

The Journal

News of the Churches of God

- 3 Bob Ellsworth remembers his friend and old roommate Mark Robinson
- 4 Readers of *THE JOURNAL* report on more Feast of Tabernacles sites
- 6 Bill Bartholomew considers the Night to Be Much Observed
- 28 Elders of the United Church of God nominate nine men for the council

Issue No. 133 (Vol. XIII, No. 1)

Founded 1997

January-March 2009

Three congregations and town help injured logger

By Dixon Cartwright
BIG SANDY, Texas—Some 200 Church of God members and other residents of the Big Sandy area participated in a benefit meal and movie to help an ailing Christian was injured Jan. 19, 2009, in a logging accident in Minnesota.

The United Church of God East Texas, the UCG-affiliated group that meets here, was the site of the benefit on Feb. 14 for Melvin "Mel" Edelbach, the 62-year-old UCG member who was partially paralyzed when a large tree limb fell 30 feet and hit him on his head.

Mr. Edelbach is father of Jeanine Case and brother of Loren Edelbach, both of Big Sandy.

On the day of the accident "my dad, Mel Edelbach, was out logging," Mrs. Case said.

"It's a career he has loved for over 40 years. My dad always wears his safety equipment. He plans two possible escape routes when cutting a tree down. After the cut is made, Dad then drops his chain saw and runs."

Using his teeth

But Mr. Edelbach, who lives in Kellogg, Minn., was hit on the head with a limb about four inches in diameter.

"Thankfully, he had his hard helmet on," Mrs. Case said. "Dad lay on the ground for about four hours

before his brother Bill found him."

Mr. Edelbach remained conscious and "wisely used his teeth to lift his fingers out of the snow" in the 10-degree Fahrenheit weather, his daughter said.

"He said he knew that when he survived he didn't want to deal with frostbite."

After he located his injured brother Mel, Bill Edelbach worked for three hours to get him out of the woods and to a hospital.

"Dad could hardly move anything," Mrs. Case said. "He said he had never been so happy to hear an ambulance. Dad joked with the rescue workers upon finding one of them was a banker and another was a veterinarian. He mentioned that as long as there weren't any undertakers he was doing fine."

Rallying around

Mr. Edelbach has maintained a positive attitude throughout his ordeal and recovery.

"I watched him as he showed kindness to the [hospital] staff, even as he suffered from agonizing pain and leg cramps. I remarked to Dad what an

See **MEMBER LEARNS**, page 7



Melvin Edelbach



BOOK RESEARCHER—Sheila Graham pats her horse King while standing on land the Graham family owns near Lake Kiowa, Texas. Mrs. Graham, a former managing editor of *The Plain Truth*, is researching for a book she is writing about women who are members and former members of the Worldwide Church of God. See an article based on *THE JOURNAL*'s interview with Mrs. Graham beginning on this page. See an announcement on page 11 to learn how to be a part of Mrs. Graham's research. See a related photo on page 27. [*JOURNAL* photo]

Raymond McNair did not die of cancer

By Dixon Cartwright
Eve McNair, widow of longtime Worldwide Church of God evangelist Raymond F.

McNair, has notified *THE JOURNAL* that her husband did not die of prostate cancer or any other form of cancer.

This newspaper, in its July 31, 2008, issue, reported that 78-year-old Mr. McNair, founder of the Church of God 21st Century, "in recent years reportedly battled prostate cancer."

THE JOURNAL had based that statement on a press release from Mr. McNair in 2006 in which he

See **MR. MCNAIR'S**, page 5



Raymond McNair

A former managing editor of *The Plain Truth* wants to talk to women in and out of the WCG

By Dixon Cartwright
LAKE KIOWA, Texas—A former managing editor of *The Plain Truth*, which for many years stood as the flagship magazine of the Worldwide Church of God, wants to make contact with Church of God women in and out of the WCG.

Sheila Graham, who for decades until 1996 worked as an employee of the WCG in Pasadena, Calif., is writing a book in which she will tell the story of her life in the church as well as the stories of other female church members.

The women she is including are present and former members of the WCG and present and former members of the splits that have spun off the mother church especially since the mid-1990s.

Mrs. Graham, who lives in this

North Texas community with her husband, Eddie, thinks women's experiences with the WCG have gone largely unreported, and she would like to remedy that.

Slice of history

She says her book will relate "a slice of the history of the church because it includes women from the time I came into the church even until now.

"I've got women contributing to my research who stayed in the WCG and those who decided to go with their pastors to other groups, and it also includes those who decided not to belong to any of those churches."

Mrs. Graham's volume is still in the works, and it doesn't yet have a title. But the way she describes it it

could appear at Barnes & Noble or Amazon.com as *The Stories of Women In and Out of the Worldwide Church of God*.

