



Messenger

SOUTHEAST ASIA UNION

MITA (P) No. 108-05-95

October - December 1995



I N S I D E

Dealing With Prejudice	2
SAUM Constituency Session	3
The Night Rainbow	9

“Money Talks, OJ Walks” the headline cried!

A trial that dominated the attention of a nation for a record nine months ended surprisingly abruptly, prompting suggestions that the jury danced to the racial tune the defence played.

Americans were clearly divided on their opinions of the guilt of football legend Orenthal J. Simpson. Polls showed that the vast majority of blacks believed that the verdict was just, while the majority of whites disagreed with the decision of the predominantly black jury.

Was OJ guilty as charged? Not according to the jury and not according to the law. Was the verdict fair? In my opinion, yes. Was the jury completely without bias? I don't think so.

Incongruous? Let me explain.

Humans, being human, have feelings and opinions and beliefs. Based on these, impressions are formed. These impressions, sometimes have no relation whatsoever to fact.

Once it was revealed that OJ had, on previous occasions, hit his wife, many started to believe that he had killed her. The reasoning was that if he was capable of beating her, he was capable of murder. Does a history of battery make one guilty of murder? No. However, our views of his guilt were prejudiced by our opinions about marital violence.

Another example—Nathaniel, when he heard that Jesus was from Nazareth, responded by asking if anything good

could come from Nazareth (*John 1:46*). Prejudice at work? Definitely! His biases told him that Nazareth just was not the sort of place to produce a messiah. Nevertheless, Nathaniel did not let this prejudice stop him from going to the Saviour. Had he discriminated against Jesus because of his ties with Nazareth, Nathaniel would have done so at his own loss. Thankfully, he was able to make the right decision in spite of his opinion about Nazareth.

Prejudice

by Sophie Lee

Prejudice is not equal to discrimination. The first step in dealing with our prejudices and biases is to recognize that we, as humans, are not emotionless machines. Admitting our prejudices and being aware of them will, perhaps, help us in making a conscious effort to reach decisions without letting these prejudices make those decisions for us.

Prejudice exists even in the church. Paul said that in Christ there is no Greek nor Jew, slave or free person, male nor female (*Galatians 3:28*). However, this is not a reality today. The church is not perfect. While we are still in that process of being changed into Christ's likeness, we still have flaws, and prejudice is a very real part of life.

If you ask me, the decision at the last General Conference session regarding the ordination of women was certainly affected by the biases of many of the delegates. That is only one example of how prejudice has led to discrimination with the church. Youth, alternate worship styles, certain independent ministries, women, AIDS victims—amongst others—have at one time or another been discriminated against.

All of us have prejudices and biases, but we do not have to discriminate. It may not be easy, but by making conscious effort, we can strive to be as fair as possible in spite of our prejudices. ☺

Sophie Lee is a pseudonym.

Views expressed above do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the SDA Church.

In Brief...



APD RELOCATES. The Asia-Pacific Division has made a temporary move from the familiar compound on Thomson Road to SunTec City, a brand-new convention centre located in the middle of Singapore's central business district. "Over the years, the office building and staff housing have been deteriorating beyond the feasibility of repair," said P. D. Chun, APD president in a recent *Outlook* report. A contract was negotiated with a developer that provided for a new Division office building, elementary school and housing. A percentage of the sale also provided cash needed for special soul-winning opportunities. The new APD offices on Thomson Road are expected to be completed by January 1998. ☺ —*Outlook*, 8.95

FALLING TREE DEMONSTRATES GOD'S POWER. A few years ago, local Kwaio villagers on the Solomon Islands killed an Adventist missionary—so resistant were they to the Gospel. However, a recent event has changed their minds. While the villagers were observing workers cutting trees to make a landing strip for Atoifi Adventist Hospital, a small child ran into the path of a falling tree. Hospital chaplain Baxton cried out, "Lord, save him!" The tree stopped its crashing descent mid-air long enough for the chaplain to run over and pull the child to safety. Then the tree continued its fall, crushing everything in its path. The Kwaio tribe was so moved by this display of God's power that they have chosen to renounce heathenism. ☺ —*From the GC President*, 10.95

about the cover:

This Vietnamese woman and her family benefit from ADRA's cow bank scheme. See report on pages 13-14.

SAUM's 22nd Constituency Session

by R. D. Riches

SAUM recently conducted its 22nd Constituency Session from November 12-14, 1995 in Singapore. The motto of the Session: Challenge 2000.

