



THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY RUTHIE EDGERLY OBERG

The first Pentecostal missionary to Argentina, Alice Wood (1870-1961), served more than 60 years on the mission field, the last 50 without a furlough. When she retired at age 90, she left behind a thriving church pastored by Holy Spirit-empowered Argentinians.

In 1914, Alice Wood was a single, 44-year-old Canadian Pentecostal missionary in Argentina, with no visible means of support. Encouraged by the vision to support missions, Wood sent in an application to be included among the first official missionaries of the fledgling Assemblies of God. She was accepted onto the roster on Nov. 2, 1914.

Wood had become a missionary with

the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1898. However, after receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues, the Christian and Missionary Alliance broke ties with her.

In 1910, with no commitment of support, Wood sailed for Argentina as the first Pentecostal missionary to that nation, trusting that God would provide — and He did for the next 50 years! She would lay the foundation for the revival that continues today in Argentina.

Read one of Wood's reports from the field on page 12 of the May 29, 1920, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/may291920.

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DAVID GREEN'S INVESTMENT RETURN

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

Long past the conventional retirement age, Hobby Lobby founder David Green seems to be in his prime, touring the nation to promote his new book, *Giving It All Away ... And Getting It All Back Again*.

"I'm not going anywhere, I'm only 75," quips Green, who remains CEO of the Oklahoma City-based retailer with projected sales of \$4.5 billion this year. "The kids aren't going to run me off as long as the profits are where they are."

Green's profile rose in 2014 when he and his family successfully defended the company's religious convictions before the U.S. Supreme Court. Green's book recounts how the entire family voted to file suit against the government to prevent Hobby Lobby from being forced to provide abortifacients for workers. Without the court victory in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*, the business faced daily \$1.3 million fines.

Yet in the wake of those trying times, Hobby Lobby has thrived as never before. The conglomerate now has 780 stores and 35,000 employees in 47 states. The company started in the family garage in 1970 after Green secured a \$600 bank loan.

In the past five years, the retail chain giant — which is owned entirely by the family — has given away half its profits.

"Here's what God can do," Green told *PE News*. "God has created this environment where we started with \$600 to now giving away hundreds of millions of dollars every year."

The generosity only seems to have boosted the company's bottom line. Hobby Lobby opens 50-60 stores annually, all debt-free. And the company is noted for its munificence to workers, with a \$15.70 starting hourly wage for full-time employees and an \$11 base for part-time help.

"Scripture talks about not withholding good when we have the ability," says Green, citing Proverbs 3:27. "The biblical thing to do is to care about people. It pays dividends."

Part of the Hobby Lobby legacy is relinquishing millions in annual revenue by keeping stores closed on Sundays so employees can attend church. Outlets also shut down at 8 p.m. the rest of the week so personnel can get home to families.

Green, who attends an AG church in Oklahoma, is a proponent of giving

RUNNING IN THE GAP

BY ERIC TIANSAY

College professor and runner

LeRoy Bartel is going the extra mile to stand in the gap for his family, friends, community, and even strangers.

A former dean of the College of Bible and Church Ministries at Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) in Waxahachie, Texas, Bartel started to incorporate Facebook into his prayer circle earlier this year when he prayed and ran during his regular jogging routes.

"Runs are an opportunity for intercessory prayer," says Bartel, who completed running 70 miles in less than a week in recognition of his 70th birthday in April. "I've invited individuals in our homeowner's association and Facebook friends to submit prayer requests. I always promised confidentiality."

Due to the power of social media, word spread about Bartel's prayer runs as requests flooded his inbox.

"I've had prayers for wayward and rebellious children, the need for a job, cancer and other serious diseases, and husband and wife problems," says



Bartel, who continues to teach doctoral students, serve as distant education academic adviser, and teach graduate courses at SAGU. "There have been answered prayers, including jobs received, healings, and passed exams."

SAGU President Kermit Bridges says Bartel's prayer runs have been a blessing to the university.

