



MGA

Alumni News

MGA Honors 5-, 10-, 11-Year Classes

Recent world events have caused our hearts and minds to reflect on those special individuals who have touched our lives. Former classmates, friends and teachers have all filled important roles in shaping the past. On Sabbath, September 14, 2002, 49 MGA alumni returned to campus to recall memories with former classmates and teachers.

The Sabbath services featured Mike Bennie, current religion teacher, sharing thoughts on "Homecoming." Steve Becker and Joy Riddle showed slides of their recent mission trip to Africa. Former MGA principals Bob Rice, Roger Miller and Don Dudley shared memories of their experiences at Mesa Grande Academy. Principal Gordon Day brought the alumni up to date on what is currently going on at MGA. The MGA choir, under the direction of Milo Heinrich, performed "Lord, Listen to Your Children." MGA's "Fresh Expressions" did a skit.

A luncheon was catered for all alumni and faculty followed by faculty giving tours of the campus to alumni. As the alumni quickly found out, many changes have taken place on campus.

This activity was followed by the

**Plan now to attend
Alumni Sabbath
on September 13, 2003.**



Class of '92, 10-year honored class

alumni getting together in the "pit" and sharing what has been going on in their lives since they left MGA, along with memories they have of the school. The ten-year class got together in the evening before they parted.

The greatest distance that was traveled to attend this alumni Sabbath was James McNeill and Tom Elmer coming from Illinois. Both are from the ten-year honor class.

Start planning now and save September 13, 2003, for MGA Alumni Sabbath. This year the honor classes will be 1998 and 1993. Join classmates and former teachers for this special Sabbath that is being planned. We look forward to seeing you on campus!

Please contact Judie Yakush, Alumni Coordinator, at 909-795-1112, ext. 252, if you have any questions.



MGA alumni returned last September 14 for a Sabbath of remembering the old and seeing what's new with each other and their school.

a l u m n i m a i l b a g

Since graduation in '91, I moved to the Napa Valley. I initially started my career at UPS and worked there for eight years. I was married for two years though it did not work out. Since then I have met a great woman, and adore having her in my life. We have a beautiful little six-month-old baby girl, and her name is Sarah Nicole Husted. I have been working as a computer estimator for a roofing contractor for the last three years. I enjoy it immensely.

—**Larry Husted '91**

After high school I attended Walla Walla College for four years, graduating in '96 with a BS in Computer Science. I worked at Westwood Studios, a computer game company in Las Vegas, for three years.

In '98, I married Mendi Carroll, a friend from college. She has a degree in music (piano) with a minor in math. We got to know each other in a philosophy class and later were opponents in a fencing class.

After some time in North Carolina, in 2001, we moved to Chicago where Mendi is in law school at University of Chicago. I have been working remotely for a North Carolina game company called Sinister Games, flying back to NC about one week a month.

We both have old friends who live in Chicago and we are enjoying it here very much. If you are ever traveling through, feel free to call us up for a visit.

—**James McNeill '92**

I attended Crafton Hills College for generals and transferred to UCR in '94, graduating from the Natural and Agricultural Sciences School in '96. I enrolled in A. Gary Anderson Graduate School of Management and graduated with an MBA in '98, after writing my thesis in Market Segmentation, Theory and Practice.

I worked with Advantage Medical, Inc. from '92 to '99 both as a sales support clerk and a hospital-based sales rep. After a few months working as a pharmaceutical sales rep, I have worked at Roche Diagnostics Corporation, where I was promoted to Senior Account Manager last year.

In December '98 I married Elena Sanz, a graduate from Andrews University in Michigan, and LLU Dentistry in 2000. We have two beagles. We purchased a home in Loma Linda in 2000, and enjoy playing golf and visiting with friends.

—**Gunter Wessels '92**

I am writing to let you know that not much has happened after my last visit to Mesa Grande. I was accepted in a tutoring program but so far they haven't called. I renewed the forms to be a substitute teacher in the San Bernardino County Schools, but they are unable to process it. The only successful venture I have is selling books on eBay. I started out with Uncle Arthur books but I have moved on to others.

