

# The Journal

## News of the Churches of God

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## Motorist believes helpful truck driver was an angel

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By Laura Lee

**B**ISMARCK, N.D.—I did not grow up in the Church of God, nor as a child did I ever have contact with anyone who kept a Saturday Sabbath, at least not to my knowledge.

So the true story I am about to tell you may change the way you look at those in other affiliations.

Our family bounced from church to church, starting with the local Congregational church. I believe the Congregationalists changed into or split into the United Church of Christ, where I was sprinkled as a fifth-grader.

I think that church lit candles, and my mother thought it seemed too Catholic, so she moved us to a Lutheran church, where the minister's wife ran off with another man.

Because of that scandal, my mother moved us to the Methodist church.

At age 16 our Methodist church sent me a bill that I was supposed to return with my offering, but I ripped it up and mailed it back.

### Church history

Even though my family generally always had a church affiliation of

some sort, we hardly ever attended.

As I grew up, we also had Jehovah's Witnesses at our house several times, and I had a girlfriend who was Mormon, so I attended sometimes with her. Our baby-sitter was Assembly of God. I got married the first time in a Baptist church.

From the time I was in third grade until I was 17, I attended a Pentecostal church the most.

I even attended that one and the Baptist church throughout most of my life until the early '90s, when I first learned about the Worldwide Church of God.

As a young child I always knew that the Sabbath was Saturday, but never to my knowledge did I have contact with any Saturday-Sabbath keepers. When I asked my mother to explain why, if the Sabbath is Saturday, do people keep Sunday, she got mad at me, and that was the end of the conversation.

### God will reel you in

Now that you realize that at the time these things happened I was not a Saturday-Sabbath keeper of any sort and that I hardly ever attended any Sunday-keeping church either, perhaps you can have more compassion for those who are not yet called.

Their time will come, and God will reel them in, sometimes from the deepest sin-infested life a person could be living.

See **MYSTERIOUS MAN**, page 7



**VOLUNTEERS AND REFUGEES**—Legacy Institute volunteer teachers stand with a family of Burmese Karenni refugees. (See the article at the bottom of this page for more information.) *From left:* Nathan Kimmons of Bogue Chitto, Miss.; Nay Blu Htoo (*in hat*) and five family members; Elainea Spivey of San Diego, Calif.; and Erika Pederson of Minneapolis, Minn. [Photo by Nathan Kimmons]

## Church member says learning you have cancer transforms your point of view on many matters

**By Dixon Cartwright**  
**B**IG SANDY, Texas—Mac Overton had become lax in his Christian practice, he says. But something recently caught him up short and snapped him out of his indifference.

That something was a diagnosis of cancer in his pancreas.

Since a doctor informed him of his findings after examinations that included CAT scans and endoscopic ultrasounds, Mr. Overton, a member of *THE JOURNAL's* volunteer staff since this newspaper's beginning in 1997, has turned introspective.

"I tell you there are trials and there are trials," he began at the Church of God Big Sandy's Fellowship Club after Sabbath services here Aug. 15, 2009.

"Once you're told you have a seri-

ous illness, it kind of changes your perspective on a lot of things. Financial trials don't seem so big anymore."

### Fellow church member

Even before February 2009, when Mr. Overton, 59, heard a doctor first mention the "C word," as Mr. Overton sometimes calls it, he had undergone some life-changing experiences. One involved a fellow Church of God member who also lives in Gilmer, a few miles from Big Sandy. That man is 57-year-old Robbie Tuel.

"Robbie is an invalid brother," Mr. Overton said recently. "He was in a nursing home about to have his legs amputated, suffering from congestive heart failure, diabetes, many things."

Mr. Overton had known Mr. Tuel

years before but had lost track of him. He heard from a mutual friend that his friend was under hospice care in a local nursing home and was looking for a copy of *Mystery of the Ages*, the book by Worldwide Church of God founder Herbert W. Armstrong.

So Mr. Overton visited Mr. Tuel, a church member who had not attended anywhere for many years, to present him a copy of the book.

"I went out and gave him the book and we became reacquainted," Mr. Overton said.

