

Reflections

Renewing Our Strength— Running Without Growing Weary

There is a story that inspires me every time I think of it—it makes me happy, proud, emotional, nostalgic. Our daughter Erin is a runner. She started this when she was a senior at Rio Lindo Academy and has not wavered. She regularly runs on her treadmill at 5:00 a.m. before starting the school day, or outdoors on weekends. Is she dedicated? Yes. Her average weekly total is 25 miles.

She says she “ups her training” before an event, running many miles in the high altitude of the Sierras. She ran the distance of a half marathon the other morning in the snow. By the time you read this she most likely will have completed her 15th marathon by running in the Ventura Marathon on February 26. We will be there!

We have been at the start and at the finish of at least six of the marathons in which she has participated. It is so easy to get caught up in the excitement of the mass of runners and the

(continued)



Judy Thomsen is retired and lives in Southern California. She continues to work a few hours a week for the *Adventist Review/Adventist World*. She enjoys the high desert sunshine, walking, reading, playing the piano and communicating with her daughters and four grandchildren.

PAYROLL BULLETIN BOARD

*Checks/EFT
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THIS MONTH:
February 27

NEXT MONTH:
March 27

*“Looking unto Jesus
is ever to be our
motto” (Selected).*



thousands of spectators gathered for the occasion. I remember officials one year at the LA marathon scurrying to move people to the side with shouts of “Move out of the way—there are 20,000 runners about to come through here!” It makes you want to run as well. Alas, my claim can only be participating in a 5K walk in Palm Springs, Portland, Chattanooga, and one in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, years ago.

There probably aren’t too many who enter a race who could expect to come in first. Really, there is only a handful who have even a chance at winning prize money in Los Angeles or Boston or any other race. Still, every entrant looks ahead to the high of the run and the satisfaction of achievement. Looking ahead and living in expectation is a good thing. Without forward thinking we don’t have much to tell. It adds excitement and challenge to day-to-day living and spurs us on to accomplish our own goals.

All the friends and family who came to watch our girl run one year in LA were not always at the same location. We drove all over, fast, from place to place along the course, searching for parking spots, hopping out of the car quickly and running to catch sight of her and call out words of encouragement at many of the mile points. Then we joined hundreds of others a block or so from the finish line and leaned out over the barrier, watching to catch the first glimpse of her running down the home stretch.

Suddenly, there she is, coming into view—she has just about made it to the finish line! Almost overcome with emotion we see her, and my husband crosses the barricade and falls into step beside her for a short distance. I will never forget the thrill of watching them.

Another Father is watching intently as we live each day—the race of life if you will. All along the course He is there: “I will never leave you or forsake you” (Joshua 1:5). I can imagine Him leaning far out over any barrier there might be between us, hoping to see you and me on the home stretch. He has been in

step with us all the way. “He gives strength to those who are weak and energy to those who are weary. Even young people get tired and stumble and fall. But for those who wait on the Lord and ask for help, He will renew their strength. They will soar like eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:29-31).



Erin Rodriguez
training in the Sierras
for a marathon

“Since we have so many examples of faith, let’s get rid of any weight that slows us down in our Christian race, especially the sin that keeps us from getting ahead. Let’s run with endurance, following the path that God has set before us. Let’s keep our eyes on Jesus, the source and goal of our faith. It was by faith that He looked past His own suffering to the joy of seeing us in heaven with Him. That’s why He was willing to endure the cross and its shame. Then He went back to heaven to sit next to His Father and share His throne (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

Look ahead with anticipation to what the Lord has in store for you. Here it is: “Because of this one sacrifice, Jesus can now present us to God and to the universe as if we were already holy and perfect (Hebrews 10:14).

It’s really not the winning; it’s the finishing that counts. ■

Scripture is taken from The Clear Word paraphrase.

Meet our new staff

Photo by Angela Vandervalk



Last month we welcomed **Gina Lombard** to Adventist Retirement.

"I am so happy to have Gina join our staff as benefit distribution processor. She is a great addition to our team and has hit the ground running during this busy time of year for payroll," said Andrew Choi, chief financial officer.

Lombard (pictured with her husband, Jason) is enthusiastic. She says, "I'm excited to join the retirement team with such wonderful, kind, and Christ-centered colleagues! I look forward to serving our retirees and helping them with their payroll needs."

Lombard comes from Spencerville Adventist Academy in nearby Silver Spring, Maryland, where for the past six years, she has been assistant business manager.



Vanesa Gaitan also recently came on board as a retirement benefits assistant and is already a much-appreciated staff member.

SHARP Corner

*(Supplemental Healthcare
Adventist Retirement Plan)*

If you receive monthly automatic reimbursements from your HRA, this reminder is for you!

Until your insurance company provides Alight with your new rate for 2023, you will receive reimbursements at the 2022 rate for January and, possibly, February. Once Alight receives that information, your next reimbursement will be adjusted to ensure you are accurately reimbursed at the new rate.

NOTE: If your premium has not changed or you have exhausted your HRA balance, disregard this reminder.

"Vanesa brings experience as a human resources specialist at the Florida Conference and a background in graphic design. She is bilingual in English and Spanish," said Lisa Turpen, associate administrator. "We are thrilled to have her on our team."

"I feel blessed to have joined the Adventist Retirement team—or should I say family. I enjoy learning alongside this talented and kindhearted group that shares my passion for service," Gaitan says. "I pray I will be of your service, and I assure you this team strives for excellence." ■

AdventistRetirement

North American Division of SDA
9705 Patuxent Woods Drive
Columbia, MD 21046



AdventistRetirement | www.adventistretirement.org

Edwin Romero
*Administrator &
Chief Executive Officer*

Andrew Choi
*Associate Administrator &
Chief Financial Officer*

Lisa Turpen
*Associate Administrator,
Defined Benefit &
Healthcare Plans*

Wirmin Alcantara
*Associate Administrator,
Defined Contribution Plans*

Lisa Sharpe
Assistant Administrator, SHARP

Tara Mead
*Assistant Administrator,
Defined Benefit Plans*

Samantha Young
*Editor & Communications
Manager*

Adventist Retirement:
*Reporting a death, change of address,
disability reviews*
Ph.: 443-391-7300 | Fax: 443-259-4880
Email: NADRetirement@nadadventist.org
Address: 9705 Patuxent Woods Dr,
Columbia, MD 21046

Alight Retirement Health Solutions:
Phone: 1-844-360-4714
SHARP Healthcare Eligibility Queries:
Ph.: 443-391-7338
Email: SHARP@nadadventist.org

Submit DVH claims to:
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Grapevine, TX 76099-1928
Ph.: 1-800-447-5002

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