Let’s Start at the Very Beginning (A very good place to start!)

The regional map in my office shows the territory of the North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (NPUC) including the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington—a vast region! I’ve placed little pushpins in the map at the site of each pre-K, preschool, and daycare. There are colorful pins from Fairbanks, Alaska to southern Idaho—from Roseburg, OR to Bozeman, MT! It’s fun to look at the map and imagine all the tiny people being nurtured at the various sites by you, the dedicated staff. But how can we possibly all get acquainted and network together? It is my hope and that of the NPUC education department, that this little newsletter will help.

For several decades there have been very successful EC programs affiliated with our Seventh-day Adventist schools and churches in various places around the Northwest. Just why is the North Pacific Union Conference getting involved now? That is a good question!

Let me share a bit of background.

Some time ago Adventist Risk Management (ARM), the corporation that insures all Adventist entities in North America, became aware that across the US and Canada there were increasingly, some alarming situations:

- a for-profit daycare operating on church premises whose presence threatened the church with the loss of its non-profit tax status;
- a daycare renting space in a Seventh-day Adventist school but with a conflicting and compromising agenda;

These and other situations caused ARM to ask the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists (NAD) to develop policies and curriculum that will be consistent across the continent, ensuring quality and reducing legal exposure in all preschools, daycares and pre-Ks affiliated with Seventh-day Adventist schools and churches in North America. And to further ensure that all comply with state regulations, SDA church principles, with proper insurance to protect EC children, staff, properties and the organizations involved, as it already does for its K-12 schools.

That is why just over a year ago an ECE Advisory was formed by the NAD to provide guidance and oversight for children from birth to entrance into formal schooling.

The ECE Advisory is granted authority solely as a recommending body to the NAD Office of Education (located in Silver Spring, MD). Each regional office (i.e. union conference--our NPUC) appointed a coordinator for this position. The coordinator serves as an advocate for the centers of that region as well as a liaison between the center, local conference and union, and the NAD. That is where I entered the picture.

So now you know how I got to where I am. Elsewhere in this newsletter I will tell you a little about myself (and in the days ahead we want to learn about YOU).

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**“Let the little children come to Me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.”**

Luke 18:16
The exhibit hall will house more than 1,000 booths—among the largest at any education conference. There you will find the latest resources, publishers, manufacturers of learning materials, and providers of services. It is a great place to network as well as pick up freebies!

For those who may not know about it let me offer you their website to check it out: www.naeyc.org.

This is the world’s largest conference on early childhood education and this year it is in Anaheim, CA. The dates are November 3-6, 2010.

There is a wide variety of sessions to attend, including (but not limited to):

- Assessments
- Community Relationships
- Children with Disabilities/Early Intervention
- Curriculum (see website for full list)
- Faith-based ECE
- Families (see website for full list)
- Health and Safety
- Play
- Leadership, Management & Administration
- Financial Management
- Accreditation of Programs for Young Children
- Program Management and Accountability
- Quality Initiatives (see website for full list)
- Relationships
- School Age Care/Out of School Time
- Teachers & Teaching

The North Pacific Union Conference Education Department is offering $500 toward the trip for three directors/teachers (sorry, only one per center/school). Let me know if YOU are interested in more information.

GREAT NEWS...

2010 Northwest NAEYC Conferences:

- Spokane, WA
  - October 13-16
- Portland, OR
  - October 8-9

CLOSER to HOME...

This ‘n That--

Do you get the ACCN (Adventist Child Care Network) “Connection” newsletter? If not, call 805-413-7344 or go to this website: www.paucearlychildhood.adventistfaith.org

Fundraiser--Check this out! www.escrip.com

Have you seen this site? For some great ideas go to: www.preschoolrainbow.org


YUM! A healthy snack for Fall especially after a trip to an apple orchard: Baked Apples – wash and core one apple per child. Place apples in upright baking dish. Fill center of each with raisins and brown sugar. Sprinkle top with cinnamon. Bake at 350 for one hour. Serve warm. (optional: a little scoop of ice cream on top)

Thanks to those of you who have shared these photos! We especially love action shots. Feel free to email photos to me at any time.

