

The Journal

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1 John 4:18

March-April 2007

Brethren in El Salvador hear Big Sandy history

The writer, a native of Argentina, attends the Church of God Big Sandy and has been a board trustee of the congregation since 1995.

Mr. Monsalvo graduated from Ambassador College, Big Sandy, in 1992. He lives with his wife, Paula, in Gladewater.

The following is the conclusion of a two-part article that began in the January-February issue. The first installment ran under the headline "Church of God Brethren in El Salvador Are Determined."

By Bernie Monsalvo

GLADEWATER, Texas—In THE JOURNAL'S January-February issue, I noted that Robert Dick, chairman of the council of elders of the United Church of God an International Association (UCGIA), had written the Big Sandy congregation a letter dated May 13, 1998.



Bernie Monsalvo

This was part of my explanation to the recently independent Church of God El Salvador for the reasons for the separation between the UCGIA and the United Church of God Big Sandy (which nowadays is called simply the Church of God Big Sandy).

I and many others did leave the WCG in 1995. But in 1998 the UCGIA made the decision to leave the UCG Big Sandy.

"In brief," Mr. Dick stated in his

letter to us almost nine years ago, "the local church is incorporated as a Texas corporation with its own governing board. The corporation and board consist of seven members with the pastor serving as the chairman. They view themselves as an independent church that has merely chosen to affiliate with the UCGIA."

In the same letter, Mr. Dick mentioned that Big Sandy church members had left the WCG in 1995 "because of doctrine."

"There is no question that the structure of the [WCG] organization facilitated the introduction of heresy, yet how we would be governed was not the primary issue which brought us together," he wrote.

We in Big Sandy agree with Mr. Dick's assessment: that the primary reason for Big Sandy's original split from the WCG was doctrine, not governance.

As of this writing in early 2007, the only organization most of us have ever left was the WCG. Most of us in the Church of God Big Sandy are in the same congregation that we formed in 1995, a few weeks before the UCGIA formed in Indianapolis, Ind.

A major question the Big Sandy congregation faced in 1995 was whether—after the formation of the UCGIA—to affiliate with it.

As is made plain in Mr. Dick's letter, the UCGIA is an "international" association, not a "national" one. He states specifically that, "of course, in the US there is no national council," even though several national councils in other countries exist that are affiliated with the

See CONGREGATION, page 6



CHURCH OF THE ETERNAL GOD CONFEREES—The leadership of the Church of the Eternal God and its affiliates meets in San Diego, Calif., in February. Discussions included the CEG's relationship with other Church of God groups. **Seated, from left:** Margaret Adair, Escondido, Calif.; Delia Messier, Summerland, B.C., Canada; Johanna Link, Ramona, Calif.; Jill Gale, Derby, England; Peggy Harris, Fort Collins, Colo. **Standing:** Wray Zehrung, Fort Collins; Michael Bannen, Poway, Calif.; Michael Link, Ramona; Eric Rank, Fort Collins; Rene Messier, Summerland; Robb Harris, Fort Collins; Norbert Link, Ramona; Kalon Mitchell, Escondido; Brian Gale, Derby; Paul Voss, San Diego; Joan Voss, San Diego; Dave Harris, Fort Collins. **Attending but not pictured:** Rhonda Cagle, Escondido; Manuela Mitchell, Escondido. See an article about the conference on page 24 of this issue of THE JOURNAL. [Photo by Wray Zehrung]

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The Deweys' ministry to hit the road

By Bill Stough

LONEDELL, Mo.—George and Pam Dewey operate ministries unlike those of many Church of God groups. No large organization backs them, yet they have a significant impact.

Mrs. Dewey has several Web sites, has published a book and presents seminars at many gatherings. Mr. Dewey regularly gives sermons.

Recently the Deweys, who live in Allegan, Mich., announced that they plan soon to spend full time on the road living out of an RV (recreational vehicle). They will visit any group that invites them and will drop in on individuals when requested.

