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## Western Field Family, Missionary, and Youth Camp Highlights

*Evelyn Holmstroem, Sacramento, California*

**O**n Wednesday, June 27, a group of young people and families came together at Camp Asperkaha in Oregon. Located on the southern shore of Howard Prairie Lake (a reservoir located 4,526 feet above sea level near Ashland), the camp is about 16 miles north of the California border. The first evening, we shivered in the cold wind as we put food away in the large commercial kitchen and unloaded sleeping gear and other things in our 12' x 12' lighted but unheated rustic cabins. Two vault toilets, three small showers, and outdoor sinks near the kitchen served us day and night. Our camp hosts, Jay Love and his wife Dani, helped to develop the camp with their church many years ago and still enjoy welcoming and assisting campers. Jay and Dani were a joy to work with!

Those who attended the retreat included two great-grandmas, one grandma, one grandpa, two mothers, one father, five young men, and three young women (seventeen in all). The ages of those who attended were 8-80 years.

Our cooks (Sisters Sandy, Gretchen, Jelena, Anne, and Martha) prepared and served delectable meals that included apricots and peaches picked fresh from the trees and lots of other fresh and prepared foods. Each day except Sabbath we prepared our own bag lunches. Brother Stephen cheerfully

rinsed and washed all the dinnerware with the quick-as-a-wink commercial dishwasher.

We experienced wildlife while at Camp Asperkaha, including chipmunks, deer, field mice, and squirrels. At one point, a couple of field mice scampered across Andriana's bed and prompted her and her two roommates to move in with Anne and me for the last three nights. We also discovered an otter on our way back from Crater Lake. Wildcats have been sighted in the camp; in fact, a couple of years ago, a mountain lion bedded down near one of the cabins.

We also had the pleasure of seeing many birds—crows, ducks, killdeer, mergansers, pelicans, robins, and swallows, to name a few. In fact, at one-point Sister Jelena heard a mockingbird.

Beautiful blue, white, and yellow butterflies were seen, along with monarchs, swallowtails, and one type that looked like a monarch or a viceroy but was neither. We saw mammoth moths, too, and some of their caterpillars.

Fish that were seen included rainbow trout, largemouth bass, and smallmouth bass. The flowers that we saw were biscuit root, blue dicks, dandelions, harlequin flowers, whisker brush, yarrow, and more. Trees at the camp included cedar, Douglas fir, red fir, white fir, juniper, and Scotch pines. God's handiwork is amazing.

“‘God is love’ is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green—all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 10.

### Program Highlights

**Thursday, June 28.** The wind was much weaker on Thursday, as it was each succeeding day. After a nice morning worship service, we went to revel in the splendor of blue, blue, blue Crater Lake—the first time most of us had seen it.

The evening meal and worship by the bonfire were delightful as we shared our thoughts about seeing such beautiful things that day.

**Friday, June 29.** During morning worship, Sister Martha thrilled us with stories of what can be done for the homeless—like passing out umbrellas and burritos, hugs and pamphlets. She told about a

special homeless person who dropped by the Denver church on one cold winter Sabbath. Her name is Teresa. After everyone had eaten and was ready to go home, Teresa was found asleep in the multipurpose room. What could Sister Martha do but take Teresa home? She learned that the lady actually had two college degrees but chose to live simply. After a shower, another night of sleep, and a three-hour soak in the tub, Teresa was on her way again. She still drops by the church now and then.

We drove to Ashland to distribute literature and/or conduct surveys and talk with the people in Lithia Park. Sister Martha has recorded on YouTube.com some details of her encounter with Hezekiah, a young black man with twelve brothers and sisters. Unfortunately mistreated as a child, he now thinks only of a young woman friend. After encouragement through words and literature, handshakes with nearby group members, a hug, and a prayer by Sister Martha, he said that he felt as if the weight of the world had been lifted off his shoulders. We continue to pray for him. Recent news is that, as of July



6, Hezekiah is of good courage in the Lord. Praise God!

Back at the camp, all those who could went canoeing and kayaking and even swimming in the lake.

