

OF INTEREST TO TEACHERS

JOURNAL WINS EPRESS AWARD

The Journal of Adventist Education has just won an Education Press Association 1994 Distinguished Achievement Award, in the Feature Story category. The prize-winning entry is "Nurturing Faith in the Christian School," by George H. Akers from the special December 1993-January 1994 Integration of Faith and Learning issue.

The awards ceremony will take place on June 10 during the EdPress annual conference at the University Club in Chicago, Illinois.

Some 1,576 entries were submitted to the 1994 contest. Of the 11 entries sent in by the *Journal*, seven made it through the initial screening, including items in the following categories: Cover design, feature article, how-to feature, and one-theme issue. This is the second award the *Journal* has won from EdPress in four years, having received a Distinguished Achievement Award in 1990 for a one-theme issue on multicultural education.

Established in 1895, the Education Press Association seeks to nurture and promote the quality, health, and community of educational publications. Core services include conferences, awards, publication, and other professional activities. Its awards ceremonies have honored exemplary achievement in content and design each year since 1962.

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NEW BIBLE STUDY TOOL FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

One of the most exciting Bible study aids ever developed by an Adventist publisher will hit the market in time for the 1994-1995 school year. The first four volumes of the Abundant Life Bible Amplifier series have just been released by Pacific Press.

This new series, which will eventually include 40 volumes and approximately 10,000 pages, is scheduled to appear at the rate of four volumes per year for the next 10 years until every book of the Bible has been covered.

Each volume is both a *commentary* and an *instructional tool* to help people learn to study the Bible for themselves. In order to accomplish these goals, each scriptural passage (of roughly chapter length) receives attention through five components:

The first, and one of the most important, is entitled "Getting Into the Word." This component seeks to encourage *personal study* of the Bible passage under consideration. It asks leading questions aimed to unlock the meaning of the biblical passage within its context. The questions and exercises suggest which Bible-study tools (i.e., concordances, Bible dictionaries, maps, and marginal cross references) will help the reader unlock the answers. Thus, readers not only gain Bible *knowledge*, they also develop *skills* that help them unlock the meaning of the Bible for themselves through the use of simple tools.

The second component for each biblical passage is entitled "Exploring the Word." This is the commentary section, in which each volume's author provides scholarly insights on the passage. Unlike the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, the Amplifier volumes are not verse-by-verse analyses. Rather, the series treats larger portions of Scripture, seeking to unlock each passage's major theological themes within their developmental and literary context. In essence, the Amplifier series is more interested in examining the shape of the forest rather than merely identifying the individual trees.

The third component is "Applying the Word." This section helps the reader apply the principles to his or her own life. The fourth component, "Researching the Word," is for those who wish to dig deeper into the Bible than the average student.

The final section, "Further Study of the Word," suggests other sources that will provide greater depth on specific topics.

The Bible Amplifier volumes will be helpful for Bible classes, teacher preparation, and student and teacher devotional and cognitive growth.

The first four volumes are *Exodus: God Cre-*

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ates a People, by Jon L. Dybdahl; *Matthew: The Gospel of the Kingdom*, by George R. Knight; *Timothy and Titus: Counsel for Struggling Churches*, by Charles E. Bradford; and *Hebrews: Full Assurance for Christians Today*, by William G. Johnsson.

Each volume is published in both hardback (\$17.95) and paperback (\$12.95). They are available through your local Adventist Book Center. Those purchasing all four volumes will receive a special introductory coupon entitling them to a discount of 20 percent on subsequent volumes.

AMERICAN TEACHERS DOING MORE FOR LESS

American teachers earn less than their counterparts in other industrialized countries, even though they work harder and longer, according to a recent study by the American Federation of Teachers.

The report, which compares teacher workloads, schedules, and salaries among 19 industrialized nations, concludes that it is wrong to blame the shortfalls of American education on overpaid,

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underworked teachers.

While it is true that American teachers enjoy a standard of living comparable to teachers in other nations, it costs more to live in the U.S. than any other country, so American educators are actually taking home less pay at the end of the work week.

The study, "How U.S. Teachers Measure Up Internationally: A Comparative Study of Teacher Pay, Training, and Conditions of Service," confirms that elementary teachers in the U.S. spend more time with their students than teachers from 18 other industrialized nations. In addition, American teachers have more students per class than every other nation except Japan, Ireland, and Spain.

