

---

# Adventist Elementary School Libraries: A Model

By Peg Bennett

**S**eventh-day Adventist elementary school libraries have, for many years, been the victims of inadequate funds and insufficient personnel. Faced with the leanest of budgets, most elementary schools leave the library to one of the teachers, with the unfortunate designate having neither the time nor the professional expertise to meet the challenge. Already shouldering more than full-time responsibilities in carrying heavy curricular loads, such teachers are also asked to hold responsible church positions, as well as be available for all

church and school functions, so, understandably, they have little inclination to accept still another job. But even given the unlikely event that adequate time is available, the teacher is often ill-prepared professionally for the demands of a school library.

Great care must be taken in selecting materials suitable for varied grade and reading levels that support the academic curriculum, as well as our distinctive Adventist ethic. A knowledge of publishers, jobbers, and their modus operandi can save many dollars for the straining school budget.\* Once ordered and received, the materials must be organized for retrieval, preferably in a

way that will be compatible with the organization of other libraries. Accomplishing these objectives can be a baffling task for nonprofessionals.

## A Low Priority?

Many academies face similar crises. In a study published in this JOURNAL, Iris Farrell Denison found that in academies surveyed in 1977, 22.5 percent of those employed as librarians indicated that they had no college degree, as compared with only one English teacher who had no degree. Fur-

\*See Harvey Brenneise's article, "How Am I Ever Going to Get This Library Organized?" in the Summer, 1984, JOURNAL for information about jobbers and publishers.

Associate Librarian  
Southern College of SDA  
Collegedale, Tennessee

*Scope = G*  
*# 254      # 255      # 256*

ther, only 32 percent of the librarians held master's degrees, contrasted with 58 percent of the English teachers. Forty-two percent of the librarians carried additional responsibilities (teaching, registrar, principal, guidance director), paralleled by only 27 percent of the English teachers.<sup>1</sup> Given this latter statistic, we can hardly help wondering how many of the 32 percent holding master's degrees obtained that degree in an area unrelated to library science.

Clearly, the library has not been perceived as a high priority area. The result? Students fail to gain access to enrichment or remedial information relating to the curriculum and do not learn how to use a library—a skill each one will desperately need in his or her future education.

### Attempts to Upgrade Libraries

It has long been a goal of the librarians at Southern College (Collegedale, Tennessee) to change this dismal scenario. Over several years, discussions with the Georgia-Cumberland Conference education superintendents have resulted in several library workshops for teachers, coupled with marathon cataloging sessions in which Southern College librarians spent Sundays in various schools organizing the libraries. This helped teachers deal with the backlog of work and gave them some know-how, but couldn't lengthen their days. Quickly it became apparent that at best these procedures were just a finger in the dike, while the whole structure continued to crumble.

### Program Methodology

Out of continuing discussions between the SC library staff and the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Education Department, a plan emerged offering a full-scale

repair of the dike. Made possible through the SC library's membership in SOLINET (Southeastern Library Network), an automated library network connected to a data base containing nearly eight million entries and linking libraries spanning North America, the plan involved a processing center based at SC, which orders and organizes materials for each of the 63 school libraries in the conference.

The program, dubbed ANGEL, an acronym for Adventist Network of Georgia-Cumberland Elementary Libraries, was launched in March, 1981, when the program was accepted by the college and conference administrations and the librarians began visiting the schools to evaluate each library collection. Because each school is unique, consultations with teachers revealed distinctive needs and interests; consequently, the titles ordered were selected not only to achieve academic strength but also to perpetuate the heritage and culture of the locale.

Upon arrival at the center at SC, the items are cataloged via computer terminal, with catalog cards, spine patches, and check-out card labels being simultaneously produced. Books to be shelved, as well as catalog cards in alphabetical order, are then mailed or delivered to each school.

### Advantages to the ANGEL System

Many advantages can be seen in this system:

1. ANGEL focuses on materials supporting both the Seventh-day Adventist curriculum and a distinctive Christian philosophy. Reuben Hilde, currently dean of the School of Education at Loma Linda University, points out the importance of sound curriculum planning and development, coupled with a strong library of supplementary materials and

enrichment resources supporting that curriculum.<sup>2</sup> To meet these criteria, qualified professionals knowledgeable in the best and most current materials available suggest and order relevant titles.

2. The amount of resource materials available to each school is increased because of the purchasing power of such a center. Discounts to date are averaging 37 percent, partially due to special savings not ordinarily available with single copy purchases.