"LeRoy Bartel is revered at SAGU as a man of great faith, Spirit-filled scholarship, and personal discipline," he says. "To know he is interceding for the campus as he consistently logs mile after mile is both a blessing and an inspirational model."

Bartel's prayer runs were spotlighted in an online article published by *Runner's World* magazine. 

THE ABCs OF SALVATION

ACCEPT that you are a sinner, and God's punishment for your sin is death and separation from God forever.

BELIEVE that Jesus paid God's price for your sin when He died on the cross.

CONFESS "Jesus, I believe You are who the Bible and history declares You are – the Son of God. I humble myself and surrender to You. Forgive me. Make me spiritually whole. Change my life. Amen."



CHURCH IN BLACK AND WHITE

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

Assemblies of God Pastor Wallace C. Phillips has shaken the status quo in Ahoskie, North Carolina. Phillips, who is white, believes community reconciliation and healing can't take place unless residents worship together, whatever their skin color.

A quarter century ago, Phillips, an energetic, good-natured man with a booming voice, took over as pastor of Carpenter's Shop International Church. Before Phillips arrived, the church had gone through 11 pastors in 15 years, and dwindled to a dozen white attendees.

Today, Carpenter's Shop International Church is the most racially diverse congregation in the town of 4,910. About 300 people attend. Two-thirds of them are black, coinciding with the overall population of Ahoskie.

"After 25 years we've finally reached the place where the church is a mirrored reflection of the community," Phillips says.

"The purpose of ministry is people, not selective people," Phillips says. "Racism is a spiritual problem, it's not a social problem. If you have a heart for God, then you realize all the ground at the Cross is level."

Phillips and his Caucasian wife of 35 years, Joy, have three children, who all learned to live peaceably with people from other races. Older son Josh married a Chinese-American woman, Cassandra, and they adopted a Japanese-American child, Alexi. Daughter Abigail married an African-American man, Jeremy Wheless. Younger son Zach is dating an African-American woman, Ashley Harris.

Phillips laments that in some ways the area is as segregated as ever.

"I would like to say racial tensions have diminished, but they haven't," Phillips says. "Not everybody in the South can embrace reconciliation. There are still a lot of white churches and a lot of black churches." 

CAMP GC: FLY HIGHER, GET CLOSER, THINK BIGGER!

BY DAN VAN VEEN

Camp GC, the biennial General Council daily event for kids ages 3 to 12, is not a regular children's church ministry — it can't be.

"The kids we're ministering to are pastors' kids, deacons' kids, church leaders' kids, missionary kids, Junior Bible Quiz kids — kids who have, for the most part, been in church all their lives," says Patti Chapman, longtime Camp GC director. "They have seen it all and done it all. Often first-timers come anticipating being bored!"

But much like the adults come away from General Council evening services with a blessing that impacts their lives, Chapman says Camp GC has had the same type of gripping and life-changing impact on kids' lives.

"We understand that the kids we're ministering to in Camp GC are highly likely to make up a significant portion of who is running the Church in the future," Chapman says. "So Camp GC is geared to help these kids fly higher, get closer, and think bigger about what God has for them."

The 2017 General Council in Anaheim, California, begins with registration on Monday, Aug. 7. That evening, Camp GC also begins.

Registration for Camp GC is open. However, costs increase 20 percent on June 1. 

GENERAL COUNCIL PRAYER COMMITTEE APPOINTED

BY DAN VAN Veen

The establishment of a General Council Prayer Committee was recently approved by the AG national office's Executive Leadership Team to help facilitate prayer initiatives and to be a national and district prayer resource.

Mark Forrester, senior director of Communications and Public Relations for the AG, says the prayer committee, which he chairs, is made up of five additional ministers who are known for their passion for prayer and leadership.

In addition to Forrester, the Prayer Committee includes: Ronald J. Auch Sr., Kenosha, Wisconsin; John C. Bates, Ovilla, Texas; Jamie Morgan, Williamstown, New Jersey; Kevin Senapatiratne, Blaine, Minnesota; and John Maempa, Springfield, Missouri. The committee members have each agreed to serve the Fellowship in this capacity for a two-year term.

