The Senior Informant

The official tri-annual newsletter published by the **Young-at-Heart**(YAH) of the Greenville Avenue Church of Christ (GACC)

1013 South Greenville Avenue, Richardson, Texas 75081

YAH HIGHLIGHT

YOUNG-AT-HEART HONOREE SANDRA WRIGHT By Dr. Mildred Bell



SANDRA WRIGHT

ongratulations to Sister Sandra Wright! She was born on November 15, 1948, in Clinton, Oklahoma. At the age of 4, her parents moved to Brooklyn, NY, where she grew up and graduated from high school. After graduation, she convinced her parents to let her attend college in California. As an only child, this was a major feat for her to convince them to let her move over 2000 miles away from home. She says that she is forever grateful to them for believing in her and allowing her to do so.

It was in Los Angeles, California, that Sandra met a Christian man, James Wright, and dated him for two years. In 1967, he introduced her to the Church of Christ. As a result, she was baptized in 1968, at the age of 20, at the Normandie Church of Christ, Los Angeles,

CA, by the late Bro. Carroll Pitts, Minister.

Sandra and James were married on February 22, 1969. Later, they proudly welcomed their two sons, Jason and Brian, and are happy grandparents of Jalen, Brianna, and Branden. Declares Sandra, "My most cherished value in marriage is having the love and support of one another when facing the challenges in this life, and then sharing a common goal to make Heaven our eternal home and striving together to get there."

In 1976, the Wright family moved to Texas. By doing so, James was closer to his grandparents who were getting up in age, and Sandra was closer to her parents who had retired and were living in Oklahoma.

In 1977, they placed their membership with the Hamilton Park Church of Christ (now Greenville Avenue). Sister Wright continues to serve in the Evangelism Ministry. Later, she and her husband became leaders of a Care Group (now Service Groups). Since 1989, they have labored together as the GACC Leaders of the Service Group Ministry. Sandra states, "Overall, we both have grown spiritually and have been tremendously blessed by those we have served and those who have labored alongside us in this ministry."

Sandra has an impressive employment record. She worked at SAFECO Insurance Company in the Underwriting, Human Resources, and Surety Departments for 30 years, and retired in 2008. Her greatest achievement while working there was being the recipient of the "Empathy Award." She says it recognized her as a Human Resources Assistant who showed care and concern for her peers, supervisors, and others, which she continues to pattern after Jesus. After retirement, she became the caregiver of her mother.

Following are Sandra's responses to the **YAH Highlight** questions:

Philosophy of Life: SHOW Christ in All that I do; SHARE Him through my time and efforts with others; and SERVE Him by serving others!

Favorite Scripture: "Philippians 4:13...gives me confidence and strength as I endeavor to serve Christ."

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YAH members' deadline to submit articles for the May 2024 newsletter is *January 30, 2024*. Email to: marilynmcaples@gmail.com

CHRISTIAN/SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

USING "SELF" AS GOD'S GIFT OF LOVE By Dr. Mildred J. Bell

s a Christian, do you believe God made you as His gifted child to witness Him in your daily life? If yes, do you diligently study the Word to better understand the reason GOD created you a gifted child in His image? Also, do you study the Bible to better learn how to pattern your daily speech, behavior, and activities after Jesus Christ? Prayerfully, this article motivates Christians to better use themselves as God's gifted children of love in the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

"God is love" (I John 4:16). Love is the nature of God, and we also <u>believe</u> that during our second birth, He gave us *His divine nature (Genesis 1:27)*. This, alone, merits our daily prayer and thanksgiving because love is of God and automatically becomes one of the Christian's characteristics. Further, love is one of the fruit of the Holy Spirit that lives in Christians to guide their speech, actions, and daily activities to glorify God.

Jesus was a living example of God's love. Just as He told His disciples in John 13:34, 35, the same is applicable to us today, "... Love one another. As I have loved you, so must you love one

another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if vou love one another." Therefore, as Christians in God's family, we show love for one another because we love Jesus. Though everyone in Christ's church is not lovable, God still wants His gifted children to trust and obey His commandments. The book of Philippians describes how we can find pleasure in doing so: HAVE *JOY in BELIEVING (3:1-4:1)*; in SUFFERING (1:1-30); in **SERVING** (2:1-30); and in GIVING (4:2-23).