"In the book I have my life and my story," she said, "and I think it is a rather unusual story for a woman in the Worldwide Church of God.

"I tell some of the things that happened to me while I was working for the church and how I came into the church and that type of thing.

"But I really want to tell the story of the women of the WCG because I don't feel in some of the other books that have been written their story's been told."

So far Mrs. Graham has encountered quite a range of anecdotes, some

See **LONGTIME WCG WRITER**, page 6

Can't we all just get along?

By Dixon Cartwright
LINDALE, Texas—Members of a Church of God congregation in East Texas got some advice in early January 2009 about how to deal with fellow Christians.

David Antion of Pasadena, Calif., visited Texas to speak three times at Texas Fellowship, which meets sometimes in Lindale and sometimes near Hawkins, Texas.

The 72-year-old former Worldwide Church of God evangelist and present pastor of the Church of God Southern California contributed to the 2,000-year-old discussion about communication among Christians.

Dr. Antion, who also heads up Guardian Ministries, delivered lectures on his subject here Jan. 2 and 4.

On Friday, Jan. 2, he presented "Relationships and Getting Along." His address on Sunday, Jan. 4, was "Dealing With Difficult People."

Three relationship laws

Early in his Friday lecture Dr. Antion referred to three principles that some psychologists have decided are laws.

■ The first is *quid pro quo*: this in exchange for that.

"All relationships," he began, "operate on an exchange basis."

■ The second is the law of symmetry. An example: If you want respect, you have to give respect. Another example: "Everybody loves people who love them."

■ The third law, which Jesus mentioned, is the Golden Rule (Luke 6:31): Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

The prophet Micah, Dr. Antion continued, summarized in a few words God's requirements for mankind: to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

To be just, merciful and humble toward God, a person must "have a right relationship with people," Dr. Antion said.

Fellowship can continue for years on an even keel with Christians in their myriad groups, he continued. But at some point, "no matter who we are and how well we are getting along, something often happens.

"You make a mistake. It's called sin. You miss the mark, a faux pas, a bad word, a wrong tone of voice."

And then—*voilà*—peace in your church group explodes into war.

Even when offense is unintentional, it chafes. "You can hurt people without it being in your heart to hurt people," he said.

So what should you as a conscientious Christian do?

Matthew 5 formula

You should go immediately to Matthew 5 and read the formula:

"... If you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your

See **FOR DAVID ANTION**, page 8



David Antion

Church of God literature: Go print it yourself

ROME, Ga.—The first CD of Oasis Ministry's Printable Literature Project is available. The project of George and Pam Dewey is a collection of CDs, each containing quite a variety of articles.

"It has been designed to equip a grassroots movement of nondenominational believers with tools to help them to reach out in evangelism and discipleship with minimum expense," an announcement from Oasis explained.

CD No. 1, with 69 titles, is ready for sale at \$13 including shipping and handling. Additional disks ordered at the same time are \$10 each.

Topics include the Sabbath and annual feasts, Bible study, salvation, Christian living and puzzling Bible questions.

See youall.com/plp, or write Oasis Ministries at oasis@chartermi.net or P.O. Box 2134, Rome, Ga. 30164, U.S.A.



Pam Dewey

CEM begins Sabbath services in HQ building

By Darlene Warren

In mid-January 2009 Christian Educational Ministries founder Ron Dart, business manager Larry Watkins and former Tyler Church of God pastor John Reedy began conducting Sabbath services in the CEM building in Whitehouse, Texas, just south of Tyler.

Since CEM's beginning, in 1995, Mr. Dart has stated emphatically more than once that CEM, although a ministry, is not a church.

Recently *THE JOURNAL* asked Mr. Watkins to talk about the ministry's nonchurch status. Is its standing affected by the addition of CEM-sponsored Sabbath services?

"Essentially, nothing has changed," he said. "We are not a church. We do not have a name."

Mr. Watkins said CEM has begun its own Sabbath meetings "to provide staging for our tape program. So

See **CEM FINDS A WAY**, page 5



Larry Watkins

Notes and quotes

Betty Bates Michel dies

CASTAIC, Calif.—The first female student of Ambassador College, Betty Michel, died at her home in Castaic Jan. 28, 2009.

As one of the first four students of Ambassador College, Pasadena, Calif., in 1947, she was Betty Bates.

After her graduation, in 1951, she was employed on the AC campus until 1958.

Survivors include her husband, Gene Michel, who receives mail at 30445 Byfield Rd., Castaic, Calif. 91384, U.S.A.

Mark Robinson dies

PLANO, Texas—Mark Robinson, a former elder and pastor of the Worldwide Church

of God, died Feb. 1, 2009, in a Dallas hospital of heart failure.

