involved in a building program and I was appointed Coordinator of Fund Raising.)

The Home Study student can become myopic in the process and this term applies both physically and philosophically. He/she has only his/her own thoughts colored by those of the instructor to flavor his thinking. Whereas, in a classroom situation, variances of opinion enhance discussions and thoughts.

Plugging away alone, often in the young hours of the morning, it was easy to give in to weariness.

The required 30 hours necessary to obtain my degree encompassed a wide range of subject material that ran the gamut from Music Appreciation to Foundations of Math to American Literature to Church History. I faced the subjects with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Children's Literature for instance, was sheer pleasure. Lectures for this course had been taped with actual classroom discussions. This greatly enhanced the learning experience and the rehearsal of childhood themes created pleasurable nostalgia.

Nonetheless, the constant plugging away threatened to erode my determination. Was this, after all, a worthwhile goal or only an ego booster? What difference could this 'piece of paper' make at this late date?

As the completion of each course brought me closer to the coveted prize, however, I began to feel that the investment of time, money and energies must count for something so I continued.

One decidedly 'plus factor' concerned the supportive attitude my husband and family displayed. Their continual encouragements buoyed my spirits as they shared my excitement.

Finally, I had completed all of the academic requirements. There remained only a research paper to be written. Once again, my courage flagged. I approached this final task with great trepidation. Try as I would, I kept drawing a blank as I sought a topic. I even took off a week from my job to devote to this project. When at the end of said week, I had still to write my first word, I almost concluded that all was lost.

Prayer and travail of soul followed. At last, I chose a subject close to my heart for many years, "The Christian Day Care Center." Next came an intense period of research and writing and collaboration with my department head. I experienced various pinnacles of joy as my subject, material and research paper were accepted in respectable stages of succession.

The circumstances were over and I stood at the head of the line of graduates ready to receive my trophy.

My life has changed very little since August 2. I still work at the same job. I am still strongly involved in local church activities to the extent that I find it hard to believe that I found time to study and finish college. However the efforts were not wasted.

"Our first duty toward God and our fellow beings is that of self-development. Every faculty with which the Creator has endowed us should be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection, that we may be able to do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable." COUNSELS ON HEALTH, p. 107.

—Jane Doswell Darby

## It's Up to Us

He sat there with tears in his eyes, telling the counselor and me about his son (17) and daughter (15) who were "pushing" drugs. This conversation was not foreign to either the counselor nor myself. Having taught in a junior high school (grades 7, 8 and 9) for 12 years, has forced me to harden my emotions to many things.

I continually see the many stresses both, parents and children, face in our space age society, since I work in a large county school system that is "a bedroom" county of the nation's capital. Educators are forced, daily, to deal with crisis situations, while their time and energies in dealing with preventative types of work is limited.

Over the years, I have asked several of the following questions of parents when in crisis conference situations. These questions have been posed as thought questions, not the type I expected immediate verbal responses to. You may have thought of these before or may need to think of them yourself.

1. Do you really listen to your child? Not just hear the things s/he says but really listen! When you listen you can learn a lot about who your child is or is in the process of becoming.

2. Do you like your child? Sure, you love your child, but do you *like* your child? When you are with your child, s/he can tell. Even little children have the great ability to sense feelings we adults have become immune to.

3. Does your child have some responsibility? A child must feel needed and having some responsibility around the home makes him/her a more integral part of the whole.

4. Do you point out the things your child is successful in doing? We find it so easy to find fault, what about the good things that s/he does? Everybody needs some stroking, children thrive on it and grow with it. When children are constantly told what problems they are, or cause, they will begin to live out those problems and cause more. Help your child grow in character, let him/her know that s/he is a successful part of the family and society. It helps to create leadership abilities and skill development.

5. Have you hugged your kid lately? Good old-fashioned affection is never out of style. Keep in mind that the need for approval and love doesn't die when a child becomes a teenager. Show that you care.