During the campfire worship, each person told about something that happened during the day in Ashland. Brother Stephen invited everyone to tear out and help burn pages from the satanic bible that a young man, Bobby, had traded for a copy of *Steps to Christ*. Like the Ephesian believers, we rejoiced to see this material consumed in the flames. On the Sabbath after we returned to Sacramento, Brother Christian described his long conversation with Bobby and asks that we pray for him, too.

Brother Henry asked, “Are You Ready for heaven?” and flooded our minds with the amazing complexity of the birds and the heavens. May we be saved by the grace of God and go there soon! He will help us to repent and reform, but we were warned that “one defect cultivated” will ruin all our hopes.

Ideas were shared for future outreaches. For example, it would be good to have a “tool bag” containing a variety of literature—for young people and for the elderly. We could laminate copies of the “Father’s Love Letter.” (Thoughts for the coming Western Field, also in Oregon, in August: We need a workshop for parents to learn how to keep or lead their children away from the current obsession with the media!)

**Sabbath, June 30.** Morning worship was given by Brother Christian, featured a reading about grasshoppers. The adult lesson in the Sabbath School, “Believers and Authorities,” was taught by Brother Art, and everyone participated. Then, each person took a printed Bible verse or two (or even three) from a nearby table, read the verse(s), and added thoughts.

After lunch, we separated for individual or group walks, naps, and down-by-the-lake experiences. Worship around our last Apserkaha campfire led us to thank God for a beautiful, restful Sabbath.

**Sunday, July 1.** We were up early and emptied and swept our cabins. After the last camp breakfast, we prepared lunches for our trip home and packed the remaining food. The kitchen was inspected by our host and hostess, as were all the cabins. For morning worship, I referred to one of my favorite Bible verses, Psalm 119:165: “Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them.” I urged everyone to remain “unoffended” by the world.

## Memories/Quotes from Apserkaha Participants

*Elder Henry Dering:* “Countless blessings.”

*Jelena Dering:* “It was a completely new experience for me—a lot of nice friends, new people, a new city. The grief in Ashland has hurt me to the bottom of my heart; but the faith and hope that reign in my heart will never abandon me, and I believe that God will soon come and remove all sin.”

*Kaca Dering:* “It was a blessing.”

*Andriana Holmstroem:* “The company of Sister Martha, Crater Lake, feeding chipmunks, taking photos, and witnessing in Ashland.”

*Jon Jennings:* “Crater Lake—its beautiful blue color, its history, and the island in it.”

*Martha Knight:* “Talking with like-minded people.”

*Christian Nelson:* “Restful, joyful place, full of beauty; clean, crisp, cool wind, lots of smiles, lots of love; grace and truth in the name of Jesus Christ sown and given; lots of blessings; ready to it do all over again—but next time with you [the reader]!”

*Jeremiah Nelson:* “Crater Lake, Ashland, and the wooden cross in the park.”

*Jonathan Nelson:* “I love Apserkaha!”

*Sandy Nelson:* “God’s planning played out from beginning to end in our Apserkaha adventure.”

*Stephen Nelson:* “It was a wonderful experience seeing all the wildlife and nature, and I felt very blessed by being a blessing in Ashland.”

*Anne Petrovich:* “Having my devotions early in the morning down by the lake.”

*David Petrovich:* “Kayaking.”

*Megan Petrovich:* “Feeding (with Kaca) almonds and peanuts to the chipmunks.”

*Art Schendel:* “I enjoyed seeing Crater Lake again, especially the beautiful blue color, from the rim. The film we watched explained that this lake has neither inlet nor outlet, that the water comes from melting snow and is pristine (has no pollution)—with clarity to a maximum depth of 134 feet.”

*Gretchen Schendel:* “I loved the smell of the pine trees, the roaring fire in the evenings, the use of the commercial kitchen, and the energizing experience of distributing literature in the city of Ashland.”

*Evelyn Holmstroem:* “This experience was a little piece of heaven on earth!” (This is what Martha said, too!)

## Teacher Being Tested

*Manuela Di Franca, Munich, Germany*

**A**s an English teacher, I am used to testing my students before finals to see what progress they have made; to make sure they have studied their lessons, and to prepare them for the finals. Creating and grading tests are part of my everyday work. But there comes a time when the teacher needs to be tested, too.

