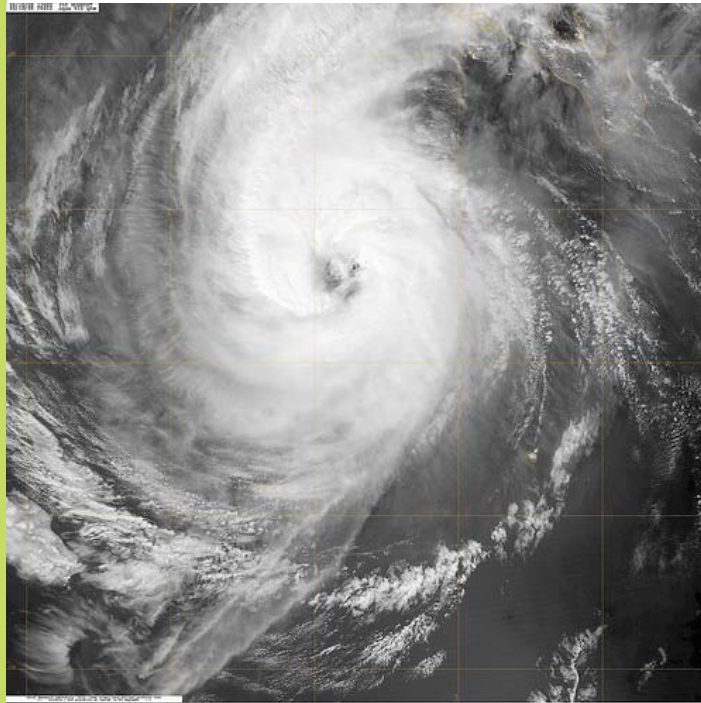


BOOMERS and beyond

Connecting
Igniting
Transforming



Inspiration and
Resources for
Leaders in
Second Half Ministry

A publication of
CONVERGE
Worldwide
2nd 1/2 for Him



JULY 2010

photo by CoreBurn; www.flickr.com

*Just when you thought it
was safe to go out....*

In the Eye of the Storm

*By Richard and Leona Bergstrom
Co-directors, 2nd 1/2 for Him*

For the past decade, professionals in the field of gerontology have referred to the overwhelming demographic bulge populated by Boomers as the “Age Wave.” The illustration impressed upon our minds the image of a huge, powerful and overwhelming event, much like a giant wave or even a tsunami. It would hit the shores of our society, culture and church, changing life forever.

Many church leaders, including us, became sociological prophets. We studied and applied the research of Dr. Ken Dychtwald, author of *The Age Wave*, and Dr. Charles Arn, author of *Catch the Age Wave*. We warned of the need to prepare for the coming age boom and stressed that new infrastructures had to be put in place to minister in and through this vast group of individuals. We challenged churches to think strategically and creatively.

While it cannot be denied that 78,000 Boomers (those born between the years 1946 and 1964) are indeed catapulting their way through the life stages, the earth-shattering power of their arrival isn't being experienced. In fact, it's a little **quiet** out there. The Age Wave seems to be more like a high surf than a cataclysmic event. And, frankly many are a bit fatigued with the age wave warnings and are no longer taking them very seriously.

As we entered the 21st century we noticed two things happening: One, existing senior adult groups began dying out – literally. Saints were going home, and those left behind began asking, “How can we get the next generation to get involved in our group?” At the same time, that next group of “up and coming seniors” was running as hard and as fast away from becoming a part of the seniors group as one could imagine. No way were Boomers going into the same group where, potentially, their parents still attended. In fact, Boomers don't seem to want to be segregated into a group at all!

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We think there may be a better analogy. We are beginning to see the whole aging demographic is more comparable to a **hurricane** than to a wave. And surprisingly we are actually in the **eye** of the storm!