—**Ted Thiel '92**

I graduated in '97 from Andrews with a BS in Computer Science. I've been working since '97 for Blizzard Entertainment,

a top computer game company in Irvine, CA. My current job title is Web Specialist, which focuses on the web site, public relations, and game design and feedback. I enjoy hiking, biking and making friends!

—**James Geoffrey Fraizer '93**

Since graduating from MGA I have filled my time with a variety of experiences. I spent five years studying at Walla Walla College and finally left with an MSW. In '95-'96 I took a year off in West Virginia and Puerto Rico, working as a Christian Service Volunteer. I moved back to Southern California in '99 with "Buddy" (my dog) and started using my social work degree. I married Mike Stafford in June 2000, and we had our first child on July 24, 2002 (Allen Michael Stafford). My husband is finishing dental school this year and we plan to work with the GC as missionaries in Africa.

—**Andrea (Bryson) Stafford '93**

Jackie and I have been married for about two and a half (wonderful!) years. We moved to Everett, WA (about half an hour north of Seattle) last July. I am going to Fuller Theological Seminary to hopefully obtain a Master's in theology so I can do some type of youth ministry. Jackie is teaching fifth grade at a public school in Everett. We both love Washington very much; it is so nice to see so much green everywhere you look, and the mountains are awe-inspiring. We miss family and friends, but we visit California a couple times a year. We've recently become members at Mars Hill Church in downtown Seattle.

Prior to moving up here, we lived in Corona, CA, where we both taught. Jackie taught fifth grade, and I taught eighth grade science. I also was the high school youth leader at Riverside Community Church. Life was a bit too busy back then, but also very rewarding.

Right now I am working on putting together a Christian surf film outreach in downtown Seattle, hoping to reach out to non-Christian high schoolers about Christ's love for them.

—**Craig Marais '94**

I cannot believe how fast time goes by, especially when you get busy! I attended La Sierra University where I met my husband, Brad, then transferred to CSUF where I was graduated with an MS in Speech-Language Pathology. I have been working as a speech therapist with children, adults and the elderly. I am blessed to love my job. Currently I am working on starting my own speech therapy practice and getting settled into my new home.

My husband and I primarily attend the Azure Hills SDA Church. During my free time, which is quite a bit since I am child-free, I travel and enjoy everything there is to do in Southern California.

—**Laura (Rodriguez) Welebir '94**

After graduation, I packed up my belongings and headed to Southern Adventist University where I spent five wonderful years. For one of those I was a student missionary on the island of Saipan, and the experiences of that year helped me determine

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what I wanted to do with my life.

During my time at SAU, I met and married a wonderful man by the name of Adam Case. We have been married almost four years now and are still starry-eyed. In 2000, I graduated from SAU with a Bachelor's in Family Studies and currently have plans to earn a Graduate Certificate from Andrews in Family Life Education. After my husband graduated from SAU in 2001, we moved to Green Bay, WI, where he is currently working as the Associate Pastor of the church. We have met many wonderful people here and have learned a lot about how to serve God and His people through our experiences. In May of 2003, my husband will be continuing his education at the Theological Seminary at Andrew's University so we will be moving very soon! The future is in God's hands and that is just where we like it!

—**Laurella (Fillman) Case '95**

Since that momentous day back in '95 life has thrown some interesting curves, but through it all, I have found out what God wants me to do. After graduating from Southern Adventist University back in '98 with my pre-PT, I took a year out to work as a student missionary in Pohnpei. I believe that was a turning point in my life.

I had been accepted to start PT at LLU the following June, but through some convincing from friends, I headed back to South Carolina for a second summer to teach waterskiing at camp. Because of this, I had to defer from LLU for a year. During that year in limbo, I substituted at MGA and helped coach the Varsity and Junior Varsity teams. But after some news from Loma Linda, which I can only see as divine intervention, I was no longer accepted and had to reapply for the next year.

After a lot of confusion and feelings of despair, I came to terms that I wasn't supposed to do PT. Through the guidance of friends and family, and plenty of prayer, I felt the call to go back to Southern and get my theology degree. I graduated in '02 with my BA, got picked up by the Florida Conference and am on my way to finishing my first year of seminary at Andrews. Since then, I've had the opportunity to go to Fiji to help a local village, Romania and Africa on evangelistic crusades, and Greece to study Greek.