In Bavaria, where I work, the final English exam always takes place on a Friday in the month of June. For several years, teachers at my school used to meet on the following day, a Saturday, to discuss the solutions and exchange tips for the grading system. Since I will be in charge of the graduating class the next year, I had a talk with my vice principal. I kindly asked her to change the date of the meeting or to find an alternative, since the Sabbath is God's day of rest and I want to keep it holy.

Right away her face showed disapproval. Being a workaholic, she could not understand the fact that I do not work on Saturdays. She blurted out that they would not change the date just because of one person and added that as a civil servant I had to obey this official order and be present at the meeting. She also threatened that if I stuck to my position in not attending the meeting on Saturday, I would have to expect negative consequences for my future career.

Discouraged and with tears in my eyes, I left her office and hurried home. I called my mother and also texted some of my international friends who instantly started praying for me. With a heavy heart I cried out to God: "I have been going through a lot recently! Within the space of a few months, I lost my father due to brain cancer, I struggled with a heartbreak, and now You test me in my professional life as well? What comes next? I cannot do this anymore!"

God listened to me patiently and gently reminded me: "... But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a

way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Corinthians 10:13. With this Bible verse in mind, I sat down and put on paper what I was going to say to the principal the following day.

I hardly slept that night, however in the morning I got up with peace in my heart. After recess, I went to see the vice principal in her office. I presented the matter, emphasizing that my faith and God's day of rest are more important than anything else. The tone and atmosphere of this conversation were completely different from the previous one. Right from the beginning, she showed both respect and understanding. She stated clearly that I was entitled to freedom of conscience and worship, and she did not want me to act against my faith. Besides, she was quite interested in knowing a bit more about the Sabbath. It turned out that she had been to Jerusalem recently and had experienced how the Jews kept the Sabbath there.

At the end of our meeting, she assured me of her support and expressed her appreciation for my work. My heart overflowed with joy! God had answered our prayers and had been faithful.

The next day the vice principal called me into her office. I was surprised as she apologized for her inappropriate behavior and lack of understanding. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." James 1:12.



## Doctors and Nurses Often Use Holistic Medicine for Themselves

*Partially excerpted from article by Joseph Mercola, MD*

**D**r. Joseph Mercola, M.D. is one of an increasing number of medical doctors who follow the science that is coming out of studies documenting the use of wholesome lifestyle practices and natural means of treating illness. He shares his findings at [mercola.com](http://mercola.com), has written articles on these subjects, has videos that are available on [youtube.com](http://youtube.com), and has joined alternative healthcare professionals in videos discussing alternative treatments. Some people oppose his ideas, while others embrace them.

On his website is an article about doctors and nurses who themselves use natural healing methods. Following are some portions of the article, which is dated September 9, 2011.

“Alternative medicine is no longer so ‘alternative’ for health care workers, the majority of whom use a variety of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) for themselves.

“In fact, 76 percent of health care workers use CAM, compared to 63 percent of the general population, according to research in the journal *Health Services Research*. Even more revealing, health care providers, including doctors and nurses, were more than twice as likely to have used practitioner-based CAM, and nearly three times as likely to use self-treatment with CAM, during the prior year than support workers.

“It seems health care workers are poignantly aware of many of the pitfalls of modern medicine and as such are embracing more holistic modalities. As psychiatrist Joya Lynn-Schoen, M.D., who practices alternative medicine, told Health Behavior News Service, part of the Center for Advancing Health:

“As insiders, health care workers understand what’s missing in our medical system. They’re more educated than others about orthodox and alternative medicine.... Mainstream medicine will say, ‘Here’s a pill’ or ‘Have an operation’ or ‘There’s nothing wrong with you. You’re just tired.’

“With holistic therapies, attention is directed to finding the root cause of disease so you can heal on

a deep, instead of surface, level. In simpler terms, holistic medicine focuses on health, whereas conventional medicine focuses on disease.

