



## THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY GLENN W. GOHR

Byron and Marjory Personeus, Assemblies of God missionaries to Alaska, developed a unique evangelistic tool at the close of World War II.

In 1945, funds from Speed the Light, together with money Byron had raised itinerating, made it possible for him to purchase the Fair-Tide II, a cabin cruiser to be used to evangelize in Southeast Alaska.

Byron Personeus was born in Juneau, Alaska, and grew up on the mission field as the son of pioneer AG missionaries Charles and Florence Personeus, who first went to Alaska in 1917. After Byron finished Bible college in 1940, he worked with his

father in Ketchikan and later helped him build the first AG church in Pelican.

Ordained in 1944, Personeus was granted approval by the Northwest District to itinerate among churches to raise funds for an Alaskan boat ministry. He traveled 5,000 miles by motorcycle raising funds.

The *Pentecostal Evangel* reported the Fair-Tide II “will be used to carry the gospel to fishermen, cannery workers and villagers among the many islands . . . where the Full Gospel has never been preached.”

Read “Gospel Boat for Alaska” on page 11 of the July 7, 1945, issue of the *Evangel* online at [s2.ag.org/july71945](http://s2.ag.org/july71945).



### DEALING WITH PAST TRAUMAS



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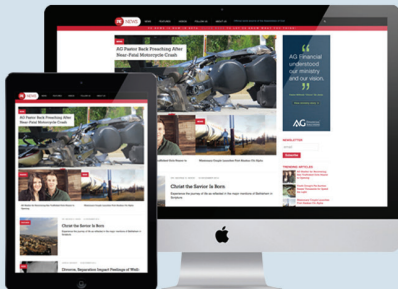
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## DEALING WITH PAST TRAUMAS

BY SHANNON M. NASS

Johb Puleo, an Assemblies of God U.S. Missions health care chaplain from Millsboro, Delaware, knows the power of second chances.

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Puleo says he joined a street gang to survive the harsh, inner-city environment in the turbulent 1960s. He started smoking cigarettes at the age of nine and became addicted to heroin and barbiturates by his late teens.

In 1970, he entered a drug treatment program in Manhattan, where he experienced a conversion to Christ as Savior on the first night. Soon after, Puleo felt called to ministry.

He attended Zion Bible Institute in East Providence, Rhode Island (now Northpoint Bible College in Haverhill, Massachusetts), where he met his wife Ruth, who is the Women of Purpose director for the PennDel Ministry Network.

Puleo also served as pastor of Newark Assembly of God in New York for 12 years, and then as lead pastor of Christian Life Assembly in

Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.

In his late 50s, Puleo says emotional wounds from his past began to surface.

Materials from Paul Hegstrom of Life Skills International in Aurora, Colorado, helped him realize he had underlying anger. While learning not to cry or show fear helped him survive as a child, he says it ultimately caused emotional distance.

A turning point came in 2009 when he officiated his mother’s funeral.

“The whole experience frightened me because when I viewed her remains in the casket, I didn’t feel a thing,” he says.

Looking for answers, he enrolled in a Masters of Arts in counseling program at Biblical Theological Seminary in Hatfield, Pennsylvania. Emotions awoke during the first class. He realized he hadn’t cried since the age of 9.

During a class on post-traumatic stress disorder, a memory of a violent attack 40 years earlier surfaced. He

## SENIORS FULFILLED AT FOOD PANTRY

BY JENNIFER M. NELSON

An Illinois church’s food pantry ministry is meeting needs outside and inside the congregation by feeding the hungry and providing a new assignment to a group of retired seniors.

Twice a week, City Temple Assembly of God in Granite City opens its doors to distribute food and clothing. The church serves around 550 families a month.


Each family leaves with three or four boxes of food. On the fourth Thursday of each month, families are encouraged to return and participate in the mobile market. Anyone in need may come to the mobile market and leave with additional boxes of food.

Historically, Granite City had a thriving steel industry. However, an economic downturn in the 1980s resulted in layoffs and the closure of some industrial businesses. Those tough times continue to impact the community today.