What do the Deweys offer that can benefit individuals and groups? How can they take their ministry on the road since Mr. Dewey works full time? Why have they

See NO GROUP, page 23

CG7 Meridian announces a systematic-theology project for the training of its ministry and elders

WEISER, Idaho—The General Council of the Church of God 7th Day, based in Meridian, Idaho, has decided to develop a "systematic-theology project" to help with training of its ministry and "local eldership," said Tom Roberts, seminary professor at the CG7's Maranatha College and coordinator of the church's ministry. Dr. Roberts directs the project.

The goal of the undertaking is to help the Church of God "better understand where its teachings fall within the larger context of theological history," Dr. Roberts said.

The project will involve scholars from "all corners of our Sabbatarian persuasion and to emphasize our common biblical heritage." The scheduled

date of publication is July 2008.

The Idaho-based church is not to be confused with the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day), based in Denver, Colo.

Dr. Roberts, who holds a Ph.D. in theology from the Hellenic Orthodox University in Athens, Greece, is a writer, professional singer, lay pastor and disc jockey who lives with his wife and children in Weiser.

In 2001 he wrote a book, *From Sacral Kingship to Sacred Marriage*:



Tom Roberts

A Theological Analysis of Literary Borrowing, that discusses the "ancient pathways between the biblical Hebrew and other Middle Eastern cultures."

The book examines ancient cultures, linguistic contributions and interactions of Mediterranean powers.

Dr. Roberts believes his mission is to make biblical knowledge more widely known among the public.

Financial contributions to benefit the theology project and letters of inquiry can go to Dr. Roberts at Systematic Theology Project, General Council of the Church of God 7th Day, 1827 W. Third St., Meridian, Idaho 83642, U.S.A.

Call Dr. Roberts at (208) 888-3380. See also maranathacollege.org.

Christian woman's journey theme of annual conference

The writer is a member of the Church of God Big Sandy.

By Melodee Overton

BIG SANDY, Texas—It was a wonderful East Texas Women's Conference again this year, starting with activities on Friday evening, March 9, that included fellowship, snacks and a "human scavenger hunt" designed by Linda Benton of Tyler.

Karen Weese and Nancy White, both of Big Sandy, brought snacks. Coordinating the food was Julie Wilkins of Hawkins.

Mrs. White, our mistress of ceremonies for the weekend, kept us focused on our Christian journey throughout the three days we spent together.

Next we had group singing led by Lyna Jane Bryant of Sulphur Springs.

Historical letter

Later in the evening Kim Skelton of White Oak read a historical letter from Linda Hardy White encouraging us in Big Sandy to continue with the conference to help edify, encourage and exhort one another. Linda Hardy White, who died in 2003, was the founder of the annual meetings.

Saturday morning started with music led by Mrs. Bryant, brunch by Mrs. Skelton at 9:30 and then our first conference speaker, Sharon Ledy of Spring Arbor, Mich.

Prayer and fasting

Mrs. Ledy presented "Our Relationships With Other People Reflect Our Relationship With God," followed by a talk by Barbara Payne of Dallas, "Strengthening Our Relationships Through Prayer and Fasting."

After this we went to local women's homes for interactive Bible studies centering on the key conference scripture, 2 Peter 1:3-10.

The women who opened their homes and provided lunch for this event were Michele Mischnick and Linda Cartwright of Big Sandy, Jeri Holcomb of Hawkins and Tat Tomes of Lindale.

Rather than attending the Bible studies, the conference women could choose to stay at the Church of God Big Sandy's building and attend services where Dave Havir, pastor, and Ray Wooten, an elder from Roanoke, Ind., spoke.

We gathered back at the building

See COG LADIES, page 4

Learn what the Bible really says—really fast

KETTERING, Ohio—A new book by a Church of God member provides answers to many important questions about life, death and eternity, announces its author, Robert M. Kelley.

Mr. Kelley, a 1967 graduate of Ambassador College, Pasadena, Calif., is known for programming the Worldwide Church of God's computerized mailing system in the 1960s.