Some have asked for suggestions…

Early childhood assessment: www.TeachingStrategies.com/GOLD

Distance training/online continuing education: www.cceionline.com

Staff training: www.nationalchildcaresystems.net
A Checklist for Early Childhood Curriculum

This checklist from Head Start Bulletin #67 and adapted by the NAEYC, may be of interest to you as you evaluate curriculum.

Does the curriculum . . .

- Promote interactive learning and encourage the child's construction of knowledge?
- Help children achieve social, emotional, linguistic, physical, and cognitive goals?
- Encourage development of positive feelings and dispositions toward learning while leading to acquisition of knowledge and skills?
- Have expectations that are realistic and attainable at this time?
- Include children with disabilities in the curriculum?
- Build and elaborate on children’s current knowledge and abilities?
- Permit flexibility for children and teachers?
- Lead to conceptual understanding by helping children construct their own understanding in meaningful contexts?
- Facilitate concept learning and skills development in an integrated and natural way?
- Encourage active learning and frequently allow children to make meaningful choices?
- Foster children’s exploration and inquiry, rather than focusing on “right” answers or “right” ways to complete a task?
- Promote the development of higher order abilities, such as thinking, reasoning, problem solving, and decision making?
- Promote and encourage social interaction among children and adults?
- Respect children’s psychological needs for activity, sensory stimulation, fresh air, rest, and nourishment?
- Promote feelings of safety, security, and belonging?
- Provide experiences that promote feelings of success, competence, and enjoyment of learning?
- Promote positive relationships with families?

Is it . . .

- Based on sound child development principles?
- Meaningful for these children? Is it relevant to the children’s lives? Can it be made more relevant by linking it to personal experiences the children have had or can have easily?
- Sensitive to and respectful of cultural and linguistic diversity? Does the curriculum expect, allow, and appreciate individual differences?

And of course, we who represent Seventh-day Adventist centers across the Northwest would add…

- Does it include spiritual nurturing that is in harmony with the mission and teachings of Christ and the Seventh-day Adventist Church?
The oldest of three, I was born and raised in Green Bay, Wisconsin (I remain an avid Packer fan!). After attending Andrews University in Michigan for two years, I transferred to Atlantic Union College in Massachusetts and graduated with a degree in elementary education. It was God’s doing as I met my future husband there—but that is another (fun and funny) story!

A year later I married my college sweetheart, Jere. After graduate school we began our ministry with the youth of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Pennsylvania. Our two sons were born in Reading, PA.

In 1976 we accepted an invitation to the Northwest. With two preschoolers, my first priority and delight was being a stay-at-home mom. In 1985 our family was blessed with the addition of a daughter, a little 16 month old dark-haired pixy who literally flew into our lives—all the way from Guatemala.

Over the years I have been privileged to teach at various levels, from preschool through 10th grade, as well as being involved in women’s ministries. My combined desire—to see people come to know Christ, and to have young people experience overseas mission outreach—has presented me with opportunities to assist in this venture on every inhabited continent.

My passion for helping people feel secure about the future by knowing how God has led in the past, is the force that continues to motivate me to coordinate Christian heritage study tours to Europe and the eastern United States.

I was grateful when asked in 2009 to serve as the liaison and coordinator of early childhood education in the Northwest. Partnering with their parents in molding Christian characters in my four grandchildren (pictured below) has kept me focused and intensely interested in spiritual nurturing and cutting edge early childhood education. The loss of my husband in 2008 has only proved to heighten my focus of what is really important in this life—becoming more like Jesus as we prepare ourselves and others for our future with Him. What better place to start that Journey of Excellence than at the beginning of life?

This past year has proved to be a very busy one. Meeting many of you, learning from you, and touring your facilities continues to be a most valuable learning experience. I see as one of my top priorities being your advocate as ECE policies are studied, tweaked, and adopted for our North American Division.