This reality motivated those at City Temple to take action. The pantry is quickly outgrowing its space at the church. As many as 40 volunteers, primarily seniors, help throughout the week with various tasks, including collecting food, stocking shelves, greeting visitors, doing paperwork, distributing food, praying for families, and cleaning up.

Some volunteers come in wheelchairs or walkers. Others have various ailments or don’t always feel well. But all share the same passion to show the compassion of Christ to the needy.

Sharon Woodson volunteers with her husband, James, in the kitchen, where they organize produce for distribution. Although James has a heart condition and is on oxygen, he doesn’t let that stop him from serving.

“He can sit down and sort and divide the food up,” Sharon says. “He’d be lost without it.” 



### THE ABCs OF SALVATION

**ACCEPT** that you are a sinner, and God’s punishment for your sin is death and separation from God forever.

**BELIEVE** that Jesus paid God’s price for your sin when He died on the cross.

**CONFESS** “Jesus, I believe You are who the Bible and history declares You are – the Son of God. I humble myself and surrender to You. Forgive me. Make me spiritually whole. Change my life. Amen.”



## PASTOR RECEIVES NEW CAR . . . THAT SEATS 12?

BY DAN VAN VEEN

There are few things more irritating or inconvenient than a car that keeps breaking down . . . except for, perhaps, a car that keeps breaking down during the dead of winter in North Dakota, where the temperature dips to 20- and 30-below zero!

Sadly, Pastor Paul Agamiri had one of those “irritating” cars.

“It broke down many, many times and I took it to repair many times,” Agamiri says with a sigh.

The church, All Nations Assembly of God in West Fargo, took note of the pastor’s struggle. So, without his knowledge, the congregation of about 300 got together and, on Father’s Day, presented Agamiri, his wife, and their six children (ages 4 to 18) with a new pre-owned SUV.

“I had no idea — it was totally a surprise,” Agamiri says, the appreciation echoing in his voice. “I’m so thankful for our church and the good leaders we have.”

Agamiri is from Sudan. After fleeing the brutal civil war in Sudan, the U.S. government relocated him from a refugee camp in Kenya in the mid-1990s to North Dakota.

Committed to following God’s calling to become a pastor, Agamiri began taking Berean courses to become an AG minister when he arrived in North Dakota. In 2005, he launched the church in West Fargo.

“Any given Sunday, there are 15 or more nationalities represented — they are truly committed to be the house of prayer for all nations,” says Scott Temple, director of AG Office of Ethnic Relations.

Agamiri says the SUV seats up to seven, although they have a family of eight.

“That’s not to worry,” Agamiri deadpans. “It can fit eight, African style . . . well, actually, African style it can fit more like 12!”

Agamiri may *still* be laughing. 


## AG NEXT GENERATION GRANT AVAILABLE BY AMBER WEIGAND- BUCKLEY

The application for the 2016 AG Next Generation Grant, made possible through Assemblies of God Trust and the Alliance for AG Higher Education, is now available online at [AGTrust.org](http://AGTrust.org). Each applicant must be a graduate of one of the 17 AG-endorsed colleges, from spring 2010 to spring 2015, and committed to a full-time AG ministry position.

The AG Next Generation Grant assists recipients with payment of educational debt in order to help them move into full-time ministry sooner.

“Receiving the AG Next Generation Grant has greatly benefited my wife and me, giving us the freedom to focus on the ministry we were called to do,” says Joseph Veltri. “It also has helped us to be more generous in our giving and less stressed about our finances.”

Veltri, a graduate of North Central University (Minneapolis) and one of the 20 AG Next Generation grant recipients for 2015, serves as the ministries pastor at Mount Olivet Assembly of God in Apple Valley, Minnesota.

The application deadline for this year’s grant is Sept. 16, 2016. For more information, see [www.agtrust.org/scholarships](http://www.agtrust.org/scholarships). 

## TRIENNIAL AG WORLD CONGRESS SET FOR 2017 BY DAN VAN VEEN

Registration for the eighth triennial World Assemblies of God Congress (WAGC), to be held in Singapore from March 29 to 31, 2017, has officially opened on the Singapore Assemblies of God website.