His book is *Learning What the Bible Really Says—Fast!*

Its 240 pages include answers provided by 922 Bible verses quoted from three popular Bible translations.

"This book is not related to any church or religious organization," Mr. Kelley said. "All answers are truly Bible answers."

For more information write Mr. Kelley at P.O. Box 293125, Kettering, Ohio 45429, U.S.A. Or visit www.kelleybiblebooks.com. Or phone Mr. Kelley at (800) 652-1415.



Robert M. Kelley

God has a sense of humor?

LAKEWOOD, Ohio—Mark Graham had a novel idea: Write a book about the history of the universe as if narrated by the Creator Himself. "Or is it Themselves?" he quipped.

Maybe Mr. Graham's name sounds familiar because his hymns appear in the songbooks of various Churches of God. The name on the new book won't sound as familiar, however, because he wrote it under a pseudonym, R.E. Amnos, since so many novelists are named Mark Graham.

In writing *God: The Novel: A Possibility*, Mr. Graham banked on his sure belief that God has a sense of humor and will "forgive me the literary liberties I have taken."

The book not only takes the reader on a journey of adventure that begins billions of years before the Garden of Eden, but it "carries a clear warning on the back cover that it contains the meaning of life," Mr. Graham said.

To buy *God: The Novel* call 1-800-AUTHORS or visit www.iUniverse.com. Write Mr. Graham at 1490 Roycroft Ave., Lakewood, Ohio 44107, U.S.A.



Mark Graham

Oklahoma tornado casualties were members

BEAVER, Okla.—A tornado that hit the Oklahoma Panhandle March 28 took the lives of two Church of God members, Vance Woodbury and his wife, Barbra Woodbury, both 59.

About 7 p.m. on that Wednesday, a twister blew away the Woodburys' house, which had stood in a rural area near the small town of Elmwood, in Beaver County.

Mrs. Woodbury was in the house and her husband was outside. The tornado touched down and crushed the residence and killed her instantly. The funnel picked up Mr. Woodbury and carried him several yards. He died on the way to a hospital.

Mr. Woodbury was a road supervisor for Beaver County. Mrs. Woodbury was a retail merchandiser.

Victor Vance Woodbury met Barbra Davisson while they were attending AC, Big Sandy, in the 1960s.

The Woodburys attended Sabbath services of the Christian Church of God (CCG), Amarillo, Texas, and the United Church of God (UCG), Liberal, Kan.

Mr. Woodbury is survived by his father, Ledru Woodbury of Fruita, Colo., a brother, Kevin Woodbury, and a sister, Jeanette Jones of Sand Springs, Okla. Mrs. Woodbury is sur-



THE WOODBURYS—Vance Woodbury (left in left photo) and his father, Ledru Woodbury, and Vance's wife, Barbra Woodbury, attend a Feast of Tabernacles observance in Colorado Springs, Colo., in 1997 sponsored by the Christian Church of God. [Photos by Dixon Cartwright]

vived by her mother, Fern Davisson of Akron, Colo.; a brother, Alan Davisson of Akron; and two sisters, Bonnie Fassler of Wray, Colo., and Betty Lou Lewton of Omaha, Neb.

Mr. and Mrs. Woodbury are both survived by two sons, Curtis Woodbury of Hooker, Okla. (who was serving with the military in Afghanistan), and Brad Woodbury of Guymon, Okla.; a daughter, Vicki Shook of Sayre, Okla.; and eight grandchildren.

Officiating at the funeral service in Beaver were Tom Clark of Wichita, Kan., a pastor in the UCG, and Joe

Kirkpatrick of Portales, N.M., an elder in the CCG.

The Woodburys were "wonderful people, good Christians and excellent friends," Mr. Kirkpatrick said. "I cannot remember when I didn't know Vance as we were childhood friends."

More than 300 relatives, friends and neighbors attended the service, "an obvious tribute to the character of these two wonderful people," Mr. Kirkpatrick said.

The family receives mail in care of Ledru Woodbury, 1180 Marigold Ave., Fruita, Colo. 81521, U.S.A.



