

# southernconnect



**Velino A. Salazar,**  
*President*

## It's a Matter of *Priority*

**T**oday, Annie and Adrian\* are Seventh-day Adventist professionals in medicine and law, respectively, and obviously, their income is according to their professions. But when they were children, things were completely different. Their parents drove an old, noisy, and smoky car, had no electronic gadgets at home for entertainment, and didn't take an annual vacation. And, like many immigrants, they were living with another family in the same two-bedroom apartment because of their financial limitations. However, these two kids were attending an Adventist elementary school, where their mother was a part-time daycare worker before and after school, cleaning houses in between. Their father had two blue-collar jobs. Both parents were earning minimal wages and had to fight rush hour for 45 minutes each way.

This picture is familiar among many families, whether or not they are immigrants, have children in private school, or have high aspirations for their children.

It is especially commendable for the parents who value Adventist Christian education and make sacrifices. And the question always is: How could these parents have afforded this type of costly education?

I recall a church member saying, "If they can't afford private education, they should go to public schools." Well, that is true for parents who do not have clear priorities or the

willingness to pay the high price while choosing between limitations and commodities.

On the other hand, some parents say they can't afford Adventist Christian education. If this reason is genuine, for sure those families have old cars, few clothes, limited electronic equipment, and don't take vacations. If their picture is the opposite, I ask: What's the real reason for not sending their children to Adventist school?

I encourage parents with school-aged children to honestly revisit this subject on their priority list. I invite parents with no school-aged children to review their budget and consider partially sponsoring a child.

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### ALWAYS HAS BEEN AN OPTION

### FOR ADVENTIST FAMILIES.

Christian education always has been an option for Adventist families when considering a couple of factors: conviction and priority.

Yes, Adventist Christian education is neither inexpensive nor free. Why? The short answer is that these schools don't receive governmental

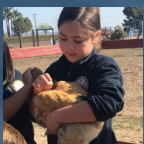
assistance. Let me explain how Adventist Christian education is funded, especially at elementary and secondary levels.

A school's income comes from four sources: 1) tuition paid by parents/custodians, 2) special subsidies given by local churches and denominational entities, such as conferences and unions, 3) donations from friends, alumni, and community business, and 4) funds raised by students, parents, and teachers through events. And school principals know there is an art to orchestrating the confluence of these resources in order to operate in the black.

I consider it appropriate to include in this message a word of gratitude, appreciation, and recognition to those who make possible Adventist Christian education in our denomination.

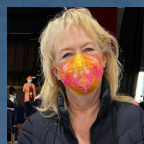
**CONTINUED ON PAGE 3**

**INSIDE**



#### **Chicken Club Teaches Practical Skills**

*Chicken Club makes school fun at LVAES.*



#### **Teacher Honored at Clippers Game**

*Third-grade teacher Cheri Dawson is honored for inspiring her students.*

#### **IN EVERY ISSUE**

- 3 In Transition
- 4 Region News

# Chicken Club Teaches Students Practical Skills

BY ARAYA MOSS

This year, Linda Vista Adventist Elementary School (LVAES) introduced its very own Chicken Club, where students take care of their own chicken and learn practical skills, such as tracking income and expenses, profit and loss, and caretaking.

The Chicken Club is one of the ways LVAES is prioritizing whole child education, a system that “ensures each child, in each school, in each community is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.”\*

“Living in Southern California, it can be a busy, fast-paced lifestyle, and we want to do as much as we can to connect our kids to nature,” said Jonathan Fox, LVAES principal. “We’re looking for ways we can connect learning to real

life and have hands-on opportunities.”

The idea for the club formed two years ago when a then-sixth grader raised more than \$600, simply because he wanted to have chickens at school. COVID-19 delayed its official start, but the club currently has 12 members and 14 chickens. On the days students take care of their chickens, they’re able to keep any eggs laid.

The Chicken Club is open to all ages. Students can apply to join, and they pay \$5 per month to participate. Kindergarten through second-grade students share a class chicken, and third- through eighth-grade students take care of their personal chicken.

“My vision is for school to be more than just school, but to create an



PHOTO: LVAES FACEBOOK PAGE



PHOTO: JONATHAN FOX

exciting place for them to be,” added Fox. “When all their needs are met, they do a lot better in the classroom.”

\*<http://www.wholechildeducation.org/about/> ●

# Third-Grade Teacher Honored at Clippers Game

BY ARAYA MOSS



PHOTO: CHERI DAWSON

Mrs. Dawson with her certificate of recognition.

Cheri Dawson, third grade teacher at South Bay Christian School (SBCS) and passionate lifelong reader, was honored at the L.A. Clippers Teacher Appreciation Night, February 17.

Dawson was one of seven teachers recognized that night. Before the game started, the group was invited to the floor, where they each were announced and given a plaque. Dawson received four floor-seat tickets and an additional 20 tickets for friends and family to celebrate with.

This honor acknowledged her dedication to helping her students find joy in reading.

“Mrs. Cheri Dawson is excellent in motivating her third-graders to excel in reading,” said Deborah Dahl, SBCS principal who nominated Dawson for this honor. “She not only inspires them to become avid readers, but she also instills in them a love for reading.”

“From my viewpoint, Kindergarten, first-, and second-grade teachers have

a hard time getting the kids reading,” Dawson said. “When they come to me, my job is to take these new readers and create in them the love of reading.”