At the secondary level, the report finds that teachers in the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands have the largest teaching loads, with class size in the U.S. being about average. Japanese and most European teachers have more time for class preparation than their American counterparts.

High school teachers in the U.S. have less training than those in other countries. Of the 19 nations studied, salaries of elementary teachers rank just below the average, while salaries of senior-level teachers rank above only those of Italy, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. While veteran teachers in American high schools can expect a salary of \$38,000 a year, their peers earn \$43,000 in Germany, \$45,000 in Japan and France, and \$70,000 in Switzerland.

Part of the reason American teachers earn less than their European colleagues is due to differences in training. In many European countries, teachers in the upper-secondary grades must spend five or six years at a university before they can teach. In most cases, American high school teachers need only a four-year degree to be eligible for a teaching certificate. Many American teachers do hold advanced degrees, but some have earned them in subjects unrelated to what they are teaching.

Though summer vacation time is longer for U.S. teachers than elsewhere, every nation studied had between 12 and 15 weeks of vacation annually, including fall, winter, and spring breaks.—Reported by *The International Educator* VIII:1 (Fall 1993).

VERBAL, MATH SCORES ON S.A.T. UP SLIGHTLY

For the second straight year, U.S. college-bound

seniors performed better than the previous year on both the verbal and mathematics sections of the S.A.T.

The national average verbal score rose one point over the 1992 scores, to 424, on the test's 200 to 800 scale, according to the College Board, which sponsors the college-admissions exam. The average math score for students taking the exam in 1993 increased two points, to 478.

The rise in scores continued the reversal of a five-year, nine-point drop in verbal scores, although the 1993 average score is still one point below the 1983 average and well below the 1960s median score.

Although a greater proportion of those tested in 1993 reported taking tougher academic courses, which the College Board has said helps account for the higher scores, the overall level of achievement remains disappointing.

More than a million seniors take the S.A.T. each year, making even a small change in the average score significant, according to College Board officials. Women continue to score lower than men (this past year, by 8 points on the verbal and 45 points on the mathematics section), although the gap has narrowed slightly during the past decade. In 1993, a record 30 percent of test-takers were members of racial or ethnic minorities, double the level of 1976. This past year, whites had the highest average verbal score, 444, and Asians the highest math score, 535.

A new version of the exam, the S.A.T. I: Reasoning Test will be released in 1994. A guide is available at bookstores or can be ordered directly from the College Board Publications, Box 886, New York, NY 10101-0886. For each copy of "Introducing the New S.A.T.: The College Board's Official Guide," enclose \$12 plus \$3.95 for shipping and handling.—Reported by *Education Week* XIII:15 (December 15, 1993).

STANDARDS FOR BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The National Association of Elementary School Principals and the Wellesley College School-Age Child Care Project have issued "Standards for Quality School-Age Child Care." The 60-page document sets 19 standards of excellence that will provide safe, secure, and stimulating environments for 5- to 13-year-olds in before- and after-school programs.

The standards urge schools to develop a pro-

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gram that shifts from academics to recreation and socialization just as parents would if they were at home. The schedule for

the program should be flexible with a wide range of activities.

The standards recommend (1) staff/student ratios of 1:10 for children up to age 6 and 1:12 for those over age 6; (2) clean, well-organized indoor space with a variety of interest areas and a warm, inviting, home-like atmosphere; (3) safe and well-equipped outdoor space; (4) healthy snacks provided when children are hungry; (5) specific policies for discipline, homework, TV watching, etc.; (6) ongoing communication and cooperation among school and program staff, principals and directors, and staff and parents; and (7) a skilled program director and well-trained staff.

NAESP and Scholastic, Inc. have also produced a colorful, 24-page booklet entitled "The Right Place at the Right Time," which is designed to help working parents find quality daycare. The book and booklet will be sent to NAESP members without charge. Non-members may obtain one copy of each for \$19.95. Contact NAESP for prices of additional copies (add \$3.50 for shipping to all orders). Write to: NAESP Educational Products, Dept. SACC, 1615 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314-3483.