Jesus lived a perfect life with no sin. Though we gifted children can never be perfect, we are admonished to forever strive to be **perfect-minded** as we study and practice being like Jesus. He sacrificed Himself and died on the cross to redeem mankind from sin. In like manner, He expects Christians to sacrificially love and help man in need, beginning with those in the church. The question we must ask *SELF* is, "Do I use myself as God's gifted child?" If our answer is no, pray about it. Ask God to help you discover your spiritual gift and put it to work! We do not believe about Jesus, we believe in Jesus! (1 John 5:10)

In summation, remember, Christians are supernatural, twice born spiritual beings. God created us in His divine nature as gifted children and members of His dear church family. We, personally and with the Missions Ministry, must witness God by showing love and help to one another, beginning with the church. Following are loving and helpful ways we can serve: 1) Help others when it is not convenient for us to do so: 2) Give when it is a financial burden to do so; 3) Use our energy for another's well-being instead of always on ourselves; 4) Endure hurtful things from others without complaining; 5) Turn the other cheek without fighting back; and 6) Go to the person involved in the offense and peacefully share your concerns instead of talking with someone else about the situation. Hallelujah! Praise God! What a blessing to be one of His gifted children! ₽



Dr. Mildred J. Bell Editor-in-Chief/Writer

YAH HIGHLIGHT QUESTIONS (Continued from page 1)

Recreation: "Spending time and relaxation with family, friends, and my fur baby, Happy."

Community involvement: "Being the Chair of the

'Welcoming Committee' for my Neighborhood Association."

What I need to improve: "Stop taking it personally when others don't fulfill the commitments they have made."

What I like most about me: "I love God and I love HIS people! I can truly say I've never met a stranger. Everyone has a story to tell, and I'm interested in learning what that story is and about the person behind the story." \$\frac{1}{2}\$

HEALTHY LIVING

TIPS FOR HEALTHY LIVING

By Elizabeth Diane Afriyie

- t is a new year and many individuals make New Year's resolutions. So, let's talk about some things to incorporate into our daily living to create a *healthier* lifestyle in 2024.
- 1. **Eat a balanced meal**. Healthy food choices can help you or protect you from various health problems. Healthy meals could even provide improved brain function. Eat nutrient-rich foods, such as seafood, plant-based proteins, lean meats, poultry, fruits, and vegetables.



- 2. **Limit your processed foods.** Reduce your sugar intake, especially sugars that are added into drinks and food. Eliminate or reduce use of packaged foods.
- 3. **Plan and prep your meals**. Purchase fruit and vegetables in season to help your budget. If you have trouble affording healthy food, check out **usa.gov/food-help**.
- 4. **Stay hydrated**. Hydration is linked to healthy aging, enabling you to live longer and develop fewer chronic conditions.



- 5. Add antioxidants daily. This will help protect your body from free-radicals that can be harmful.
- 6. **Move**. Increase your movements and just move your body for at least thirty minutes a day.
- 7. **Reduce stress**. Stress and anxiety have a negative impact on your memory, decision-making, and mood.
- 8. **Stay socially active**. Keep those connections with family and friends to add years to your life.
- 9. Challenge your mind. Engage in MIND EXERCISES!
- 10. Check your mental health. If you are having mental or emotional health problems, seek help.
- 11. **Protect your skin from the sun**. This is a vital part of anti-aging. Wear wide brimmed hats, add a pair of sunglasses, and make a habit to moisturize.
- 12. **Schedule periodic doctor visits.** Preventative check-ups and care visits are essential and can help reduce risk factors.

Be intentional about what you are eating, moving more, and staying socially connected. These tips can help you keep your New Year's resolution and be a healthier you in 2024. †

20 Tips for Healthy Aging by Robyn Tellefsen 5/26/2023 <u>www. Care credit.com/ well-u/health-wellness/tips-For-health</u> OASH My Health Finder Eat Healthy 10/25/2023



Elizabeth Diane Afriyie Executive Secretary/ Publications Assistant/Writer

MEDICAL INSIGHT

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Submitted by Joyce Cook

ndustrial Revolution-era factory builders developed machines to mass-manufacture drugs once ground by hand. Today's pharmaceutical companies are turning to artificial intelligence (AI) to both speed up and smarten the work of clinical development. AI could assist pharma companies in getting medicines to market faster.