If you have experienced a hurricane, you know the storms typically have a first eyewall, then the eye of the storm, followed by a second eyewall or series of concentric eyewall cycles. The church has experienced the first eyewall of the hurricane. For 40 years, beginning in the '60s and edging up to the new millennium, we've witnessed the development of "Senior Adult Ministries." Churches segregated this life stage into *Berean* and *Hilltopper* classes, sent folks on bus trips and sponsored potlucks. Denominations created national programs (including our own BGC Gold) to help support churches in program development. The winds of ministry were strong.

Being in the eye of the storm can be deceptive. The NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association) offers this description of the eye: "The hurricane's center is a relatively calm, clear area. People in the midst of a hurricane are often amazed at how the incredibly fierce winds and rain can suddenly stop and the sky clear when the eye comes over them. Then, just as quickly, the winds and rain begin again, but this time from the opposite direction."

It's not unusual for people to want to leave their shelters during this time, thinking that it's all over and it's safe to go back out. That's what we see leaders doing today. Surely it's so quiet – the old seniors groups are self-sustaining, Boomers are not joining in, so what's the fuss? Why have church staff designated for this age group?



We believe we are in the lull, truly the calm before the storm. Just because it's quiet and the skies are blue, remember the "eye" signals to us to be ready. Things are changing! In an actual hurricane, this is when the winds are chaotic and are blowing in every direction. It's when one eyewall absorbs the energy of the first one and becomes even stronger and more powerful.

So, how do we prepare for the full-force of the hurricane?

We begin by not trying to conform the second eye-wall to the standards and expectations of the first. Then we do all we can to help the individuals in that second wall become equipped to hit the ground with a force that makes a constructive difference in the world, not a destructive one. We find creative ways to help Boomers find their personal calling for the second half of life. We unleash the power of age and then watch a generation make impact!

See page 4 for resources on how to help Boomers and Beyond find a second calling, or as one person called it, "A second chance for Him." -RB/LB

2nd 1/2 for Him Ministry

Boomers and Beyond Newsletter

This newsletter is produced bi-monthly by Converge Worldwide (BGC) 2nd 1/2 for Him. Editor: Leona Bergstrom. To subscribe for free electronic editions via your email, please visit www.convergeworldwide.org and click on "lists." To submit articles or ideas, please write to Leona.Bergstrom@convergewww.org or call (206) 362-2621.

Training

Our goal is to train leaders who are effective in leading the local church toward powerful midlife and older adult ministry. We are partnering with CASA Network (www.gocasa.org) to provide excellent leadership training opportunities. 2nd 1/2 for Him leaders are available to come to your church or district for on-site training. Call Richard Bergstrom at (425) 216-4408.

Resources

We are continually updating our resource list to provide you with up-to-date information. Check our website at www.convergeworldwide.org click on "U.S." and then go to 50+ Ministries.

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Make a World of Difference:

Become a **CONVERGECares** Partner

One of the highlights of our biennial meeting is the commissioning of new missionary appointees. The stories of how God leads men and women to serve him in far-away lands and cultures always warm our hearts and stir our spirits.

It is not unusual for the journey of a missionary appointee to be likened to a Six-Flags Ultimate Roller Coaster ride. From the time one is appointed to actually setting foot on the field, there are both times of exhilaration and of quiet desperation. There are fragile days filled with fear, disappointment and fatigue. Likewise, some filled with praise, answered prayer and God's presence. No matter the experience, the journey is not for the faint-hearted.



You can walk this journey with a missionary appointee and offer support, companionship and encouragement. You can become a **CONVERGECares** Partner.

According to Brian Stankich, director of Ministry Partner Discovery, Converge Worldwide International Ministries, having someone who will pray for, talk with, listen to and gently mentor a missionary appointee can make all the difference in the world. Those in life's second half have the most to offer because they have experienced God's grace and faithfulness throughout a lifetime.