Mr. Robinson, 58, earned his master's degree in journalism from the University of

Texas at Arlington and was a lifelong Dallas Cowboys fan.

He is survived by his wife, Dianne Robinson, and son, Alexander Robinson, both of Plano; a brother, Robert Robinson of Bullard, Texas; and two sisters, Felicity Reedy of Tyler, Texas, and Mary Robinson of Austin.

He was preceded in death by his father, David Robinson, and brothers John and Tommy Robinson.

In lieu of flowers, a scholarship fund has been established for Alexander Gray Robinson, c/o Dianne Robinson, at Bank of America, 1925 Dallas Parkway, Plano, Texas 75093, U.S.A.

See Bob Ellsworth's remembrances of Mr. Robinson on page 3 of this issue of *THE JOURNAL*.

Five keys to understanding

TULSA, Okla.—The Churches of God Outreach Ministries (CGOM) offers a free 38-page booklet about one of the "great keys essential to understand what is going on currently in the world, Bible history and prophecy."

The book is *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.

A recent letter to "Brethren and Friends" sent out by the Tulsa office listed the five essential keys to understanding as:

- Divine revelation.
- Observance of the Sabbath.
- Observance of the biblical holy days.
- Knowledge of the identity of the nations, especially the United States and Britain.
- Knowledge of the Father and Jesus.

Contact the CGOM at P.O. Box 54621, Tulsa, Okla. 74155, U.S.A., or cgom.org. Or phone (800) 611-8080.

One-God Seminar set for near Dallas

SEATTLE, Wash.—Ken Westby announces plans for his One-God Seminar, the eighth annual discussion of the nature of Jesus, for Grapevine, Texas, near Fort Worth and Dallas, the weekend of June 13-14, 2009.

"We have chosen the Hilton DFW Lakes Hotel for our location," Mr. Westby said. "It is just two miles from DFW airport and has shuttle service so out-of-town folks need not rent a car."

"It is a five-star 90-acre resort-type hotel with lots of amenities and nearby attractions. They have offered us an excellent rate on sleeping rooms and a meeting room."

"I thank my old friend Merle Vines for helping secure these arrangements. Merle is head of security for the huge hotel complex."

For more information see the Web site of the Association for Christian Development at godward.org, or write the ACD at 2303 W. Commodore Way, Suite 206, Seattle, Wash. 98199, U.S.A., or acd@godward.org. Phone Mr. Westby at (206) 453-5241. See the hotel's Web site at hiltontdfwlakesec.com.

Introducing Jewish roots

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, Ark.—The online campus of the American Institute for Advanced Biblical Studies is up and running, announced Ron Moseley.

The first online course is Introduction to Jewish Roots.

"Additional courses are to be added over the next couple of months," Dr. Moseley said, "with all courses available online by late spring."

See www.aihls.org.

Record numbers

FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich.—Biblestudy.org is already having a banner year, reported Alan Ruth. Mr. Ruth said his Web site attracted 571,000 visitors in the first 56 days of 2009, an average of 10,500 visitors per day.

Those figures represent a 35 percent increase over the same period in 2008.

Mr. Ruth expects the site to attract 3.6 million visitors by Dec. 31, 2009.

COG perspective

CLEVELAND, Ohio—John Carnack has a new Web log called "COG Perspective" at cogperspective.blogspot.com.

"It is a blog to discuss major doctrines of the Church of God movement and current events through that filter," Mr. Carnack said. "It is not tied to any one COG organization, and discussing difference in doctrines is permitted."

"It is not a site for bashing HWA, GTA or even AC, as we have far too many sites for that already. All you need to participate is a Blogger, Google or OpenID login."

Write Mr. Carnack at johndcarnack@gmail.com.

Church changes name, publishes new hymnal

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah—The Church of God (Sabbath Day) based in Utah has a new name, announced Pastor General Michael W. Stevenson. Now it's the Reorganized Church of God (RCG).

The name "will better suit us since we truly are bringing the Church of God back into harmony with what we have been taught and which has been revealed to us through the late Herbert W. Armstrong, who had fulfilled the role of Elijah," Mr. Stevenson said.

The church publishes *Precious Truth* magazine, doctrinal articles and booklets.

The ministry has produced a new hymnal that includes hymns by Dwight Armstrong and songs from the Worldwide Church of God's gray paperback hymnal from the 1950s.

"In the future I hope to also include some from Mr. Mark Graham and from Mr. Ross Jutsum," Mr. Stevenson said.

Visit www.cogsabbath.com, or write 8317 Western Dr., Magna, Utah 84044, U.S.A., or call (801) 548-5414.