Dawson achieves this by introducing her students to different genres, topics, and alternate reading formats such as audiobooks. Audiobooks have been a great way for Dawson to introduce a new book series to her class. Every day, Dawson will either read aloud or play an audiobook from her large classroom library while students work on their independent activities, like handwriting.

“The more you read, the better reader you become,” Dawson added. “When you see the growth, when you see the lightbulb come on, that’s what motivates me.” ●

# in transition

## NEW EMPLOYEES

Voted January 13, February 10 & 24, 2022

**Anthony Pascal** | Teacher, Glendale Adventist Academy, as of January 1, 2022.

**Jon Cicle** | Pastor, Eagle Rock church, as of March 27, 2022.

**Michelle Noland** | Associate Director for Media Production, SCC Communication & Media Production, as of February 22, 2022.

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## LEAVING SCC

Voted January 27, February 10, 2022

**Samuel Quiroz** | From Business Manager, Newbury Park Adventist Academy, as of December 31, 2021.

**Robert Hicks** | From Teacher, South Bay Christian School, as of June 30, 2022.

**Morris Barnes** | From Pastor, Fifty-Fourth Street, as of February 28, 2022.

**Brian Campos** | From Associate Pastor, Lancaster Spanish church, as of March 4, 2022.

**William Sellers** | From Pastor, Ridgecrest church, as of January 31, 2022.

**Laura Alvarez** | From Teacher, Ridgecrest Adventist Elementary, as of June 30, 2022.

**Araceli Diaz** | From Conference Clerk, as of February 28, 2022.

## TRANSFERS WITHIN SCC

Voted January 13, February 10 & 24, 2022

**Donavan Childs** | From Associate Pastor, University church, to Pastor, Ephesus church, as of January 30, 2022.

**Ashton Hardin-Artiga** | From Conference Registrar, SCC Education, to Assistant Director, SCC Human Resources, as of January 12, 2022.

**Celeste Harrison** | From Youth Specialist, L.A. Metro Region, to Pastor, Alhambra church, as of January 2, 2022.

**Adam Hicks** | From Pastor, Journey church, to Associate Pastor, Temple City church, as of January 2, 2022.

**Mishelle San Felipe** | From Junior Accountant to Senior Accountant, SCC Treasury, as of December 15, 2021.

**James Dok** | From Pastor, Hawthorne church, to Associate Pastor, West Covina Hills church, as of February 13, 2022.

**Salvador Garcia** | From Pastor, East L.A. Bilingual & Panamericana Spanish churches, to Pastor, Panamericana Spanish & Long Beach churches, as of February 27, 2022.

**Audrey Zorek** | From Administrative Secretary, AV Tech, Vallejo Drive church, to Executive Assistant to SCC Executive Secretary, as of February 22, 2022.

**Melanie Rivera** | From Administrative Assistant, Simi Valley church, to Business Manager, Newbury Park Academy, as of March 1, 2022.

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A word of admiration and affirmation to the thousands of **parents** who, like Annie and Adrian's parents, sacrifice commodities and privileges to make possible their priority to provide Adventist Christian education for their children.

A big thank you to **local churches** for their support, demonstrated in different ways: 1) their presence at school boards and committees running our schools, 2) their subsidies sent to enhance and sustain the operational and capital budgets, and 3) their openness for our students and teachers to visit and promote our educational program.

A special recognition to **conference and union leaders** for the financial allocations as a budgetary cornerstone in the operation and enhancement of school facilities and scholarship accounts.

A deep gratitude to dozens of **friends, alumni, and community businesses** for their constant donations investing in "future workers" who will pay back in service to the community and local businesses after education and training.

Last, but not least, a million thanks to all our educators who also make sacrifices to provide high-quality education to our children.

Yes, I know all of us value and love our schools, so let's boost our Adventist educational program to prepare our children to be better citizens here in this world and in the world to come while helping with the church's mission in our Southern California Conference territory. ●

*\*Names are fictitious.*

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Lauren Lacson

**Submit a story**  
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STORIES

REGION NEWS

**Greater L.A. Region**

It's Sabbath, February 5, in Mae Sot, Thailand, and 13 students from Naung Bo Den (NBD) Learning Center are on a special mission doing outreach to a Burmese migrant community with no Adventist presence. With the help of the Greater Los Angeles Region (GLAR), through Bottles4Life, Inc. (B4L), they have been planting a seed of hope in the community here, working toward starting a church plant.

GLAR has been active in this mission field for a few years now. With the support of GLAR, a school was built in Myanmar. Through the Delaware Avenue church and its members, they have helped build the NBD Learning Center. Students from NBD volunteered for GLAR's "I Will Go" initiative



to reach the unreached and under-reached people.

These student missionaries teach the children songs, Scripture, and read Bible stories. Each child receives a book of 25 Bible stories in the Burmese language.

Weather impacts the work, but the children still come, even when it's raining. "We are so grateful to have the student missionaries coming to our community and sharing the love of Jesus with us," said one parent.

The impact has been tremendous on this community. Children have something to look forward to on

Sabbath afternoons, and the adults are starting to participate with their children. "You can see God is working on the hearts of the people in this community and I'm glad we listened to the Spirit's leading to come and evangelize this place," said Ester Joy, NBD student.

We pray this program will be able to add to the membership of the church in Thailand. As people read their Sabbath School lesson, they can know they are making a direct impact on the people in the Southern Asia Pacific Division. Please pray for us as we hope to soon be able to transport the children on Sabbath mornings to NBD to worship with us and even one day to build a church plant in the community.

*By Fedly Bonneau & Samuel Kitevski*



PHOTOS: FEDLY BONNEAU