

Update on Planning for NAD Teachers' Convention  
Nashville, Tennessee  
August 6-9, 2006

The next national convention of Seventh-day Adventist educators, K-12, is scheduled to be held in Nashville, Tennessee, in early August, 2006, at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Convention Center. The December, 2003 meetings of the North American Division Curriculum Committee were held at the convention hotel in order for more of us to become acquainted with the grand hotel complex.

Let me begin by saying that it is an awesome convention facility with plenty of room for all of our six to eight thousand educators and with an abundance of breakout rooms with easy access from the main complex—no elevator challenges such as we had in Dallas. The ballroom is approximately one fourth larger than the one in Dallas, and it is suppose to seat some 6,200 convention delegates since it has a built in stage that is raised and recessed from the ballroom floor. The exhibit areas are huge with no need for any crowding, and we are hopeful of setting up a fast Adventist food serving area there since the onsite restaurants are in no way adequate for our needs.

As any of you know who have visited the Opryland Hotel, the most outstanding features are the enclosed garden areas and the wonderful decorations. With hotel rooms forming the outer walls, the interior sections are huge, enclosed gardens of living plant life containing wandering paths, roaring waterfalls, fantastic fountains and an overall park-like atmosphere. The beauty is outstanding, but the fact that the hotel is divided into garden groupings does create some challenges. First, you will need to plan for a lot of walking—up and down over trails leading here and there. Bring your walking shoes and plan for extra time between appointments since it is all too easy to get lost in going from one area to another. We discovered some really clever shortcuts, but they do require a little searching, and sometimes the long halls stretching out before you are a little intimidating to even experienced travelers. Maps help, and everyone onsite seems willing to give guidance.

The more than 2,800 hotel rooms are nice, but the ones we observed are not opulent or extravagant. The views from the interior rooms are great, but the fact is that you will not want to spend much time in your room with so much to see and do at the convention and throughout the hotel.

For those shoppers in the group, the Opry Mills Mall is a ten minute walk from the hotel, and the Grand Ole Opry House is about the same. There is much to do in the Nashville area from country music to sports to historic locations ranging from Andrew Jackson's Hermitage to the Parthenon to Belle Meade Plantation. Nashville is a fine family entertainment location, and we are hopeful that it will prove to be an outstanding site for our convention.

Just a couple of added thoughts: the hotel is only six stories high, and there is plenty of parking onsite although there is a charge for parking. Local shuttles and tours are available for family members who are not convention delegates.

We hope that you are planning to attend the convention and meet old friends and colleagues while growing professionally in a delightful atmosphere.