6. Do you trust your child? If you don't, why not? Children can feel it when they are not trusted. Lack of trust can bring on tensions and lead the child to do just what the untrusting parent "thought" might happen. Develop this from a young age and everyone will be a lot happier.

7. Do you know who your child's friends are? In our complex and busy

society this is not always easy, especially when children are far off at some academy. Try to create in your home an atmosphere where your child will enjoy being and having friends in to visit. This will help you to know who s/he is "hanging" with and also give more time for you to be with your child.

8. Do you respect your child's privacy? We all need our own "turf," and your child is no different. I'm not saying go overboard and never "check" on your child, but sometimes we all need to be alone and we all need an area or place to call our own.

9. Is discipline consistent and fair? Everyone wants to be treated fairly. Children are not different from adults in this matter. We all need to know where we stand.

10. What kind of role model are you? This is the hardest question for any adult to answer whether it be; parent, teacher, pastor, or church member. On a daily basis, what type of image is being portrayed to our children at home or in the classroom?

As you can imagine, these probing questions have not endeared me to many parents; yet, just as in the case of the gentleman at the beginning of my article, I have been called in on many matters that have been very touchy and most sensitive. Daily educators are facing increasing enrollments, decreasing dollars, lack of materials, greater responsibilities and the difficult task of developing the greatest resource of our nation and our church, our children.

We all need to ask ourselves how we are affecting the minds of our future generation?

—Joan Angelo Adams

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## A Message from the Treasurer

To our over 1100 subscribers, we wish to say thank you. To our many contributors, we express our appreciation for your support.

In an age when double digit inflation forces us daily to revamp our lifestyles, a nonprofit, volunteer organization is hard put for financial support.

An average issue, with all volunteer labor, costs about \$550 to publish. This includes typesetting, labels for mailing, postage and printing. As costs rise, so will our subscription rate. Help us think of some fund raising activities to help us continue to produce a quality newsletter, at an affordable price. We will be looking forward to hearing from you.

## Vacation Bible School

In this era of the Equal Rights Amendment we are inundated with views of the Assertive Woman. She is lawyer, physician, educator, executive, architect or pastor. Her range of options are ever-increasing. She is assuming a more active role in her community, her church, her society.

Unfortunately, some feminists seem to disregard the fact that all women need not assume a professional status in order to achieve fulfillment. For many women the option of homemaker and mother is a satisfying career. These unpaid working women often make contributions to church and community which go unrecognized. One such woman is Virginia Sutter of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



Virginia Sutter

One doesn't usually consider directing Vacation Bible School a professional job. One doesn't know Virginia Sutter. In 1973, Virginia assumed an active role in the church's Vacation Bible School program. Four years ago she started to direct the program. In 1980 she co-directed the program with Charlyn Sorenson, another full time mother and homemaker. Under the direction of these two women, the major evangelistic effort of the Ann Arbor Church proceeds. Last year attendance was ninety children and it has gone as high as 120 in a church of under 200 members.

One might inquire as to the method employed to obtain such a level of success year after year. It is due to Virginia's organizational skills—skills that were learned through trial and error. Virginia says her first year as director was somewhat less than exceptional by her standards. Realizing the need for better organization, she now uses the talents of her sister, homemaker Vivian VanBeukering, as Secretary-Treasurer. This office, Virginia feels is essential to the success of any VBS program.

Virginia worried so much about the success of the program that first year that her husband, Frank, told her not to take the position the following year. That would

have been a serious loss for the Ann Arbor church and the children in its community. Fortunately, with prayer and hard work, the Bible school was successful and now her husband is extremely proud.

Ann Arbor's program really begins in January with the selection of leaders and teachers. Once staff has been established, January through March is filled with meetings to determine a theme and strategies for the coming summer. Their planning is aided by attendance at a Michigan Conference Workshop in April.