VIP DAY

A lot of schools feature "Parents' Days," but such events can be awkward for children from single-parent homes. Besides, what about grandparents, aunts and uncles, or close family friends? Those were the people Keith Rife, principal of West Franklin Elementary School in Columbus, Ohio, had in mind when he created a "VIP Day" with the help of teachers. The children received personal invitations to hand out to the special people in their lives, and reservations were required. The teachers sent out flyers, took the reservations, provided refreshments, and planned activities for each classroom. The school selected the Wednesday before the Thanksgiving holiday for the event, expecting about a hundred visitors. Some 175 showed up, each one greeted at the door by the children, principal, and staff. Visitors were escorted to the classrooms of the children they were visiting, where they watched learning in action. The evaluations were more than 90 percent positive.—Reported by *It Starts on the Frontline*, December 1993.

TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION ENROLLMENT

Higher education enrollment in the U.S. increased significantly in the 1980s, but these changes were more evident for certain groups and specific types of institutions. A U.S. Education Department report indicates:

- Proportionately, minority groups made more gains in enrollment than white non-Hispanics. Minority enrollment increased by 43 percent at public institutions and 47 percent at independent colleges between 1982 and 1991, while white non-Hispanic enrollment increased by 11 percent at public colleges and 7 percent at private institutions.

- The greatest overall increases in undergraduate enrollment occurred at two-year institutions. Between 1990 and 1991 alone, two-year institutions were responsible for 76 percent of the net increase in enrollments at institutions of higher learning.

- Women continued to increase their majority of higher education enrollment. In 1982, 51 percent of the students at U.S. colleges were women. By 1991, the share of women had risen to 54 percent.

- Graduate enrollment increased by 33 percent between 1982 and 1991.

- Enrollment in first-professional degree programs did not change dramatically over the years. However, the 1991 enrollment figure of 281,000 students was the largest recorded during the nine-year period.

NEW ARTS-EDUCATION STANDARDS SET

U.S. officials and national arts groups recently unveiled the first set of national standards for arts education. The 82 voluntary standards, which have been reviewed by an estimated 250,000 people, outline what every student at the 4th, 8th, and 12th grade levels, regardless of talent or family income, should know and be able to do in dance, music, theater, and visual arts. They suggest a curriculum for arts education that is more broadly based, more sequential, and more ambitious than what many schools now offer their students.

The standards do not specify how much instructional time would be required to meet the new competencies. But they note that national arts groups recommend devoting 15 percent of the elementary and secondary curriculum to the subject.

In high school, these groups say, arts studies should be required.

The standards recommend beginning arts instruction as early as kindergarten. By the fourth grade, the standards recommend that students should be able to demonstrate simple dance movements and perform folk dances from a variety of cultures. They should also be able to sing partner songs and rounds, create and arrange music to accompany dramatic presentations, and to play simple, rhythmic, melodic, and choral patterns on classroom instruments.

In the theater arts, the standards say, fourth graders should be able to improvise dialogue to tell stories and to plan classroom dramatizations.

And they should be able to identify specific works of visual art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places.

By 12th grade, the standards recommend that all students should be proficient in one art form. While many of the performance goals are fairly specific, the standards do not dictate teaching methods or philosophies. Nor do they suggest specific works of art or artistic media.

Overall, the standards attempt to put as much emphasis on learning about art, analyzing it, and understanding its esthetic, cultural, and historical significance as they do on "doing" it.—Reported by *Education Week*, March 9, 1994.

JUVENILE CRIME INCREASES

In the U.S. between 1987 and 1991:

- Juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased by 50 percent—double the adult increase.

- Juvenile arrests for murder rose 85 percent—four times the increase for adults.

- Juvenile arrests for murder, forcible rape, robbery, and other violent crimes reached an all-time high and accounted for 17 percent of all arrests for such crime.

- By 1992, every state had some mechanism for prosecuting youths under 18 as adults. In a recent *USA Today*/Gallup poll, 73 percent of respondents said juveniles who commit violent crimes should be treated as adults.

- Eighty-two percent of the 720 districts surveyed by the National School Boards Association reported that violence in their schools had increased in the past five years, and nearly one-third of 94 small cities surveyed reported that escalating gang activity and youth violence is a "major problem."—From U.S. Justice Department, *USA Today*, and the Pew Partnership for Civic Change. ✍