A **CONVERGECares** Partner would be assigned to one missionary from the time of appointment to actually reporting to the assigned field. The main point of connection would be to develop a relationship outside of the appointee's more structured networks. At a minimum, a Partner would be one with whom the appointee can pray at least once every month. A Partner might also write or email regularly, help the appointee establish goals or work through issues in life. One might also help in practical ways such as writing a newsletter, walking through a conflict situation or advising on family matters. The idea is that a **CONVERGECares** Partner would walk the journey as a faithful friend, prayer partner and mentor.

Interested? Please contact Brian Stankich, Converge Worldwide International Ministries, at BrianS@convergeww.org or Leona Bergstrom, 2nd ½ for Him Ministries at Leona.Bergstrom@convergeww.org. You'll be asked to apply by completing a questionnaire and personal profile. When approved, you will be matched with a current missionary appointee.



Pictured above: Catamarca Church Construction Project, Argentina.

Upcoming Events:

MINNESOTA/IOWA 2nd 1/2 for Him:

Route 66, a new program for active retirees in Minnesota and Iowa, will sponsor an "Afternoon in the Park", July 14 at Como Park Pavilion. For more information on this event, as well as the Prime Timers' annual Pig Roast on August 19 at Oak Haven Church in Ham Lake, contact Pastor Fred Tuma, 2nd 1/2 for Him Minnesota/Iowa, at 651-633-0560, or email ftuma@mbcworld.org

"Better Together"

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Along with CASA Network, Converge Worldwide 2nd 1/2 for Him will sponsor an International Leadership Conference designed for leaders in ministry with Boomers and beyond. November 10-12, 2010, in Atlanta, Georgia. Special speakers include Dr. Gordon MacDonald and Dr. Amy Hanson. For more information visit www.goCASA.org



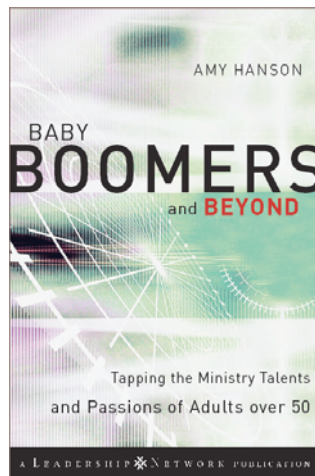
Resources to Inspire Those in Life's 2nd Half

BOOKS

NEW RELEASE (available July 26, 2010)

Baby Boomers and Beyond: Tapping the Ministry Talents and Passions of Adults Over 50, by Amy Hanson, PhD (Leadership Network/Jossey-Bass 2010)

Baby Boomers – arguably the largest segment of the population – are entering their retirement years at an unprecedented rate. With more discretionary time and increased longevity, this group is searching for a way to make a meaningful impact with their lives.



Baby Boomers and Beyond explores the opportunities and challenges that the older adult population presents for the Christian community. Author Amy Hanson dares church leaders to let go of stereotypes about aging and embrace a new paradigm, that older adults are for the most part active, healthy and capable of making significant contributions for the kingdom of God.

Pre-order at Harvest and receive a 20% discount! Call 800-323-3885 or email customerservice@harvestbooks.org

With Purpose: Going From Success to Significance in Work and Life, by Ken Dychtwald, PhD (Collins Living Publishers 2009) Psychologist and Gerontologist Ken Dychtwald challenges people in the second half of life to commit to have a lasting impact on the world.

WEBSITES

www.placeministries.org

This interactive website offers assessments for individuals to discover their "PLACE" in ministry and service. Videos and training curriculum are also available.

SEMINARS

Unleashing the Power of Age in Your Life A seminar for Boomers facilitated by Richard and Leona Bergstrom. Discover how God has shaped you for significant service for your entire lifetime. Email leona.bergstrom@convergeww.org

FILMS

Musical Chairs: One Man's Quest to Find Meaning in the Second Half of Life - Produced by ChurchHealth. This nine-minute film is designed to ignite meaningful discussion regarding purpose in life's second half. For more information visit www.chonline.org or Converge Worldwide 2nd 1/2: <http://www.scene3.org/content/view/1334/139/>