AI today not only does flashy gene -sequencing work, but it's also being trained to predict drug efficacy and side effects. AI also manages the vast amounts of documents and data that support any pharmaceutical product.



A quick primer: Artificial intelligence, or AI, is a blanket term for many advanced computing techniques. There are *two* techniques that matter to pharma companies.

Two AI techniques that
matter to pharmaceutical
companies are
Machine-learning
and
Natural Language Processing
(NLP).

The first technique is *machine*learning, which applies trained pattern-matching and statistical analysis to spot trends or predict outcomes. Machine-learning analysis may be able to improve the quality of regulatory submissions, by identifying the most likely requests for information that government regulators may have and incorporating the answers from the get-go. Some believe that soon, AI may be able to predict questions from regulators in advance, thereby preparing answers ahead of time. This technique could save weeks of back and forth with regulators, when trying to get a drug to market.

The second technique is *natural language processing* (NLP), which parses human-written

words to deduce their meaning and to develop sentences that mirror human writing. Natural language processing ensures that correct and consistent terminology is used, thereby, reducing errors and misunderstandings.

AI can quickly scan thousands of documents produced elsewhere for relevant information, rather than requiring them all to be read in full by a human being. It's still early in the game for AI as both research advisor and ultimate typist. But these concrete improvements hold promise for getting more effective drugs more quickly to the patients who need them. †

https://www.pfizer.com/news/articles/ artificial_intelligence_on_a_mission_to_ makeline_cal_drug_development_faster_ and_smarter_



Joyce Cook Assistant News Gathering Coordinator/ Publications Assistant / Writer

MIND EXERCISE

HARVEST BIBLE TRIVIA

Submitted by Marilyn Caples

Throughout the Bible, the harvest carries spiritual significance. It is used in parables and as a metaphor for spiritual growth and health. *Take the quiz to check your knowledge!*

1.	Who said "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few?" Jesus	7. Which prophet saw a "basket of summer fruit" signifying the end was near for Israel? Micah Joel Amos Obadiah
	Which major feast coincided with the wheat harvest? □ Firstfruits □ Pentecost □ Passover □ Tabernacles	8. What was Jesus talking about when he said, "they neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns"? Animals of the forest Birds of the air Cattle of the field
·	Why were the Israelites told not to gather the gleanings of the harvest? To feed the wild animals To provide for the poor They were unclean To keep the land fertile	 □ Fish of the sea 9. He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth what? □ Tribulation □ Shame
4.	What was special about the harvest in the Sabbatical year? □ It was two months early □ It produced double □ There wasn't one □ Only one type of crop was sown and harvested	 □ Death □ Famine 10. Where was Jesus when he said "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields: for they are white already to harvest"? □ Decapolis □ Jordan
5.	In the parable of the tares in the field, the harvest is the end of the world, but who are the reapers? God and Jesus The Levites The angels The Saints	☐ Samaria ☐ Galilee (See page 8 for answers)
6.	Under the law, what was to be done with the firstfruits of the harvest? Put into barns Given to the Lord Given to the poor Left in the field	Marilyn Caples Assoc. Editor-in-Chief Design and Production Manager/ Writer

 $\underline{\hbox{$\mathbb{C}$ https://biblequizzes.org.uk/quiz.php?harvest}}$

MONEY MATTERS

A NEW WAY TO GET FAST CASH

Submitted by Carylon Moss

hort on cash and needing some fast? If you've run through your emergency funds, you may have a new option for borrowing small amounts of money at a relatively low cost.

Some of the largest American banks now offer what are known as "small dollar loans:" either low-interest or flat-fee loans of different sizes up to \$1,000, available almost immediately and with few application hurdles.

These loans are significantly cheaper than typical payday loans which charge high effective interest rates and have short repayment terms. Because small dollar loans require no collateral, you don't risk having your vehicle repossessed, as you might if you fall behind on a *title* loan.