From April to June, the individual classroom courses are developed; materials and crafts ordered. A publicity campaign is waged which rivals Madison Avenue. Virginia has it down to a science. Two weeks prior to the date set for the VBS session ads are put in the local papers. Hand-written postcards go out to all the students who attended the year before. The children really notice mail addressed to them. One child said that the postcard was the only reason she returned. Posters are also displayed in local surrounding businesses.

Virginia monitors all aspects of the preparation and adds a few finishing touches. Vacation Bible School in Ann Arbor is then ready to begin.

Traditionally, most VBS programs run two weeks and end with a graduation night. Last summer Virginia and Charlyn decided on a new system in order to retain the high interest of both the children and contributing church members, some of whom took vacation time to act as teachers. The program ran for one week culminating on a Sabbath morning.

On that Sabbath the entire worship service centers on Vacation Bible School. Parents are encouraged to attend. All of the children are involved in every phase of Sabbath worship, from Sabbath School to the Benediction. Teachers are there to direct their students. Following the service, a vegetarian dinner is held for parents and students. The children are awarded their prizes and crafts. And of course, recipes are always available.

For many directors this would be the time to sit back and relax. But Virginia Sutter is just beginning. Vacation Bible School evangelism is a year-round job. Each non-Adventist student will receive a Sabbath School magazine for three months. Each Sabbath there will be a story hour, complete with VBS songs. A Christmas party and a spring picnic are also planned. In January, the planning process begins again. Virginia leaves nothing to chance.

Let us not forget that Virginia is still maintaining a home, a husband and two small daughters. She handles both careers well. And she is proud of both. And it is precisely her experience as a homemaker and mother organizing multiple tasks and directing children that gives her the talent to run an exceptional Vacation Bible School.

Virginia's main purpose is to introduce Christ to the VBS children. She says that Vacation Bible School can attract children while they are still young enough to be flexible in their thinking. It provides them with new options which will influence their future decisions. She also sees excellent outreach opportunities with the parents. Having grown up in an Adventist home, she was always aware of the need for evangelism. She chose Vacation Bible School. Through the program she wants both parents and children, especially the non-Adventists, to feel at home, to feel that her church is a place where they are cared about and loved.

In fact, the Vacation Bible School program at the Ann Arbor Church is the major evangelist outreach of the church. While many church members contribute, it is the unheralded, unpaid women of the church who make it work; they are the ones who are spreading the Word to the surrounding community.

Virginia says that her life is both rewarding and fulfilled. For Virginia, Vacation Bible School is a full-time career. God calls all of us to serve in a variety of capacities. Virginia Sutter was called to serve the children of Ann Arbor.

—Monica Greene



Ann Arbor Vacation Bible School

## Small SDA Schools; A Woman's View

When I commenced a career, I had no goal so persistent as to teach in a Seventh-day Adventist school. Being reared in an Adventist home where my parents sacrificed to provide my siblings and myself a Christian education, I was made aware of its importance in preparing Adventist youth to serve the Lord.

I was filled with dreams and aspirations of making our "religion" truly "a way of life" for my students. That first year I perceived myself as a missionary going into the hills of northern Pennsylvania to teach the gospel. My formal assignment: to teach eight students nearly evenly distributed in grades one through six. All summer I searched for ways to have "Bible class" permeate all two dozen daily lesson plans and be the center of the students' learning experience. I interwove Bible principles and stories into the geography, mathematics, science, health, and language art lessons.

Having a small group afforded not only the freedom of one-to-one teaching and learning but also the opportunity to develop a personal relationship with my students. Becoming aware of their special needs and desires enabled me to gear learning situations to each one personally, and to meet them where they were in cognitive, physical and spiritual growth.

There were other freedoms in being the only teacher in a small school. I was free to set my own schedule and take time where it was needed with each student. I was free to establish my own daily priorities and be flexible in meeting them. I also was free of direct and constant

supervision, so there was not the pressure to "look good"—only the self-imposed pressure to do well by God, myself, and my students.