Ninety-one delegates registered and were present for the opening Session. The 26 members of the Nominating Committee met for two days under the chairmanship of P. D. Chun, president of the Asia-Pacific Division. Members of the Plans Committee heard departmental and institutional reports, and participated in discussions on the crucial issues that at times arose from them. George Johnson, ministerial secretary of the APD, was chair. Union departmental directors and Mission officers were appointed during the Session for a further term in office. Directions were set for the coming five years.

◆ Report Highlights

- From 1991 to the present, membership of the Union increased by 10.6%, and now stands at 56,535. This percentage increase was negatively affected by a dropping of 2,278 from the refugee camp membership after the camps were closed in 1993. Baptisms totalled 8,462.
- Cambodia has experienced explosive growth—from just nine in 1992 to over 1,400 today.
- 581 people have been baptized in Vietnam in the past eighteen months. Hundreds more have requested to join the church!
- In Laos, members from north of Vientiane have been recontacted after living in isolation for the past 35 years. The Church is still recognized by the government because of the faithfulness of our few members in continuing to worship every Sabbath despite suppression and threats.
- Youth make up 75% of Union membership.
- Global Mission projects since 1991 have resulted in the penetration of 30 previously unentered areas, and the baptism of 1,600 persons.
- Both Thailand and Cambodia reported the baptism of whole non-SDA congregations.
- The largest single baptism during the past four years was in Sabah in 1992. There were 361 candidates. (See page 7)
- 2004 persons are employed by the Church in SAUM, 58% of whom work in medical institutions. 173 pastors lead our members in their church life.
- Tithe receipts to SAUM have increased by 26.3% during the past four years, while salary expense has decreased by 16.7%. Appropriations from the General Conference to the Union have decreased by 46.5% since 1991.
- Four missions are on course to achieve Conference status by the year 2000.
- Since 1991 ADRA has managed 72 development projects throughout SAUM, with a total value of US\$4.4 million. US\$2 million of that amount were for projects in Vietnam.
- Since 1990 there have been dramatic increases in the output of Mission Health Foods, Bangkok, with revenue increasing from *Bht* 7 million to *Bht* 75 million in the space of just four years.
- The SAUM publishing programme has been reorganized. Southeast Asia Publishing House remains as the premier publishing house for the Union. However, all printing of literature for LEs will be printed by the Thailand Publishing House, at much cheaper rates. This will free finances for the production of a greater variety of literature. Regional publishing directors and assistant directors will now work under the supervision of the Union publishing director. Johnny Rueh remains as manager of TPH and Peter Wong has been newly elected as manager of SAPH.
- Mission College currently has 175 students enrolled. Southeast Asia Union College has 151.
- Both Bangkok Adventist Hospital and Penang Adventist Hospital are presently involved in large-scale renovation and rebuilding programmes. Both institutions continue to give good witness to the Church in their areas. Phuket Hospital opened a new private wing in 1994.☺

R. D. Riches is the president of SAUM.

CHURCH BUILDING PROJECTS.

November 4, 1995 saw the opening of a brand new church in Svay Rolom village. On hand for the occasion was Garwin McNeilus, a major contributor to the church-building project in Cambodia.

Despite serious setbacks, including the return of the building supervisor to his homeland because of failing health, Cambodia is moving ahead with its project of constructing churches for its rapidly growing congregations. "An unexpected and very generous offering from Global Mission has provided enough funds to build an expected 65 churches in Cambodia," says CAM director Daniel Walter.

Cambodia church membership has grown from less than 10 three years ago to over 1,400 today, making it one of the fastest growing in the world. ☸

FIRST YOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING HELD.

The Cambodia Attached District held its first Youth Leadership Training at their headquarters in Phnom Penh from August 6-10, 1995. According to Van Thorn Nhem, youth director, the training was undoubtedly "a success." Over 40 youth attended. The teaching team, consisting of Lim Pheng, Mark Schwisow, Ben Davis, Hang Dara, Cheryl Quillin and Van Thorn Nhem presented topics on primary health care, first aid, music, and outdoor living.

"The youth are looking forward to having more Pathfinder training and activities," continues Van Thorn Nhem. "Plans are already in place to conduct more training programmes early next year." ☸

Sunday Congregation Wants to Become Adventist

by Daniel Walter



For months a congregation of Sundaykeeping Christians in Snang village (pictured left) had been abandoned by their pastor. The leader did not know what to do. He did not want his flock to go back to Buddhism but he did not know where else to turn—except to God.

After many prayers, the leader chanced to meet Mong Nueng, an Adventist layman living 10 km away. The more the Sunday group leader learned from Mong, the more certain he was that God was answering his prayers.