UCG elders nominate nine men for council

MILFORD, Ohio—United Church of God elders have nominated nine fellow elders to fill four open seats on the 12-man council of elders.

Voting for the four spaces will take place in May 2009 at the general conference of elders in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area.

For the open "international" position, elders will choose between David Baker of Honeoye Falls, N.Y. (who serves in Africa, even though he lives in New York), and William Eddington of Melbourne, Australia.

For the three spots open to U.S. elders serving in the U.S. ministry, fellow elders will choose from Gary Antion, Batavia, Ohio; Scott Ashley, Arvada, Colo.; Jim Franks, Milford, Ohio; Doug Horchak, Plano, Texas; Richard Pinelli, Batavia; Melvin Rhodes, Lansing, Mich.; and Richard Thompson, Eustis, Fla.



Scott Ashley

CGBS to sponsor Feast site in Colorado

BIG SANDY, Texas—The Church of God Big Sandy plans to sponsor a Feast site in Colorado Springs, Colo., in 2009. This will be one of the four Feast of Tabernacles sites the independent East Texas congregation will sponsor.

"We have four sites confirmed for 2009," said Dave Havir, pastor of the congregation.

They are in Big Sandy; Destin, Fla.; Myrtle Beach, S.C.; and Colorado Springs.

"Although most of our sites remain in the same locations each year, we like to rotate our Western site," he said.



Neil McIver

Oak, Texas. Since the McIvers have family in Colorado Springs, they have been there many times, and their experience in the area will help them in

planning family activities, Mr. Havir said. "We invite anyone who wants to have a happy Feast experience in a beautiful part of the country," Mr. McIver said.

Room rates in Colorado Springs will be \$79 per night or \$99 for a minisuite and \$129 for an executive suite. These prices include a free hot-breakfast buffet.

To make room reservations in Colorado Springs and for more information about all the Big Sandy Feast sites, call Shelly Howell at (800) 946-5545, or go to churchofgodbigandy.com.

The new, improved Bible Story is here

EASTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.—Monte Wolverton, son of the late Basil

Wolverton, has updated and reissued his father's series of WCG-published books each called *The Bible Story*.

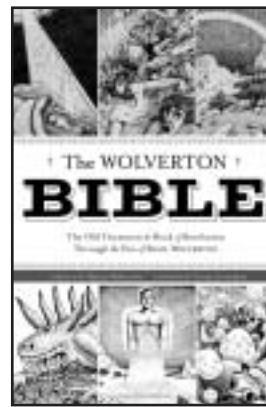
But this time they're in a single illustrated 320-page volume titled *The Wolverton Bible*.



Basil Wolverton

The new version, an 8-by-10-inch hardback, includes all of Basil Wolverton's artwork for the original series and other art he drew for the Worldwide Church of God.

It also features the elder Mr. Wolverton's original captions to accompany the art, which were much shorter in the six-volume version the church published.



Mr. Wolverton died in 1978 at age 69.

Monte Wolverton is a syndicated cartoonist whose style is similar to his father's. He also serves as managing editor of *The Plain Truth*, published by Plain Truth Ministries.

The Wolverton Bible is available at Amazon.com for \$16.50.

See also Monte Wolverton's site at www.wolvertoon.com.

The Journal: Subscribe or renew!

Mail to: **THE JOURNAL, Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A.**

Subscribe to *THE JOURNAL: NEWS OF THE CHURCHES OF GOD* and keep up with your family and friends in all the groups!

Name _____

Address _____

City/state/zip or postal code/country _____

New subscription Renewal Start with back issue dated ____/____/____ (specify any month and year from February 1997 to present). Individual back issues are \$2 each, with 2-issue minimum order. (No minimum if ordered with new sub.)

In U.S.: \$49 for 24 mo. issues \$28 for 12 issues \$15 for 6 issues. **Non-U.S. mailed from Big Sandy:** \$51 for 24 mo. issues \$30 for 12 issues \$17 for 6. For distributors in other countries, see box on page 2. Please remit in U.S. funds drawn, if possible, on a U.S. bank.

Use a copy of this coupon or plain paper to order from *THE JOURNAL* or any of our distributors. When writing or E-mailing about subscription problems, please include phone number.

To subscribe, simply send a check or money order. Or now you can pay with a credit card. (Fax 1-903-636-9097 or write info@thejournal.org.)

Be sure to check your mailing label. If you have only one or two or "zero" issues remaining, we suggest mailing in your renewal now so you don't miss any issues.

Contact *THE JOURNAL* for subscriptions and renewals at Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A., or at the distributors' addresses on page 2. See also *THE JOURNAL's* Web site, at www.thejournal.org.

Thanks for reading *THE JOURNAL!*

The Journal
News of the Churches of God
P.O. Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755

Time-sensitive material