Of course, there were limitations that prevented my experience from being a totally positive one. There were no free periods, for instance. I was "on-duty" from opening exercises and morning worship until the parents finally picked up their children at the end of the day. There was no time for refreshment or reflection.

No one was there when a crisis occurred. Whether it was an emotional or disciplinary problem or an accident of bodily harm, I was solely in charge. I was not only "teacher" but also mother, counselor, nurse, and friend.

Perhaps one of the most difficult challenges that faced me was establishing a rapport with the school board chairman of the sponsoring church. I found the school board and its chairman to be uneducated and inexperienced with children. They were Adventist lay persons interested in Christian education but not themselves equipped to increase the system's effectiveness. This I found to be my greatest limitation in teaching in Adventist schools.

At the end of the year, however, as I compared the positives (freedoms) and the negatives (limitations), I concluded that the freedoms outweighed the limitations manifold. I reviewed and evaluated my students' accomplishments and successes in terms of my goals and efforts. The most exciting accomplishment was one for which I had prepared for sixteen years. Each of my students, whether seven years old or thirteen years old, had a personal line of communication with God. Instead of repeating poetry as prayers, they had

developed an ability to converse with God and expressed their delight and comfort in being able to do so.

Teaching in a small Adventist school could be exactly like an experience in any country one- or two-room school, if it were not for the greatest freedom Adventist teachers in America have, that is, an opportunity to teach and practice religion and present it as a practical way of life.

—Margaret Wilbert Adams

## OUR WRITERS

**JOAN ANGELO ADAMS** is a Social Studies teacher in the Prince George's County Public Schools in Maryland. She has a masters degree in urban planning.

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**MONICA GREENE**, teaches seventh and eighth grades at the Ann Arbor (Mich.) Junior Academy. She has a masters degree in counseling.

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TEAR ALONG DOTTED LINE AND MAIL

## Subscription

Please send me the next 6 issues (one year) of the Adventist Women's Newsletter. I am enclosing \$5.

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## Editorial

This issue of *The Adventist Woman* deals with women involved in various aspects of education. There is an interview with an Adventist woman educator who is provost of a non-Adventist university; a thoughtful treatise on the future of women in higher education by another Adventist educator who is employed by another non-Adventist university; a jubilant essay by someone who went back to college in mid-life, attained her degree, and just what that has meant to her; some notes from a woman who taught in a one-room Seventh-day Adventist elementary school; the story of what has played an historically important role in religious summer education—a Vacation Bible School; some questions that she has been formulating for a long time for parents to answer posed by a “veteran” teacher and a review of a book written by another Adventist woman educator. In each of these instances the very great contribution of women in education is noted, whether it be mother, church school teacher, administrator, vacation Bible school director—in short as educator—women have played an important role in educating all

of us. But unfortunately that role has in too many cases been limited in both Adventist and non-Adventist society. Adventists should not be comforted by the fact that the Adventist church seems to find great merit in not being at the forefront of humane social issues. Why wasn't the church at the forefront of the civil rights movement—which was a clear case of Christian action against non-Christian action towards our brothers and sisters in Christ? In his recent autobiography—*Daddy King*—Dr. Martin Luther King, Sr., in a discussion of the agony surrounding the gaining of equal rights for blacks in Atlanta, makes a very disturbing point—one that should give all of us pause, when we are tempted to stand in the background and not get involved because we think one person cannot make a difference—“We sought out a leader from the white community, feeling that if even one would speak, a new mood could be created here. We discovered in this instance seeking brought nothing. And so we waited, feeling that across the huge but senseless divide, someone from the large, heavily populated other side

would stand up and be counted, even if just one. It did not happen.” Where was the Seventh-Day Adventist church then—and where are we now in ensuring equal and just treatment for all people? It seems to me that the message of the gospel is a message of mercy and justice. Are we going to wait until the majority of other Christian and non-Christian religions again take the lead in ensuring equal treatment of their women members? Or will we move ahead with vision and in the long run benefit from the talents of these women? We first must recognize and affirm there are many talented Adventist women in all fields. Next we should review our church structure which shows that the talents of these women in too many cases have been adversely limited. Where this is being done, I applaud the effort; where it hasn't been considered, I urge consideration and immediate action. To paraphrase the late Robert F. Kennedy: “Some people see things as they are and say why. I dream of things that never were and say why not.”