Even though I'm still single, life is great. I can't imagine doing anything else. Come January '05, I should be in Florida working at my first church. Put your trust in God and make Him first and all else will fall into place.

—**Alan Nielsen '95**

In 2000, we graduated from Pacific Union College with a Bachelor's in Music Education, married Tamalisa Caylor. We moved back to the Redlands area and worked as a substitute teacher while my wife attended a Master's program in Public Health at Loma Linda University.

We moved to Placerville, CA, in 2001, and began teaching K-12 Music at El Dorado Adventist School. While I am not teaching, I enjoy cooking gourmet meals with my wife, playing golf, doing web design and working on our real estate investment business.

—**Jeremy Carlson '95**

Since graduation I have been very busy. I attended La Sierra, Crafton and finally settled at UCR. I graduated in 2000 with my BA in Liberal Studies. That same year, I married Scott Bethurum and we bought a house in Yucaipa. I am currently teaching second grade at Morgan Elementary School in Rialto.

—**Gretchen (Giacona) Bethurum '96**

Since graduating from MGA, I moved to Alabama while attending college for four years. Currently, I'm in the third year of a five-year doctoral psychology program at Loma Linda University. Upon completing my program at Loma Linda, I plan to continue working in the field of psychology, preferably in an urban setting. My ultimate goal is to establish a mission-based outreach program in the US. But who knows? I may end up outside the US doing mission work. Wherever I am 2006, I hope to get back to Calimesa and see everyone!

—**Mark Hodnett '96**

I graduated from Southern Adventist University with a Biology degree last December. I'm planning on going to dental school at LLU this fall. Between my freshman and sophomore years I spent a school year as a student missionary teaching English in Peru. I learned to speak Spanish fluently and got to travel in South America.

I have been substitute teaching during the past couple months and the opportunity came to help out at our SDA school on Ebeye. Ebeye is located near Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands, between Hawaii and Australia. Anyway, I'll be teaching high school science, maybe history, or possibly English. Hopefully I'll get some diving in.

Ebeye is like the bad part of Tijuana—the slums of the South Pacific. The people are really nice and it isn't dangerous. (That is what people tell me at least.) Ebeye is about one mile by 1/2 mile with only 12,000 people. There is a tree here and there, but that is about it. It will be an experience to say the least.

I already had to do some preaching of sorts to the whole church for sundown worship. (I arrived last night.) We'll see how well I did by whether or not the ask me again. Take care!

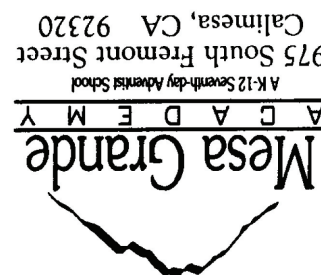
—**Scott Parker '97**

alumni mailbag *continued on page 4.*

ATTENTION ALUMNI!

Your classmates and friends would love to hear from you. Send your own "Alumni Mailbag" information to: jyakush@aol.com

Submissions may be edited for space and content.
Thanks for keeping in touch!



alumni mailbag, *continued from page 3.*

I was recently married to my beautiful wife Korwren. We met each other while finishing our BS in nursing. I worked in Cardio-thoracic ICU for a year and a half and about six months ago started working in the operating room. My wife worked in pediatric ICU awhile and now works in labor and delivery, her love. We spent three weeks in Hawaii for our honeymoon and have been rock climbing, traveling and reading a lot. Recently I have accepted a position to Bradley University School of Anesthesia. This is a three-year program and we can't wait to get started. We will look forward to future alumni get -togethers. Thanks so much.

—*James Peterson '97*

Missing Alumni

Chris Arretche
Kealan & Kory Biggs
Stephanie Bland
Michael Boyko
Ross Cooper
Chelsea (Peters) Courtney
Elissa Davis
Monica Grim
Justin Hicks
Melinda Hruby

Timothy Jordan
Ryan McPherson
John Meteere
Sarah Paoli
Jayson Schell
Greg Snoke
Yesenia Tovar
April Taylor
Ishmael Valdez

If you have contact information or other updates on any of these alumni, please contact Judie Yakush, Alumni Coordinator, at (909) 795-1112 ext. 252, or email jyakush@aol.com.

Thanks for helping keep our alumni in touch with the school and each other!