“The trend of CAM use among health care workers is mirrored by that of the general population. Increasing numbers of people are looking for treatments that fall outside of the realm of conventional medical care, often because conventional medicine has failed them or even made their conditions worse.

“In 2007, more than 38 percent of U.S. adults used complementary and alternative medicine, along with 12 percent of children—a rate that’s been increasing since 2002. This amounts to 4 in 10 adults and 1 in 9 children embracing CAM. According to the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, while CAM is used by people of all backgrounds, use is greatest among women and those with higher levels of education and income.

### Chronic diseases increasing

“Although the U.S. medical system is touted as being the best in the world, the truth is it has dismal success rates when it comes to treating and preventing chronic disease. A study published in *Health Affairs* revealed that the United States ranks 49th for life expectancy worldwide, a ranking that has fallen sharply from fifth place in 1950. At the same time that life expectancy has been declining at faster rates than many other industrialized nations, per capita health spending has been on the rise.

“The average American between the ages of 19 and 64 now takes close to 12 prescription drugs every year!

“But with all of these drugs, Americans are not walking around with stellar health. Rates of chronic diseases are through the roof, and we’re facing epidemics of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, depression, and too many others to list. As a whole, Americans are not healthy—they’re tired, depressed, stressed out, and often in pain.



“As patients, many people have taken their health into their own hands by abandoning this fatally flawed medical model and embracing holistic modalities that can help heal on a body-wide level. And now doctors, too, are following suit!

“Nearly 6.5 million Americans, or one in 30, were referred for mind-body therapy such as yoga, meditation, or guided imagery by their doctor or other health care practitioner, according to a study in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*. What’s more, you can have an impact on your doctor’s tendency to recommend these alternatives, for when you inquire about them, some health care providers do in fact listen.

“Dr. Aditi Nerurkar, an internist and integrative medicine fellow at Harvard Medical School and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, who co-authored the study, actually did so because of her patients’ requests. As reported by CommonHealth:

“Nerurkar, 35, says she was ‘inspired by her patients,’ to pursue the research because so many of them kept telling her how much better they felt—that their insomnia or anxiety had ceased—after taking a meditation or yoga class.

“So many people are now asking their health care providers about alternative options that medical schools have had no choice but to listen—many are now offering courses in alternative medicine, such as the use of herbs, acupuncture, and mind-body medicine!” —<https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2011/09/09/why-do-doctors-nurses-of-ten-use-holistic-medicine-for-themselves.aspx>.

### *A matter of faith and personal responsibility*

The apostle expressed his and God’s desire for the health of His people in 3 John 2: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”

The health of body, mind, and spirit is totally connected. When someone is sick—especially when he or she is chronically sick with one of the four dominant diseases in the U.S. (diabetes, cancer, obesity, and Alzheimer’s disease), he is bound in a slavery that exhausts his physical strength, limits his desire and ability to exert his best efforts for his family and society, and demands his financial resources to cover health insurance and medical costs.

It takes great faith and courage to stand up against the medical system in this country. It is almost like appealing to Caesar for justice, for one must accept what the system offers or be on his own.

Especially when it comes to childhood illness, there is no perfect way to go. Professionals in the medical world offer treatments to the best of their knowledge—according to their training. Few have the time in their busy schedules to research other, better ways of treating illness. It is frightening to know that drugs—the typical means of treatment—may have devastating and life-threatening side effects.

Little has changed in the century since Sister Ellen G. White wrote: “Drugs never cure disease. They only change its form and location. Nature alone is the effectual restorer, and how much better can she perform her task if left to herself! But this privilege is seldom allowed her. If crippled nature bears up under the load, and finally accomplishes in



a measure her double task, and the patient lives, the credit is given to the physician. But if nature fails in her effort to expel the poison from the system, and the patient dies, it is called a wonderful dispensation of Providence. If the patient had taken a course to relieve overburdened nature in season, and understandingly used pure, soft water, this dispensation of drug mortality might have been wholly averted. The use of water can accomplish but little, if the patient does not realize the necessity of strict attention to his diet.” –*Review and Herald*, September 5, 1899. There is more to read in this article that is of great value.