—Karen Ott-Worrow

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TEAR ALONG DOTTED LINE AND MAIL

## Subscription Survey

Instructions: Please check/fill in the appropriate spaces.

\_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Single \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_\_\_ Children \_\_\_\_\_ How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Employment: \_\_\_\_\_ Full-time homemaker \_\_\_\_\_ Full-time \_\_\_\_\_ Part-time \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_\_

Age Group: \_\_\_\_\_ 14-21 \_\_\_\_\_ 22-35 \_\_\_\_\_ 36-50 \_\_\_\_\_ 51-64 \_\_\_\_\_ 65+ \_\_\_\_\_

Education: \_\_\_\_\_ High School \_\_\_\_\_ Some College \_\_\_\_\_ College Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate School \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate Degree \_\_\_\_\_

Your response to the following question will help to determine the purpose of the publication. What should its emphasis be?

\_\_\_\_\_ News \_\_\_\_\_ Education \_\_\_\_\_ Support \_\_\_\_\_ Program sharing \_\_\_\_\_ Promotion of women's rights \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## ON REVIEW

*Teaching Your Own Preschool Children*, by Kay Kuzma, Doubleday, 1980, 312 pages, \$10.95.

From the founding of America, educators have attempted to influence the child, first through the family, then through the church and church schools and finally, through the public school system. Each of these agencies has made an effort to transmit knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills. Within recent years a small, but significant, number of parents and professional educators seem to be retracing the steps of history as children are increasingly taken from the public school system and placed into private and parochial schools, and even more recently, a growing segment is advocating a return to home education as a reasonable alternative to either public or private/parochial education. Riding the pendulum swing from almost total trust in the public school system to a renewed dedication, to concern for and trust in parental involvement in the child's education, book publishers have flooded the market with ideas, activities, and advice for parents of preschoolers. Why, then, the need for another book of suggestions for a group of would-be educators already deluged with too much advice?

While there is a great deal of advice for parents of preschoolers, few parents have written of their actual experiences. Dr. Kay Kuzma, Associate Professor of Health Administration at Loma Linda University, spent one year away from her busy schedule and devoted time to the training and educating of her three children, aged two, four, and five years. *Teaching Your Own Preschool Children* is a mother's diary of nursery school activities implemented in a home setting. Field trips, activities, library book selections, action songs, and school readiness activities are recorded as they were presented to the children each day from September to May. The publishers recommend that "Mrs. Kuzma's diary of that year serve as a plan book for all mothers to use as a guide in teaching their own small children." This is quite possibly how the book should *not* be used. Rather, the book serves as a source of insight and encouragement for mothers who are in the process of designing and developing an original curriculum for their small children. Kuzma's strength lies in first presenting goal-setting theory and second, telling the reader how she and her husband adapted that theory into practical experiences that would meet their children's individual needs. It is refreshing to have that decision-making process recorded.

Take, for example, one illustration of how a parent might come to a decision for curriculum in the home. The Kuzmas

were in the process of deciding on activities for the development of character in their children. First, they decided to follow Benjamin Franklin's method of stressing one virtue each week for thirteen weeks. After further consideration, they decided his list was not as complete as they wished and added some of the virtues listed in II Peter 1:5-7. But even Franklin's list combined with Peter's list did not cover what they felt their own children needed. The final revision was a "homemade" list of traits for character development. Extracted from Franklin remained the idea of stressing one virtue each week and from Peter a better idea of how to sequence the teaching of character traits. Illustrations such as this serve to give parent educators courage to try their own ideas, realizing that no one guide or planbook can serve to meet the unique needs of their own children.