The three-day event offers the opportunity for Assemblies of God ministers, lay leaders, and members of all generations worldwide to come learn from some of the key leaders who serve the more than 67 million AG adherents worldwide.

The conference, described as “three power-packed days and nights” with more than 30 speakers from around the world, offers something for everyone.

“You will not be disappointed,” says General Superintendent George O. Wood. “There are few things that compare to worshipping God in a multicultural and multiethnic environment with a global focus on winning the world for Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit!”

For English-speaking AG members, it’s important to note that in Singapore the working language is English.

“Most if not all of the events held will be in English, with translation provided in various other languages,” Wood says.

For more information, see [ag.org.sg](http://ag.org.sg). 



## PREMARITAL MORALITY HELPS MARRIAGE

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

A recent study affirms that women who are virgins when they wed have the highest likelihood of staying married for life, while also suggesting that women who have had just two sexual partners are among those most at risk for divorce.

One surprising result of research conducted by Nicholas H. Wolfinger, professor of Family and Consumer Studies at the University of Utah, shows that women with only two sexual partners are more likely to divorce than those who have had between three and nine.


In fact, the study, published by the Institute for Family Studies, indicates that the 33 percent divorce rate for women with 10 or more partners who married in the 2000s isn't much different than the 30 percent five-year divorce figure for women with only two partners, one of whom likely was her husband.

Wolfinger suspects it's often a case of a wife questioning whether she really should have married the husband she did rather than an earlier

boyfriend.

Linda Miller-deBerard, a Christian marriage counselor in Colleyville, Texas, says women with 10 or more sex partners are not only more liable to split up, but also likely to be less happy in marriage.

"There is a long-term impact on society; however, there is more of an impact for the women themselves," Miller-deBerard says. "It's the impact on their self-worth and perhaps on their willingness to maintain a monogamous relationship."

The study seems to confirm that in this era of legal and cultural acceptance of various sexual lifestyles and living arrangements, monogamous heterosexual marriage is the most stable. Wolfinger's research indicates that only 5 percent of brides were virgins at the start of this decade (compared to 21 percent 40 years ago), yet they have the lowest divorce rates by far, ranging from 11 percent in the 1980s to 6 percent in the 2000s. 

wept heavily as he recalled narrowly escaping the beating. The weeping, which Puleo describes as cleansing and healing, continued every night for a year.


After being credentialed as a board certified pastoral counselor, he completed a residency at Lehigh Valley Health Network in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Facing another turning point in his life, Puleo resigned after 19 years of pastoral ministry to become a full-time chaplain a year ago at the age of 63 for VITAS Healthcare in Georgetown, Delaware.

Combining his counseling training with his pastoral identity as a chaplain, he helps terminally ill patients and

their families deal with issues such as assurance of salvation, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Puleo says his life has a sense of newness, and equates his experiences to Joseph's statement in Genesis 50:20. He says at times he is able to help patients who have had difficult lives positively reframe their stories as he did with his own.

"Now I realize that God is using everything — the good, the bad, and the ugly — to connect with people and help them on the last leg of their journey," he says. "This is what I was destined to do."

The Puleos, married 39 years, have three children and eight grandchildren. They attend Midway Assemblies of God in Lewes, Delaware. 

## GLOBAL RESIGNS FROM DEAC AGENCY

BY AARON KOZAK

Founded in the Pentecostal tradition, Global University from its start established a concrete mission to prepare men and women for Spirit-empowered ministry worldwide. The university developed relationships with multiple accreditation agencies and, through its work with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC), was established as a pioneer in distance learning.

Recently, the DEAC paid an onsite visit to Global. They called upon the institution to redefine its mission, nature, academics, and governance. This was in sharp contrast to the

glowing affirmation from the HLC, which recently gave Global a new 10-year accreditation through 2025.

University President Gary SeEVERS may have put it best: "Our mission, our nature, and our academics all define our vision. To change our vision is to quench a flame of redemptive education for those most needing the light."

With this sentiment in mind, Global University's Board of Directors, in conjunction with the Board of Administration, through prayerful deliberation and as a unified body, has decided to voluntarily resign from DEAC accreditation. 