"The members of the General Council Prayer Committee have the task of speaking into prayer initiatives, such as the annual Week of Prayer," explains Forrester. "They will also be a key resource for articles concerning prayer for *PE News*, assisting districts in connecting to prayer resources, coordinating prayer opportunities such as the General Council Prayer Room, and assuming other responsibilities connected to enhancing prayer in our Fellowship." 



HISPANIC BODY BECOMES MULTILINGUAL

BY REBECCA BURTRAM

Casa del Alfarero — the Potter's House — became the first Hispanic Assemblies of God church in the metro Washington, D.C., area 45 years ago. Although Casa del Alfarero started as a Spanish-speaking congregation, in recent years church leaders resolved to make every resource, from the sermon to brochures, accessible in both English and Spanish.

The decision to be bilingual stemmed in large part from a desire to reach second- and third-generation Latinos.

"Our young people would reach high school or college and never come back, so I started calling them to ask why they left," says Pastor Jose Arce Jr. "They said they loved it and still considered it their church, but they couldn't bring their friends because they only spoke English."

And those friends don't necessarily originate from the same places as their peers.

"John 3:16 doesn't say, 'For God so loved the Hispanics,'" Arce says. "It says He loved the world. We can't just think about Hispanics and Latinos. Our vision is to be a multicultural, multilingual, and multigenerational church."

Language can be a barrier for recently arrived immigrants. English soon becomes the primary language for most children and youth, yet many of their parents and grandparents converse in Spanish.

Jose Arce Jr. was installed as senior pastor in January, after serving under his father, Jose Arce Sr., for 30 years. When Jose Arce Sr. arrived in 1974, the church had 15 people worshipping on a weekly basis. Now 600 people attend regularly. Jose Arce Sr. continues to serve as pastor emeritus.

The church serves a large migrant population, which is challenging due to adherents returning to their home countries or moving elsewhere in the U.S. for work. 

back to God, and he is saddened by the fact that Christians contribute an average of a paltry 2.6 percent of their income to church.

"God's Word tells us when we tithe God will bless us," says Green. "When we don't pay tithes, we have a lack of faith and we don't believe God's Word."

The family wealth rests in the Green Stewardship Trust, presently overseen by David, Barbara, and their three children, Steve, Mart, and Darsee Lett. If the trustees ever decide to sell the company, 90 percent of the proceeds will be funneled into a foundation for ministry purposes rather than to family heirs. 

CHAPLAINCY'S 461 RESPONSE PROGRAM RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

BY DAN VAN VEEN

The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) recently presented its Pioneering Spirit Award during the ICISF World Congress held May 3 in Baltimore, to the **461** (pronounced "forty-six one") Response program. Chaplain Mike Reighard, director of the program, was present to receive the award.

The ministry, a part of U.S. Missions Chaplaincy Ministries, is based on Psalm 46:1: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble."

"The AG fellowship is resource rich," Reighard says. "But resources have little value if they cannot be found and used at the right time. The 461 Response ministry organizes these resources and

"We see ourselves not as owners, but as stewards," declares Green. "The Bible says God owns it."

Much of the philanthropy the Greens approve involves higher education. Mart is the only immediate family member to attend college, and that for just one semester. In 2007, the family purchased the vacant 18-acre campus in Haverhill, Massachusetts, valued at \$16.5 million for Northpoint Bible College, and financed \$4.5 million worth of renovations to make the site operational. Barbara Green is on the board of Northpoint, previously located in Rhode Island and known as Zion Bible College. 

makes them discoverable."

However, what earned the **461** Response program the award was its three-pronged approach to tragedy: churches serve as caring, responding, and healing communities.

Reighard says most programs offer care and response, but the healing component of **461** Response is what stood out to ICISF. This step focuses on the comprehensive emotional and spiritual care of people by training individuals to help those suffering from a critical incident to build resiliency and continue on with their lives.

To learn more about the **461** Response ministry, email 461response@ag.org or review the website at 461response.org. 