Kuzma's home-school curriculum was based on goals that would guide the children in an understanding of God,

nature, health habits, language arts, as well as practical skills. These goals resemble fairly traditional preschool expected outcomes. The way these goals were implemented was determined by resources actually present in the home. i.e., Mother's inclination, the children's expressed interest, and events that the family chose to participate in. This is a break from the traditional curriculum in which the world comes to a halt from nine to eleven-thirty every morning while a set routine of prescribed activities is followed by the teacher.

Was the year worth all the effort? The author concludes that the project was wholly worthwhile for both parents and children, having the effect of bringing the family closer together. How are the children doing in school as a result of their home training? Were they adequately prepared? Kuzma does not attempt to answer those questions within this book. Why spoil the possibility of a future publication?

—Elizabeth Ann Wear

### THE ADVENTIST WOMAN

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Lynn E. Friday  
Betty Howard  
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The opinions expressed in *The Adventist Woman* are strictly those of the writers, and are not necessarily those of the Editors or Staff.

# Letters TO THE Editor

After seeing and reading a photocopy version of *The Adventist Woman*, I'm already anxious to see issue #2! You and your people have done a superb job and you can be proud of it.

—Sheree Parris Nudd, Texas



I feel that you should know that our school paper has been edited by a woman this whole school year, and it appears that next year we will have a woman again. I have enclosed copies of this campus paper *The Criterion*, and also a copy of the *Observer*, the campus paper at Loma Linda—please note that it's editor is also a woman. Since our undergraduate campus has around 2200 students this year, I feel this was quite an oversight in your paragraph about women editors of college papers.

—Velma Clem, Loma Linda University

(Editor's Note—Thanks for the info!)



Re: *Insight* 23 September 1980.

Was it really necessary to try to authenticate and win approval for the women involved in *The Adventist Woman* by stating they are "happily married" and their husbands are "very supportive"?

—Janet M. Prata-Msumba, Mass.

(Editor's Note: While, we appreciate the support *Insight* gave us, we have to agree with Ms. Prata-Msumba and say that it was not necessary. Also, the article was written without input from the present editors. We would not have recommended using that statement.)

I want to thank all of you for taking hold of an idea and doing something about it. I feel very strongly that women should have an equal part in the church structure in any capacity. I do not feel that by genetic chance, one sex has a closer link with God than the other. We are all equal in the sight of God as His children, and I think it's about time our church recognized this reality.

I look forward to receiving and perhaps participating in this newsletter.

—Patricia Piper-Beyer, Calif.



While attending the General Conference session I picked up a copy of the Forum Newsletter. I read about your new paper *The Adventist Woman*. I am president of a club comprised of Adventist women and would be interested in your paper to share with our "King's Daughters Clubs".

—Marian Quisenberry, Fla.



Already I have a dilemma! How do I salute you?

I have read with interest the article in the September 23 *Insight* entitled *The Adventist Woman*, and would like to have you enter my subscription to your publication.

Do you have any back issues that deal with the problem of ordination of woman? In August I was asked to serve as a local elder. Last night the nominating committee asked me to serve as the Head Elder in our little church of 60+ members. I find no problem with that, except the pastor and the Conference are dragging their feet on ordination. They do not say we are not going to do it or it is not necessary. Rather the pastor says I am waiting for information from the Conference president.

I can live with it and do a good job without ordination, but I am curious to know how this has been handled other places. I am willing to pay for the back issues if you have them.

—M.O.L., Vt.



I am the pastor of a SDA church. As you can guess more than half of my church membership is ladies. I was delighted to see the special article on woman and find out about your newsletter. Sounds great! I need help in learning how to meet the needs of my membership better and they need to know about the newsletter. Please send me some sample copies and all the details so I can sign up some of our ladies.