There are areas of holistic medicine that can also be dangerous, particularly those invoking mind control and supernatural influences. Natural medicine practitioners who do not believe in God and are not guided by the Holy Spirit can cause as much harm as unbelieving doctors in the standard medical system. So, great care needs to be taken and much prayer be sent to Heaven for help in which professionals to consult and which practices to follow.

Although increasingly under pressure to conform to some system or other, every person has to take responsibility for his or her own health and that of their families. How is this possible when the educational systems are under the control of godless people or even satanic forces?

It takes faith and a willingness to be guided by the Holy Spirit. God’s promise of guidance is not an empty one. Just as every person will be saved solely through his personal relationship with his Saviour Jesus Christ, so one’s physical health is dependent on following the principles provided in Scripture—using the divine means of healing.

“Those who seek healing by prayer should not neglect to make use of the remedial agencies within their reach. It is not a denial of faith to use such remedies as God has provided to alleviate pain and to aid nature in her work of restoration. It is no denial of faith to cooperate with God and to place themselves in the condition most favorable to recovery. God has put it in our power to obtain a knowledge of the laws of life. This knowledge has been placed within our reach for use. We should employ every facility for the restoration of health, taking every advantage possible, working in harmony with natural laws. When we have prayed for the recovery of the



sick, we can work with all the more energy, thanking God that we have the privilege of cooperating with Him, and asking His blessing on the means that He Himself has provided.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 231, 232.

In addition, more and more information is available that one can research and try. Moving by faith and refusing self-indulgence, the child of God will be blessed to maintain that optimal health that has a powerful influence on his mental, intellectual, and spiritual being now and through the end of his life.

“Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies. Every person should have a knowledge of nature’s remedial agencies and how to apply them. It is essential both to understand the principles involved in the treatment of the sick and to have a practical training that will enable one rightly to use this knowledge.

“The use of natural remedies requires an amount of care and effort that many are not willing to give. Nature’s process of healing and upbuilding is gradual, and to the impatient it seems slow. The surrender of hurtful indulgences requires sacrifice. But in the end it will be found that nature, untrammled, does her work wisely and well. Those who persevere in obedience to her laws will reap the reward in health of body and health of mind.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 127.

Exercise strong faith, be grateful for God’s blessings and the Holy Spirit, learn all you can, use the information He has given you so He can give you more, humbly share information with others, and “the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Hebrews 13:20, 21.



## *There is Still Time!*

**F**inal preparations for the Western Field Conference in Boring, Oregon, are being made. If you would still like to attend and have not sent in your Reservation Form, please call or text Sister Sandy Nelson at (916) 539-6777. She will need the total attendee count to send to the camp by Sunday, August 5 (and there will be a late fee charged).

If you are flying, please remember to take the tram from the airport to Boring, Oregon. Then, call Brother Christian Nelson (916-212-6468), and he will make arrangements for you to be picked up.

If you are not able to attend this year's conference, please pray for its success. Much work has gone into planning, but all is wasted if the Holy Spirit does not attend and work. Your prayers are greatly appreciated!

## RLPA Summer Catalog Available



**T**he Summer Catalog offers publications not only for personal study but also for outreach and group interaction in the congregation. A number of the books contain important church history that the believers may not be aware of. We need to learn important

principles that have been lived out by faithful individuals in the past and that impacted their experience and made it possible for them to resist evil.

The catalog has been mailed to individuals and churches. It is also available on the American Union website, [www.sda1888.org](http://www.sda1888.org) for viewing and printing.

On page 11 are selected items that are available at special prices to churches and colporteurs. The items were selected for their value in reaching adults and children who are so in need of eternal, spiritual truths and values in this evil age.

## 2018 Calendar

- August 15 – Western Field Delegates' Meetings, Camp Kuratli, Portland, Oregon
- August 16-19 – Western Field Conference, Camp Kuratli, Portland, Oregon
- Early October – Orion Christian Academy Tour of Battle Creek, Michigan (contact [www.ocaedu.org](http://www.ocaedu.org) for information)

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To submit news, send your item in an email to [atramirez829@gmail.com](mailto:atramirez829@gmail.com).