On October 22, Elder M. Daniel Walter, director of the Cambodia Attached District, went to visit these new interests. To his delight the group leader made a formal request for his entire congregation to become Seventh-day Adventists! This is the third Sunday group this year to request to become Adventists in Cambodia. ☸



Lim Sokha, second from left, with three monks.

Bible Studies for Buddhist Monks

Lay pastor Lim Sokha of Pursat has found a new field of interest: he is presently studying the Bible with seven Buddhist monks!

This unusual interest began when one monk, after studying the Bible with Lim Sokha, introduced him to another monk, and another monk, and so on. Others were attracted, and

now there are seven seriously studying the Bible.

When an older monk who studied with Lim returned to his *wat* (temple), the other monks rejected him because he had been associating with a Christian, and he was expelled. The old monk returned to his home, and passed away soon after from neglect. He died, however, with a changed heart. ☸

First SDA School in Cambodia

On November 3, 1995, the Cambodia Attached District officially opened its first school. The Cambodian Adventist Primary School is presently offering only the first and second grades and has 35 students enrolled. Officiating at the ceremony were Michael Ryan, director of Global Mission at the General Conference, M. Daniel Walter, director of the Cambodia Attached District, and representatives from the Education and Religion Ministries of the Cambodian government.

Classes began on September 28 with Mrs. Im Sambath as both school principal and second grade teacher. Assisting her are Mrs. Puth Sovanna, a former government school teacher who will be teaching the first grade, Ms. So Ran, a part-time worker, and Ms. Margot Duroe, a student at Southeast Asia Union College serving as youth volunteer.

Says Daniel Walter, "Cambodia is just recovering from civil wars and a total destruction of the entire educational system. The Government's new system includes mandatory Sabbath classes, except in private schools. The only way young Adventists can even hope of gaining an education without breaking the Fourth Commandment is for the church to develop an educational system in which they may study."

The curriculum currently includes all required courses from the Ministry of Education, as well as Bible and English. The school is fully recognized by the Cambodian Education Ministry. ☞



Michael Ryan cuts the ribbon opening the first SDA primary school in Cambodia.

PAH Opens Diabetic Centre

by Pang Chu Yen

On October 19, 1995 Penang Adventist Hospital opened its Diabetic Education Centre. The Centre's goal is to provide educational resources to assist and instruct diabetics in the area. The opening was officiated by YB Datuk M. Mahalingam on behalf of the Minister of Health of Malaysia, YB Datuk Chua Jui Meng.

As 30% of the total in-patient load at PAH has either diabetes or some related disease, the need for the centre is especially great. It will serve both NIDDM (Non-Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus) and IDDM (Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus) and gestational diabetes (pregnant diabetes). ☞

Dr. Pang Chu Yen is a preventive medicine specialist at PAH.

OTHER NEWS

PATHFINDER CLUBS FORMED. Two new pathfinder clubs were formed recently as the result of Net 95, a special long-term soul-winning project organized by the Youth Department of the Peninsular Malaysia Mission. The clubs were formed in previously unentered areas of Sungai Buloh, Selangor, and Teluk Intan, Perak. The Gideon Pathfinder Club under the leadership of Jacob John currently has 70 non-Adventist members aged 13-18. The Trinity Pathfinder Club, led by John Yeliah and assisted by Daniel Jacob, has 40 members, also non-Adventist and aged between 13-16. At the moment 16 of these youth are undergoing intensive Bible studies. ☞ *By David Kumar, youth director, PEM.*

87-YEAR-OLD BAPTIZED. An 87-year-old man and his granddaughter were recently baptized in Ipoh after a series of revival meetings. Both Mr. Frances and Miss Salina, 15, had studied Voice of Prophecy lessons with district pastor Sam Govindasamy. ☞ *By Samuel Money, VOP director, SAUM.*

SABBATH SCHOOL SEMINAR. A Sabbath School seminar was held at the Teluk Intan church in Perak on September 29 and 30. Organized by Pastor V. N. Joseph, PEM Sabbath School director, and Pastor T. John, pastor of Teluk Intan, the meetings covered topics on Sabbath School programme improvement, Sabbath School Action Units and teaching techniques. The potential for winning souls was evident from the looks and attitude of the church members. Attendance was good and response was encouraging. ☞ *By Edmund Siagian, CM associate, Sabbath School, SAUM.*

Moningkam

by Daniel Bagah

Moningkam was the last person to be baptized that Sabbath morning at Bambang Village.† In fact, he made the decision to be baptized during the Sabbath School service that same day! A fitting climax after years of wandering in heathenism, Moningkam, true to his name (literally meaning *morning [has] come*), finally overcame the darkness in his life.