Thanks in advance for assisting in my ministry. For the last two summers I have had a female summer ministry student run our youth program. She graduated from PUC and received a call to Central California Conference and is working on the staff of a church now. I do believe in her desire to be a minister. We have two ordained ladies on our board of elders and have been delighted with their help.

—S.M., Calif.



Today I begin a new file which will hold the charter issue of *The Adventist Woman*. I look forward to better days, more news, and exciting ideas from your publication.

It is my sincere hope that *The Adventist Woman* will serve as a catalyst to draw all of us together as we seek not to perpetuate the work, but to complete it.

May you be especially blessed as you provide leadership for this most important publication.

—Pat Habada, Md.



I had the pleasure of reading the Feb. issue of *The Adventist Woman* "cover to cover." (it was lying on my wife's desk)

I just had to write and tell you how much I enjoyed your editorial. Anyone who has been brought up "as a Super 7" would quickly identify with and shout Amen in the areas you spoke about.

As an average "chauvinist" (without any patronizing intended), I want you to know I'm all for you "beautiful women" and encourage you to speak out on the issues we all face in Adventism.

The following quotation from *The Narcissistic American* by Aaron Stern, M.D. applies to many of the issues you raised; "much of our behavior does *not* reflect our own ethical judgement, but only a conformity to limits externally derived and enforced."

Best wishes with your Newsletter about women—"tell it like it is!"

—Walt Fahlsing, M.D., Calif.

# the Adventist Woman

8522 14th Avenue

Adelphi, MD 20783

July 20, 1981

Dear Friends,

As editor of The Adventist Woman, I want to take this opportunity to personally thank each and everyone of you--our more than 1100 subscribers--for your interest and support in the newsletter.

Many of you have expressed your concern as to whether or not this project will continue or if it will just quietly be dropped, as has too often been the fate of many good ideas. I want to assure all of you that it is going to continue.

Time is donated to our newsletter by many women who have other pressing obligations--but find the time, nonetheless, to contribute to the causes we share. For that reason, we are unable to promise you that we will always publish on an exact bi-monthly basis. We do promise you that you will always receive the full number of issues that you have paid for and we know that as time goes on we will achieve a more regular and punctual publication schedule.

We count among our subscribers women of varied talents, professions, nationalities, and interests. We want to hear from all of you. We are soliciting art work, poetry, essays, photography, and short stories that you have created. We will publish in the next issue our rules of style. In the meantime, if you have something that you want to submit for publication--please do so. If you want it returned to you, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Topics that will be covered in upcoming issues include: menstruation (we are going to devote the October issue to that subject and we're still looking for more comments and anecdotal experiences!); aging; medical professions; clerical workers; non-traditional careers; alcoholism; homemakers; mothering; and women in the arts. This is just a sample of the ideas that we are working on. If you have any suggestions of topics to be covered, people to be interviewed, or books to be reviewed, please let us know.

We are planning a very special issue that will come out around Christmas and we will be giving you details in the next issue on how you can participate in this issue.

In conclusion, I want to thank all of you once again for your support. We look forward to hearing from each of you from time to time, as this exciting and important project continues.

Sincerely,

*Karen Ott-Worrow*

Karen Ott-Worrow, Editor

***“So God made man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them.”***

***Genesis 1:27***

In God's sight each individual has the potential to make a valuable contribution to our world. It is the purpose of this group of Adventist women to help the individuals in our church reflect more fully the image of God in their relationships to each other

in the home, the church, the work setting and in the community.

Through the means of this publication which focuses on the development, discoveries, interests and potential of the Christian woman, our goals are:

1) To help the Adventist woman achieve excellence in her interpersonal relationships, her personal

development, and her relations to God.

2) To help her analyze and maximize her options, whatever her age and situation, that she may reflect more fully the image of God.

3) To help her effectively cope with the results of her choices.

4) To encourage communication, support, and wider understanding among Adventist women in diverse situations.

5) To acquaint the church community at large with Adventist women's potential and achievements.

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