By last fall, banks operating about 23 percent of all branches in the United States were offering these loans: Bank of America (BofA), Huntington, Regions, Truist, U.S. Bank, and Wells Fargo.

Small dollar loans, typically available only to the banks' current customers, have a straightforward

application process. Approvals and funding can happen almost immediately. Terms and requirements vary by bank. To get a loan through Bank of America's Balance Assist, for example, you need to have a qualifying checking account at BofA that's been open for at least a year (two and a half years if you don't have a credit score), maintain a positive balance in all your BofA checking accounts, and make regular monthly deposits in your account.

For a U.S. Bank Simple Loan, you need to have a personal checking account open for at least six months, with three months of recurring direct deposits. In both cases, the bank will check your credit. The application is on the bank's website and its mobile banking app.

Most small dollar loans come with a specific repayment schedule – three to four monthly payments in equal installments, with the first payment due 30 days after the money lands in your account. Repayments are deducted from the account where the funds were originally deposited. A small dol-

lar loan has to be paid off completely before you can take out a new loan.

Make sure you understand the terms and obligations of repayment such as fees, interest rate, minimum payment, and deadline for paying off the loan. The effective interest rate can vary based on the bank you use and the size of the loan. Late repayment or failure to repay may negatively affect your credit score and may reduce your chances of getting a small dollar loan from the same institution in the future. †

Kimberly Lankford, AARP Bulletin, September 2023, pp. 22-24.



Carylon Moss Editorial News Gathering Coordinator/Writer

A WORD FROM THE LORD

GOD HAS PLANS FOR US

Submitted by Elizabeth Diane Afriyie

"For I know the plans I have for you" declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV).

There is an old saying: "Man makes plans and God laughs at them." We can take comfort in knowing that God can take whatever is going on in our lives and work it out for our good. We can have hope and be comforted as long as we believe and trust in Him and live our lives according to His will. Look at Joseph, Jacob, or Esther and how God worked things out in their lives. He will also work them out for us. \$\P\$

NEWS AND NOTES

"OPENING THE DOOR IN 2024"

Submitted by Elores Stephens

new year signals a *new beginning*. A new year provides countless opportunities to meet and get to know different people within the congregation. We can expand our horizon of love and exhortation at GACC by *seeking* new friends, new acquaintances, and new opportunities for sharing the gospel. YAH members were asked to share one opportunity to expand their circle of influence.

Their responses are as follows:

Shirley White: I will try to come to second worship to get to know the other members.

Bobbie Cook: I try to talk to and get to know different members.

Joyce McMillan: I love spending time with my fellow saints, especially the YAH.

Bertha Love: Stay in prayer.

Elizabeth Diane Afriyie: I will engage more with those I do not know at church activities. I will also send cards and make calls to those listed in the bulletin.

Debra Henderson: God has given me opportunities to interact with youth and the benevolence ministry.

Dorothy Davis: I make sure I look for faces I have not seen and make my way to introduce myself whether they are members or visitors.

Patrick H. Worthey, Jr.: I will often stand in the foyer of the building and greet members as they enter and exit the building. It's a good time and method to see individuals you would not normally see.

Jim & Elaine Adams Change seats; also, have Saturday lunch at our house.

Yolanda Medina: I will introduce myself to a new person each Sunday, write down their names, and pray for specific individuals.

Linda Green: I will take time to send personal notes of encouragement to others.

Alison Woods: I will meet someone for lunch or coffee that I haven't met before.

Mary Christopher: I will value others no matter where they are on their spiritual or mental journey.

Bobbie Rivera: I will sit in different places and exchange names.

Mavis Larry: I will start conversations with people I don't know.

Isha Zeno: When I am engaged in conversation with someone, and a familiar brother or sister in Christ comes up and speaks to me, ignoring the other person, I will ask them to introduce themselves, thus including everyone.

Phyllis Morgan: I will seek opportunities for sharing.

Harold & Mildred Bell: We interact with others to promote love and lasting relationships.

