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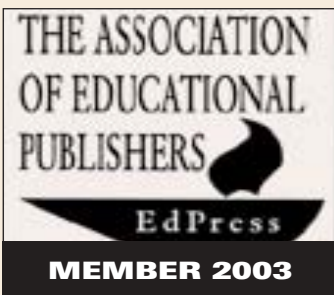
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# Passionate About the Possibilities

**I**t wasn't a normal tin of Quality Street chocolates—that would have been good. But for a 5-year-old dreamer, the contents were even more exciting! Three hundred buttons—of all imaginable colors, shapes, and sizes. They constituted my first school. How my mother collected that many old buttons, I don't know, but to me it was perfect. My parents had their school, and I had mine! I even had more students and teachers to organize than they did.

So began my excursion into the profession of education and teaching. I had no concept at the age of 5 of the ideals or values of Christian education, or the complex demands and rewards of either the classroom or administration. I did understand that my parents were doing something that was extremely important, and they loved doing it. I wanted to do the same!

Many years later, I realize how much of my present attitude toward Seventh-day Adventist education was molded by what I heard and saw in my home. And since that time, I have experienced similar commitment and vision among other Adventist educators. How do we develop such a positive attitude? Very simply, by knowing our God, and living with the conviction that He deeply values our students, our schools, and, of course, us.

If we do live with that conviction, we can only seek for the best in our students, trying to understand and redeem, not condemn. I remember the reaction of my headmaster when as an arrogant 17-year-old, I, with two friends, wrote a potentially inflammatory article for the local church paper. He asked to see us. We expected a severe reprimand and were ready for the fight. Instead, he congratulated us on a good article and invited us to discuss our ideas. He made us feel valued, and his belief in us was a major turning point in my experience with the church. I have seen students destroyed by teachers who only saw the worst in them, but I have also seen the “unreachable” and “unlovable” skip across the playground after experiencing the forgiving and redemptive attitude of other staff. God and we can cooperate in the role of redemption.

The belief that God takes a personal interest in the tasks we undertake leads us to approach our work with passion and a commitment to quality. My father's passion was voluble and emotional (for an Englishman)—my mother's was measured and quieter. However, I always knew that they cared deeply about all they did and were always trying to do it better. Why? Once again, because of their conviction that their students were valuable to God and deserved the best—not to mention that God Himself deserves the best.

Too often, I have met church members who consider Adventist education OK, but not good enough for their children. I have met educators who admit they are just putting in their time, doing the absolute minimum, not giving their best. I am glad to have also met educators and parents who know that Adventist education can measure up to the best—in fact, it can be better than the best, because of the extra dimensions that an integration of faith and learning and a commitment to excellence bring to the education process. We have no reason to be ashamed, and every reason to be passionate about the possibilities.

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## CHANGE OF E-MAIL ADDRESS

The JOURNAL's editorial secretary has recently married, and her E-mail address has changed. Please send messages to Chandra Goff at [goffc@gc.adventist.org](mailto:goffc@gc.adventist.org). The phone number and address where she may be contacted remain the same: (301) 680-5069; JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, U.S.A.



Andrea Luxton

# Editorial

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After all, we are partners with God.

And God also cares for us. In one of my favorite Bible stories, Elijah, after his success on Mt. Carmel and numerous other evidences of God's power, flees into the wilderness, demoralized by Jezebel's death threat. He has totally forgotten God's actions on his behalf. But God does not forget Elijah. He feeds him, lets him sleep and walk, feeds him again, lets him sleep and walk again. Then, when Elijah is ready, God speaks to him—not in the whirlwind or the thunder, but in a still, small voice. Even the most committed of us sometimes take that walk (or run) into the desert. Even when we're discouraged and have failed, God still cares deeply for us. And by recognizing the voice of God and leaving our personal desert to help others find their way to the still, small voice we find our richest reward.

Yes, Adventist education has a strong future. Not because we will get everything right, or the process of education will get easier, or the students become less challenging. The strength lies in our knowledge that God is a willing partner and a mentor in even the greatest challenges. Even though we may only see His back as he passes by, that reflected glory is more than enough!

—Andrea Luxton.

**Andrea Luxton** holds a B.A., in Theology and an M.A. and Ph.D. in English Literature. She served as teacher and later Principal of Stanborough Secondary School in England; as Head of English and Communication and later President at Newbold College, England; as Education, Sabbath School, and Women's Ministry Director of the British Union Conference; and Vice-President for Academic Administration at Canadian University College in Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. On June 1, 2003, she assumed the position of Associate Director of Education for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and also serves as the JOURNAL's departmental advisor.

## News About the JAE Web Site

The JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION Web site (<http://education.gc.adventist.org/jae/>) has been up and running for more than a year now. By late September 2003, the departmental site had more than 5,200 hits, the majority of which are probably visits to the JOURNAL home-page.

CIRCLE and the Southern Asia-Pacific Division are working together to scan back issues and get them indexed so visitors to the JOURNAL's Web site can use the search engine to find things they're interested in and download them in PDF format. Most photos and sketches have been removed, so they download quickly. Articles from 1991-2002 have been archived, including the continuing-education study materials.

Other items at the site include information on continuing-education credit for denominational recertification, links to Adventist educational institutions and administrators worldwide, as well as other education-related sites such as CIRCLE and the Adventist Education Forum, guidelines for writers, how to subscribe, topics we'd like to receive, and information about copying and reprinting from the JOURNAL.

Visit the JOURNAL Web site often!

## Claims for Missing Issues

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