Notes and quotes

Mary Hegvold dies

ALPHARETTA, Ga.—Mary Elizabeth Hegvold, 80, head of the home-economics department at Ambassador College, Big Sandy, from 1964 to 1973, died Dec. 17, 2006, at the home of her daughter in Alpharetta.

Mrs. Hegvold had also served as head of the home-economics department at the Ambassador College campus in Bricket Wood, England, in 1973-74, and for the Ambassador campus in Pasadena, Calif., from 1979 to 1989.



Mary Hegvold

Mrs. Hegvold is survived by a daughter, Theresa Fenton of Alpharetta; a son, Stephen Morris Hegvold of Texas; a granddaughter, Aislinn Gwen Elizabeth Fenton; and a grandson, Connor Sidney Kildare Fenton of Alpharetta; and brothers James D. Stephens and Mark L. Stephens of Pikeville, Ga.

Davy Crockett of Charlotte, N.C., an elder in the Living Church of God, conducted graveside services for Mrs. Hegvold.

Park City Feast

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.—Bill Jacobs of LifeResource Ministries announces a Feast of Tabernacles observance in Park City, Utah.

For more information, go to www.liferesource.org.

"Just a word to the wise," Mr. Jacobs said: "If you are interested in attending, I would book housing and preregister soon. They give out the best units first."

You don't have a computer? Write P.O. Box 66540, Albuquerque, N.M. 87193, U.S.A., or phone (505) 890-6806.

Feast 2007 in Broken Bow

MINERAL SPRINGS, Ark.—Rita Rector of Cornerstone Publications announces plans for the Feast in Broken Bow, Okla., Sept. 27 through Oct. 4, 2007.

For more information write Mrs. Rector at rita4573@whiti.net or P.O. Box 625, Mineral Springs, Ark. 71851, U.S.A., or phone (870) 287-4573.

New Web site

HALIFAX, N.S., Canada—Alex Nichols announces a new Web site for the Church of God Halifax. It's at www.churchofgodhalifax.org.

WCG subject of dissertation

SYDNEY, Australia—A former member of the Worldwide Church of God writes from a "psychological perspective" about the WCG's metamorphosis in the dissertation for his doctor's degree.

WCG leaders cooperated with the study but have not communicated with Dr. Buchner after seeing what he wrote.

See Dr. Buchner's work at www.tinyurl.com/3yzt2n. For more information write j.buchner@ozemail.com.au or John Buchner, UWS School of Psychology Bankstown Campus, Locked Bag 1797, Penrith South DC, N.S.W. 1797, Australia.

Pennsylvania Feast

HARRISBURG, Pa.—You're invited to Celebration 2007, "a Christian observance of the Feast of Tabernacles," Sept. 27 through Oct. 4, 2007.

The sponsor is Pleasant Hills Christian Church, with the cooperation of several congregations in the U.S. Northeast.

Bruce Chesney is pastor, Robert Wertz associate pastor.

For more information see www.pleasanthillschristianchurch.org/events.php.

300 at UB in Jamaica

KINGSTON, Jamaica—More than 300 brethren of the Church of God International attended Unleavened Bread services in Jamaica in April, with 225 participating in Passover services, announced CGI pastor Ian Boyne.

"Seven persons were baptized on the day of Passover services in this the largest and fastest growing of the Church of God groups in the Caribbean," Mr. Boyne said.

The pastor noted that the CGI in Jamaica baptized more than 30 people in 2006.

Hebrew tradition

PAULDEN, Ariz.—Thirty-three brethren attended a Passover seder April 2 in Paulden, north of Prescott, announced Mike Bacon.

"Several guests from other area churches, plus COG members, attended the B'nai Yisra'el messianic service, which also included the traditional foot-washing," Mr. Bacon said.

The gathering followed the "Hebrew tradition of reclining on the floor during the service and partaking of the food while reclined as well," he said.

One God Seminar

AUBURN, Wash.—Ken Westby announces his sixth annual One God Seminar coming up June 8-10, 2007, in the Albany, N.Y., area.