Dolores Swint: I will make an effort to spread the good news to at least three different people a week and follow through with them through conversations about our Lord.

Deborah Lewis: Look forward to opportunities.

Marilyn Caples: I will send cards/notes of encouragement and introduce myself to people that I do not know.

Finally, as the one who presented this challenge, I, **Elores Stephens**, RESOLVE that from time-to-time, I will sit in a different area of the auditorium during worship.

Now, what will **YOU** do? The challenge is *yours*!!!₽



Elores Stephens Publications Coordinator/ Writer

A NOTE FROM OUR ELDER

A NEW MODEL OF SENIORS MINISTRY

By Fred Green

hat a wonderful God we serve! We are so grateful for all of **His** mercy and kindness He has shown to us. This past year of 2023 has been filled with many challenges for some of us, but then, every year has its challenges, and God has been faithful to bring us through.

I am excited as we approach the New Year with a vision and plan to address the demographic changes in our fellowship. Americans over the age of 65 are the fastest growing segment of the population. The population over 65 is increasing twice as fast as the population as a whole. This demographic is also seen in the Church. How does the Church address this change? How do we maximize the utilization of the senior segment of our congregation to the Glory of God, with recognition that every member of the body is important (I Corinthian 12: 2, 21-23)? We plan to address this challenge in 2024 with a new model for Seniors Ministry. The old model ministers "TO" seniors; the new model ministers "WITH" seniors. This new model will concentrate in three areas, called The 3 S's: 1) Social, 2) Service, 3) Spiritual.

As we roll out this new model of ministry, it is our hope that every *senior* (62+) will see themselves as an important part of the body and will commit themselves to participating with the Young-at-Heart. For those seniors who have participated and been a part of the YAH over the past 33 years, "Thank You for your participation and support!" We ask God's blessings upon the YAH and our entire congregation as we continue to Gain, Ground, Grow, and Glorify God in 2024. ₽



Fredrick E. Green, Elder YAH Leader

MIND EXERCISE SOLUTION (FROM PAGE 5)

- 1. Who said "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few"? Jesus; Matt 9:37
- 2. Which major feast coincided with the wheat harvest?

Pentecost; Ex 34:22 - Also called the Feast of Weeks as it occurred seven weeks after the Passover.

- 3. Why were the Israelites told not to gather the gleanings of the harvest? To provide for the poor; Lev 23:22
- 4. What was special about the harvest in the Sabbatical year?

There wasn't one; Lev 25:1-7 - The same was true of the Year of Jubilee.

5. In the parable of the tares in the field, the reapers?

The angels; Matt 13:39

6. Under the law, what was to be done with the firstfruits of the harvest?

Given to the Lord; Lev 23:10 - They were taken to the priests who made the offerings before the Lord.

- 7. Which prophet saw a "basket of summer fruit" signifying the end was near for Israel? Amos: *Amos 8:1-2*
- What was Jesus talking about when he said, "they neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns"?

Birds of the air: Matt 6:26

9. He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth what?

Shame: Proverbs 10:5

harvest is the end of the world, but who are the 10. Where was Jesus when he said "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields: for they are white already to harvest"?

> Samaria; John 4:35 - Jesus had met a woman at a well in Sychar of Samaria. Read John 4 for the full story.

MISSIONS MINISTRY

THE GREENVILLE AVENUE MISSIONS MINISTRY

succinct definition of Missions in the Bible is proclaiming the Gospel message outside of one's cultural location. In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus told His disciples, and commands the same of Christians today: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." In essence, the main purpose of the Missions Ministry is to send its members across cultural boundaries to teach others about Christ and His great commandment to love God and others. Its membership is to show love by treating others the way Christ would. There is their culture, our culture, and kingdom culture. The Missions Ministry focuses on kingdom culture.

The Greenville Avenue Church of Christ (GACC) has an excellent missions program. It is called Missions Ministry, which was founded, organized, developed, and actively implemented at the church from 1999-2023 by Ray and Mary Christopher. The present coordinator of the ministry is Cedric Stevenson, with Leila Stevenson as his assistant. Randy Clark is a leading member. The GACC elders highly support this program and expect its leaders and members to show non-judgmental love as they interact with the people of other cultures. The leaders are trained by the coordinators through class lectures, exposure, experience, and by example. The GACC curriculum includes evangelism, medical work, counseling, and various educational programs, such as workshops. Currently, the ministry works in Kenya, Uganda, Cameroon, Ghana, Bahamas, Jamaica, and Mexico. It is exploring other areas in South America for future missionary work.