### 'Give Robbie a harmony'

Then something unusual happened. A couple of weeks later, at maybe 2 o'clock in the morning, Mr. Overton

See **WHY IS GOD**, page 8

## UCG makes decisions on move, bloc voting, forums

The writer is publisher of *THE JOURNAL*. This article reports on news events but also includes opinions of the writer.

By Dixon Cartwright

**T**he United Church of God is on the move: altering, or at least tweaking, controversial policies and past decisions in at least three areas.

The church's council of elders over the past few months of 2009 has addressed three touchy subjects:

■ What to do with the Texas property now that the church no longer plans to move its home office from Ohio to the Lone Star State.

■ Unofficial Internet forums and discussion groups some elders have participated in.

■ Alleged bloc voting by elders during the yearly general conference.

According to a report by official council reporter Gerald Seelig and an Internet blog operated by UCG editorial employee Mike Bennett ([ucgmikebennett.wordpress.com](http://ucgmikebennett.wordpress.com)), the council decided Aug. 13, 2009, by a vote of 10-1, with one council member absent, to kill once and for all discussion of the proposed move of the home office from Ohio to Texas.

Voting no was Doug Horchak of Allen, Texas. Not attending, and therefore not voting, was Jim Franks of Cincinnati.

The other 10 council members, all voting yes, were Scott Ashley, Arvada, Colo.; Bob Berendt, Edmonton,

Alta., Canada; Aaron Dean, Glade-water, Texas; William Eddington, Melbourne, Australia; Roy Holladay (council chairman), Cleveland, Tenn.; Paul Kieffer, Troisdorf, Germany; Victor Kubik, Indianapolis, Ind.; Daris McNeely, Greenwood, Ind.; Melvin Rhodes, Lansing, Mich.; and Robin Webber, Romoland, Calif.

(Two elders—Richard Thompson and Clyde Kilough—recently resigned their seats on the council. Taking their place were the two men next in line in the most recent voting for council members: Mr. Franks and Mr. Horchak. Mr. Kilough, although no longer on the council, is still church president.)

### Property for sale

Related to the decision to cease the discussion about a proposed move from Ohio is the determination to put up for sale the property near Denton, Texas, that the church bought in January 2008.

The general conference, in May 2007, had voted by a 202-195 margin to approve the move to Texas. But, in a rapidly changing economic environment, five council members placed the question on a second ballot a year later. That time the council voted, by a similarly narrow margin, 187-175, not to move to Texas.

### Private discussions

On the question of "private discussion groups," which can include

See **ATTORNEY'S OPINION**, page 27

## Refugees hope to attend Tabernacles in Thailand

The writer is a volunteer teacher at Legacy Institute in Thailand. Mr. Kimmons' stay at Legacy is sponsored by the Church of God Big Sandy. See a related photo at the top of this page. See also [legacyinstitute.org](http://legacyinstitute.org).



Nathan Kimmons

**By Nathan Kimmons**  
**C**HIANG MAI, Thailand—About 25 refugees who are camped out in Thailand near the country's border with Burma hope to attend the 2009 Feast of Tabernacles observance in Thailand, even though they were not allowed to attend the 2008 festival.

About 140,000 Burmese live in 10 refugee camps in Thailand near the Thailand-Burma border.

Another estimated two million live in Thailand (many illegally), integrated into the Thai economy.

Why are refugees from Burma (also called Myanmar) in Thailand in the first place?

See **SEVERAL COG FAMILIES**, page 8

- 3 J. Phillip Arnold finally sets the record straight on Mr. Armstrong's *W*
- 5 Henk Jens compares the old Amish with the old Worldwide Church of God
- 6 Mac Overton writes a book review you won't find in most COG publications
- 12 Walter Steensby says some Sabbath texts were never properly translated

## Ken Westby's still going strong

By Dixon Cartwright

**G**RAPEVINE, Texas—Ken Westby was back in action in June 2009 for his eighth annual One God Seminars, this time in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Mr. Westby began his series of annual conferences in Seattle, Wash., in 2002. This year's had the same purpose and theme: to promote the concept that God is one and only one as part of what Mr. Westby calls a "unitary monotheistic" approach to understanding Deity.