The main topic under discussion, as always, will be the nature of Father and Son as revealed in Scripture.

New on the speakers' list this year are Victor Gluckin, Nathan Crowder, Noel Rude and David Sielaff. Returning presenters include Gary Fakhoury, Anthony Buzzard, F. Paul Haney and Mr. Westby.

See www.godward.org, or write Association for Christian Development, P.O. Box 4748, Federal Way, Wash. 98063, U.S.A.

Jewels and more by Laura

BISMARCK, N.D.—A new online store called Jewelry by Laura is open for COG members to place free ads to buy and sell new and used merchandise.

Laura is Church of God member Laura Lee, who with husband Darwin operates Internet forums featuring doctrine, archaeology, humor, poetry, current events, prayer requests and more.

"We know that many of you have books to sell, music CDs to sell, cards to sell and various other items to sell new or used," Mrs. Lee said, "and we just want to help you out a little bit."

See <http://darwinlauralee.com/jewelrybylaura/>. To place a free ad go to http://darwinlauralee.com/data/place_an_ad.htm.

Church of the Eternal God meets in San Diego

The writer is a minister of the Church of the Eternal God who lives in Fort Collins, Colo.

By Dave Harris

SAN DIEGO, Calif.—The 2007 conference for the Church of the Eternal God in the United States along with its affiliates—the Church of God a Christian Fellowship in Canada and the Global Church of God in the United Kingdom—took place in San Diego Feb. 9-14, 2007.

Honoring Mr. Pope

At the beginning this conference we were sadly reminded of the recent death of Edwin Pope of Murrieta, Calif., our former senior pastor and chairman.

We attended a meaningful and emotional memorial service in Mr. Pope's honor in Chula Vista, Calif., Feb. 11. Evangelist Norbert Link of Ramona, Calif., and pastor Dave Harris served as officiants, while elders Rene Messier of Summerland, B.C., Canada, and Brian Gale of Derby, England, and deacon Wray Zehrung of Fort Collins, Colo., gave tributes.

Kalon and Manuela Mitchell of Escondido, Calif., and Mr. Link presented musical renditions, and Michael Bannen of Poway, Calif., conducted a video presentation in Mr. Pope's honor.

During the conference the chairman, Mr. Link, led discussions and introduced reports.

Canada and the Internet

Mr. Messier presented a review of the Canadian activities, as did Mr. Gale for the United Kingdom and others who commented on U.S. locations.

Webmaster Wray Zehrung presented a view of Internet activities for the past year. In addition, others on the technical team discussed areas of potential growth that included improving our Web pages for www.eternalgod.org and www.standingwatch.org in the United States, www.churchofgodac.ca in Canada, www.globalchurchofgod.co.uk in the United Kingdom and www.aufpostenstehen.de in Germany.

Twofold commission

We discussed in detail our all-important duty and twofold commission to preach the gospel and care for the church. We made plans to produce additional booklets during 2007 that will include one on biblical authority and another on God's fall holy days.

Our newest publication—finished during the conference—is *The True Meaning of God's Spring Holy Days*, by Mr. Link.

As is the case with all of our litera-

ture, the booklet is posted on our Web pages and can be requested, free of charge, in hard-copy format.

The Feast in '07

Plans and activities we discussed included a public Bible lecture in the San Diego area; Feast of Tabernacles locations for 2007 in Florence, Ore., and Derbyshire, England; and international Internet advertising of our booklets, weekly updates and video presentations, including our StandingWatch programs and videotaped sermons.

Other COG groups

Finally, in light of the dramatic scattering of the membership of the Worldwide Church of God, we discussed our position toward other Church of God groups.

Although we believe that God has placed us where we are for a reason and that we are fully accountable for what He has given us, we recognize that others do have the Holy Spirit, are members of the Church of God and are brethren.

Recently Mr. Link gave a series of sermons on the "mystery" of the "Church of God" that examined these considerations in detail. These are also on our Web pages.

See a photo from the conference on page 1 of this issue of *THE JOURNAL*.

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