Membership in the Missions Ministry is open to the GACC congregation. If you want to become involved in Missions, first, ask yourself if God has put the desire in your heart to be a witness for Him in faraway places. Be prayerful about it. Then, if the Spirit guides you to serve God through the Missions Ministry, WONDERFUL! Contact the Missions

Coordinator at <u>cedric.stevenson4@gmail.com</u> or call 214.985.6187. Both men, women, and the youth are invited to participate in this ministry. It especially needs more men. However, all will be welcomed with open arms!*



In Ghana Ray Christopher, Founder

GACC
Missions
Ministry
Across
Cultures



*Reference: Raymond and Mary Christopher, 11-08-23 Submitted by Dr. Mildred Bell



In Kenya
With Kenyans are Randy Clark (fourth from left) and Cedric Stevenson (second from right)



In the Bahamas
Greenville Avenue and Freeport Bahamas
Youth with Katrinka Quashie, wife of minister
Jason Quashie

and Sheryl Dudley

In the Bahamas (Left to right): Mary Christopher, Ray Christopher, Linda Holloway, Mildred Bell, Elizabeth Afriyie, Dorothy Davis, Angela Wrighten,

FALL QUARTER YOUNG-AT-HEART ACTIVITIES

Presentations during the Missions Ministry Weekend at GACC

Saturday and Sunday, September 23 & 24, 2023



Minister Lawrence Oduro and the Governor of Ghana, Bro. Ray Christopher, Sisters Oduro and Mary Christopher



Ray and Mary Christopher, Coordinators



Fred and Linda Green, YAH Leaders



The Christophers, Elders Raymond Hart, Fred Green, Otis Idlebird, and Jason Mosley

Visitation at Golden Acres Rehabilitation Center in Dallas

Worship and Blanket Distribution Sunday, November 12, 2023



GACC Members and Residents at the Rehab

Christmas Eve Visitation Sunday, December 24, 2023



Fred Green and Resident Lois Johnson



YAH and other GACC members



Fred Green and Resident Imogene Hill

Celebration for the Harts' 50th Wedding Anniversary Saturday, December 2, 2023



Raymond and Linda Hart



The Hart Family

YAH Celebrating the Annual Holiday Brunch Together at GACC Saturday, December 16, 2023

YAH Membership is **62**+ and its members are categorized into four groups by decades, in accordance with the chronological age of each:

60s - Swinging Sixties 70s - Super Seventies 80s - Elite Eighties 90s - Noble Nineties





YAH Swinging Sixties



YAH Super Seventies



YAH Elite Eighties



YAH Noble Nineties

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

We are most grateful to God and you for your love, support, and well-wishes during the past years. We are praying that God continues to bless all of us to be Spirit-filled, healthy, happy, and prosperous in 2024.

The GACC Newsletter Staff



Rebecca Tinner YAH Newsletter Photographer

YOUNG-at-HEART Newsletter

Founder: Elder Frederick Green, YAH Leader

Established: The YAH Newsletter was developed and named *The SENIOR INFORMANT* by the following original YAH Committee in 2014: Mildred Bell, Structure and Seal, Editor-in-Chief; Marilyn Caples, Secretary, Assistant Editor-in-Chief; Quint Hopkins, News Gathering Coordinator, Janice Swanson, Assistant; Margaret Johnson, Communications Coordinator; and Elores Stephens, Publications Coordinator, Elizabeth Afriyie, Assistant

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The purpose of **The Senior Informant** is to keep the YAH members and other GACC members informed of the general YAH activities. It will be mailed to all active YAH members and the GACC leadership on the Tuesday prior to the second Sunday of that month for each issue, and manually distributed to the Greenville Avenue congregation on the second Sunday of that month.

The SENIOR INFORMANT is published three times per year, accordingly:

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