Unitary monotheism, sometimes called unitarianism (with a lowercase *u* so people won't confuse it with the Unitarian Universalist Church), draws its share of critics from within the Church of God movement.

### Historical unitarianism

Historically, the Churches of God of the 20th century, including what is now the Church of God (Seventh Day) headquartered in

See **UNITARIANS**, page 30

# The Journal's first grandchild arrives

By Dave Havir

**B**IG SANDY, Texas—*THE JOURNAL*'s first official grandchild, a boy, arrived in the Texas capital, Austin, on June 17, 2009, weighing 7 pounds 3 ounces.

## Family history

Dixon "Cater" Cartwright IV is the son of Trey and Brandi Cartwright of Austin. He is the grandson of Dixon and Linda Cartwright of Big Sandy and Ray and Pam Kurr of Mounds, Okla. Cater is also Mr. and Mrs. Kurr's first grandchild.

Cater is the fourth Dixon Cartwright. Once upon a time there was his great-grandfather, Dixon Sr., who

lived in Kellyville, Okla., until his death in 1996.

The second Dixon is publisher of *THE JOURNAL*.

Dixon No. 3, or Trey, is Cater's 29-year-old father.

Cater has four living great-grandparents:

■ Helen Cartwright, widow of Dixon Sr., lives in White Oak, Texas.

■ Ruth Isom, widow of Louis, lives in Clinton, Ark.

■ Harold and Martha Clement live in Mounds, Okla.

Cater's aunts and uncles are Rob and Jamie Payne, Tyler, Texas; Bridget Kurr and Brittney Kurr, Tulsa, Okla.; and Raymond Kurr, Mounds.

## Cater of the Potawatomis

Cater, through a lineage that includes his great-grandmother Martha Clement, grandmother Pam Kurr and mother, Brandi Cartwright, is a citizen of the Potawatomi tribe of American Indians.

Specifically, he is an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, based in Shawnee, Okla. More than 10,000 Potawatomis live in Oklahoma.

## What kind of name is Cater?

Dixon IV's nickname, Cater, is an old word—an English word that still appears in some dictionaries—that means "four."



**CATER AND COMPANY**—Here are pictures of Cater Cartwright and members of his family. **Photo 1:** Cater with his mom and dad, Brandi and Trey. **Photo 2:** Cater with aunt Brittney Kurr. **Photo 3:** Cater with great-grandfather Harold Clement. **Photo 4:** Cater relaxing. **Photo 5:** Cater with grandparents Pam and Ray Kurr. **Photo 6:** Cater with great-grandmother Martha Clement

and aunt Bridget Kurr. **Photo 7:** Cater with aunt and uncle Jamie and Rob Payne. **Photo 8:** Cater as part of four generations of Cartwrights. He's looking at the camera along with his father, Dixon "Trey" Cartwright III; grandfather, Dixon Cartwright Jr.; and great-grandmother, Helen Cartwright (Mrs. Dixon Cartwright Sr.). [Photos by Brandi and Trey Cartwright]



**CATER AND MORE**—Here are more pictures of Cater Cartwright and members of his extended family. **Photo 9:** Cater being cute. **Photo 10:** Uncle Raymond Kurr holding Cater. **Photo 11:** Grand-

mother Linda Cartwright explaining a giraffe to a skeptical Cater. **Photo 12:** Grandfather Dixon Cartwright walking Cater. [Photos by Brandi and Bernie Monsalvo]

# Congregation conducts annual election

**B**IG SANDY, Texas—The Church of God Big Sandy concluded its annual election for board members on June 27, 2009, by reelecting trustee Jim Wilkins of Hawkins and adding David Havir III as a trustee.

Incumbent Ron Avey of Big Sandy, who concluded his three-year term, chose not to allow his name to enter into the process. The board of trustees

has seven members who serve three-year terms.

Each year at least two trustees finish their terms. A nomination process occurs each May.

The four people who received the top four vote totals this year proceeded to the final phase of the election process, which occurs each June.

The other two people who were

nominated in May (besides Messrs. Havir and Wilkins) were Marcia Chambers of Pritchett and Ron Feaker of Hawkins.