3. Books are chosen that match the students' reading and interest levels, thereby encouraging individualized learning and proving to the student that he or she *can* read successfully. Most teachers would agree with William Glasser's assertion that the failure to offer opportunities that assure realistic success for all learners effectively diminishes their chances for both academic and societal success.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the availability of interesting materials at the student's reading level should enhance learning through stimulating an increased interest in reading.

4. "Students should be given more help on how to read effectively," insists Adventist educator Raymond Moore.<sup>4</sup> Many students need assistance in other areas as well. Because library materials sent to the schools are available for immediate use, teachers have more time to spend with their students.

5. The ANGEL program sets in motion a systematic plan to build a respectable library at each school, which should contribute to an increased sense of school spirit and pride on the part of students and parents.

6. Because each school has an organized library arranged by current library standards, students can more readily learn how to properly use a library—a skill that

(To page 28)

numerous reports have charted a modest increase in 1983 enrollments, along with a big jump in applications for [1984].

“Two factors get most of the credit: the steadily improving economy has made families more willing and able to afford college; and the college population is getting older. A third of all [U.S.] college students are over 24.”—Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges *Notes*, May, 1984. □

## UNCLE SAM AND YOUR SCHOOL

By Gary M. Ross

By now it is well known that the U.S. Supreme Court pronounced February 28 on the application of Title IX, the section of the 1972 Education Amendments that bars sex discrimination by recipients of Federal assistance. Simply put, the decision is this: *Aid* must be read broadly, but *program* can be read narrowly. That is, schools become beneficiaries of government through means as minimal as the acceptance of Pell-supported students, but the compliances required thereby are limited rather than institution-wide.

This decision must not be viewed in a vacuum. First, it raises fundamental questions about the internal structure and external autonomy of almost any school. For example, it may check bureaucratic overkill to regard antidiscrimination laws as program-specific, but what will it do to an institution's accounting procedures if not expand them at great

---

The author is associate director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department of the General Conference of SDA, and serves as the church's liaison with Congress.

cost in order to trace and track programs that Federal funds might be supporting? If we have reached the equivalent of saying that a veteran's pension check spent on groceries now constitutes Federal aid to the supermarket, what school can claim independence any longer?

Second, the ruling inevitably touches other (although not all) types of discrimination, for the wording in Title IX is identical to that of statutes affecting minorities, the handicapped, and the aging. Many indeed are the rights thus placed in jeopardy. On the other hand, the requirement of racial nondiscrimination remains unique and exceptional, given its elevation to the level of “public policy” in the May, 1983, Bob Jones University ruling—few foresee *its* rollback to a mere program of an institution.

Third, as is often true when rendering a decision, the Supreme Court rests its case on “congressional intent”—the purpose of the law the application of which is being determined. But *that* is interpreted in a manner contrary to all Administrations since 1972—except the current one. Understandably, therefore, the matter cannot be considered settled. Recently a large bipartisan coalition of Senators and House members introduced legislation to change the words *program or activity* in the statute to *recipient*, thus affirming that the entire institution is obligated to comply with the law. □

---

## School Libraries

(Continued from page 24)

will prepare them to use nearly any library anywhere. This should help make them more successful in both their school and future careers.

7. The project has possibilities as a pilot program for other

unions and conferences.

At the beginning of 1984, the elementary schools and junior academies in the Florida Conference joined those in Georgia-Cumberland as members of ANGEL. In addition, two schools from regional conferences in the Southern Union have made special arrangements through their conferences to be included with one of the member conferences, bringing the total membership in ANGEL to 115 schools. Response has been overwhelmingly positive.

Reuben Hilde has warned that Adventist education must grasp one reality: The school will shape the child.<sup>5</sup> It will shape him academically; it will shape him spiritually—and in large measure will determine whether he will become a scholastic winner or loser. A program like ANGEL can help prepare students to be winners. □

### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Iris Farrell Denison, “Literature in Seventh-day Adventist Secondary Schools,” *The Journal of Adventist Education*, 43:1 (October-November, 1980), p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Reuben Hilde, *Showdown* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1980), pp. 18, 107.

<sup>3</sup> William Glasser, *Schools Without Failure* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969).

<sup>4</sup> Raymond Moore, *Adventist Education at the Crossroads* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1976), p. 103.

<sup>5</sup> Hilde, p. 19.

---

## Making the Grade

(Continued from page 17)

noise. Recess is very important to them.”

### Developmental Lag

Girls, who are able to sit quietly and who do not seem to have the same need for vigorous activity as boys, fare much better in first grade. One reason for this difference in readiness for the demands of formal academic learning is a natural developmental lag that occurs in males who are, on the average, a half to a full year behind girls at the age of six.