The other five board members are Neil McIver of White Oak, Don Mischnick of Hawkins, Bernie Monsalvo of Gladewater, Melodee Overton of Big Sandy and J.L. Roden of Hawkins.

## Notes and quotes

### Robert Roenspies dies

ELGIN, Ill.—General Pastor Robert Roenspies, founder of God's Church, also known as the Church Outreach Program (COP), died Sept. 16, 2009.



Mr. Roenspies is survived by a brother, Dave, of Lake Geneva, Wis.

No details of the circumstances of Mr. Roenspies' death were immediately available.

The last address *THE JOURNAL* has for the COP is P.O. Box 6111, Elgin, Ill. 60121, U.S.A.

### The jubilee principle

HARTVILLE, Mo.—WND Books, an imprint of the popular conservative news service World Net Daily, has published a book by Church of God member Dan L. White called *The Jubilee Principle: God's Plan for Economic Freedom*.



The book begins with a discussion of the well-known parallels between the jubilee cycle of the Bible and the economic boom-bust cycle," Mr. White told *THE JOURNAL*.

The topic of the "jubilee principle" is timely, Mr. White said, because of the recent recession and economic state of much of the world. It's also appropriate for this time in history, he said, because of "the upsurge of worldwide interest in the festivals of God."

Order *The Jubilee Principle* directly from WorldNetDaily.com or from booksellers such as Amazon.com.

### GTA tape library

NORTH SYDNEY, Australia—The GTA Tape Library announced the recent addition of more than 150 television programs taped by Garner Ted Armstrong.

The library hopes "to soon add many more in the coming months," announced David Moffitt. See [www.icg.org.au](http://www.icg.org.au).

### New take on 2012

ARROYO GRANDE, Calif.—Bob Thiel's new book *2012 and the Rise of the Secret Sect* (list price \$20) will be an "invaluable guide" to anyone worried about the period beginning with 2012, Dr. Thiel told *THE JOURNAL*.

The book "goes past the hype

to explain what really will and will not happen in 2012," he said.

It is timed to come out just before the release of a major motion picture called *2012* that is based on Mayan prophecies that some say point to the time just ahead.

Dr. Thiel researched ancient prophecies from many sources, including Mayan, Hindu, Catholic, Byzantine, Buddhist and Islamic.

For more information, see [thesection.com](http://thesection.com) and [nazarenebooks.com](http://nazarenebooks.com).

### Darts injured on way to Feast

WHITEHOUSE, Texas—Ron and Allie Dart, founders of Christian Educational ministries, were injured in an auto accident on their way to the CEM's Feast site in Fort Walton Beach, Fla., in late September just before the festival, which begins the evening of Oct. 2.

Mr. Dart, in an E-mail to friends, reported, "We will be fine." He and Mrs. Dart visited a hospital emergency room and were quickly released.

What happened? "I went to sleep at the wheel," Mr. Dart reported, "and I hit a guard rail which spun the car around."

Mr. Dart said his sleep apnea could have been a contributing factor.

The accident occurred in or near Lucedale, Miss.

### New church to inaugurate

GERMANTOWN, Md.—Pastor Lennox Abrigo announced the inauguration service of the Seventh-Day New Covenant Church on Dec. 12, 2009, at 7550 Buchanan St., Hyattsville, Md., and you're invited to attend.

The church is unusual, Mr. Abrigo said, because of its vision statement and goals.

The statement: "God's military is churches in fraternity." Its two vision-related goals:

■ To pursue its mission daily, as the first Christian church pursued its (see Acts 2:46).

■ To "partner with non-SDA Sabbath-keepers and Sunday worshippers" to "build up God's Kingdom through spiritual warfare, believing that saving grace alone—Jesus' death on Calvary—qualifies sinners to become members of His spiritual body, not devotion to their day of worship."

Pastor Abrigo, a dedicated Sabbatarian, likes to point out that "you don't have to leave your church to be active in ours."

For more information see [seventhdaynewcovenant.org](http://seventhdaynewcovenant.org).



Lennox Abrigo

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