Moningkam had been attending church services conducted by a Christian church in the cool mountain village of Bambang for several years. However, he became doubtful of the authenticity of the church's beliefs when he realized that the members took part in some questionable practices, which included dancing and drinking. On one particular night while the members were singing and dancing in the church he asked his mother, a *bomoh*, to 'check' the church's standing with the devil. He was shocked when his mother told him that the church was approved by the devil! Right then he vowed never to return to that church again and to continue to search for peace and God.

One day he met Supin, a bulldozer operator working on the building of a road through Bambang. Moningkam related to Supin his experiences. During the short time they were together, Supin, an Adventist, took time to tell him of the love of Jesus and about his own church and beliefs. When the road building work was complete, Supin left to return to Kota Marudu, not fully realizing that through his witnessing, a seed of truth had been sown.

Throughout the next several years, laypersons Malakin Luntas, Mosirih Sungkat and Mikin Gulong visited Bambang periodically, befriending the villagers and telling them about the love of Jesus. When Mikin Gulong decided to open some land near Bambang for farming, he stayed in one of the huts in the village and held religious nightly meetings. The beautiful Christian songs and simple messages he presented made plain the plan of salvation to children and adults alike. He also taught the villagers to read and write.

On July 22 Moningkam and 18 others were baptized in the beautiful Pongopuyan River. They are the first Adventists in Bambang. For Moningkam, his search for God had ended. Yet living the Christian life will continue to be a struggle for



Mission president Mansor Gingging (centre), with newly-baptized Moningkam (right) and Borikus.

him and his fellow Adventists. They will be living amidst heathenism, betel-nut chewers and home-made spirit drinkers. Please remember this small group of believers in your prayers.✠

bomoh - witchdoctor

†Bambang, at 4000 ft, is nestled in a small valley about 45 km from the nearest town. It is accessible only by four-wheel drives and big trucks. A small chapel was recently built with help and funds from Walla Walla College. However, funds for a lamb shelter and school building are still being sought. Almost everyone is illiterate and the nearest school is a four-hour walk away.

Daniel Bagah is the youth and communications director of the Sabah Mission.

Sabah Primary Schools Evaluated

Evaluations were completed in five primary schools in Sabah from September 3-8 this year. All schools received good ratings. The team, consisting of five educators, completed evaluations in Goshen, Damai, Tagaroh, Sungoi and Tambarulan. Said Edmund Siagian, SAUM education director who was part of the evaluation team, "The force behind this accomplishment is Nelton Bingku [Sabah Mission's education director]. He is going all out to improve the image of the church schools and to promote Adventist education to the members."

The completion of these observations marks the end of a series of elementary and secondary school evaluations for the Union territory during the current quinquennium. The rural settings and location of most of the schools deprive them of the modern facilities and equipment available to other schools; however, "the general assessment was good," concluded Dr. Siagian. ☒

State Government Makes Large Donation To School

Sabah Minister of Youth, Culture and Sports, Wilfred Bumburing, recently presented a RM\$100,000 cheque to Dr. Libin Rampasan, chair of the Sabah Training Primary School Board, on behalf of the state government. The donated fund will be used to build another three classrooms on the grounds of the primary school, located on the same campus as Sabah Adventist Secondary School. According to Thurup Kula, former STPS principal, another RM\$7,000 has since been approved by the minister. This donation will be used for the purchase of a computer and other audio-visual equipment.

STPS currently has 161 pupils from kindergarten to Primary Six. It is staffed by five teachers. ☒

Over 500 Baptized!

At the close of a recent evangelistic effort at Goshen, a record 554 souls were baptized—442 on 25 November at a mass baptism in the Bandau River, and 132 others during the meetings. Several more are taking Bible studies. The mass baptism involved 20 pastors, including the evangelist Jack Dubosque from the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference, James Thurmon and Tony Torres, also from the KTC, and Sabah Mission president Mansor Ginging.

Dubosque also conducted an evangelistic field school attended by pastors and LEs. A fully staffed clinic led by doctor Tony Torres attended to more than 3,000 patients beginning October 29—the clinic had to stop when the pharmacy ran out of drugs! The clinic, with two attending doctors, several RN's and aides, provided health education, minor surgery, outpatient treatments, checkups, and dental work.

The meetings involved pastors from Sabah, Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore and Sarawak. Says Daniel Bagah, communications director, "John Duroe and James Thurmon were instrumental in making the meetings and field school a reality." John Duroe is ministerial secretary at SAUM and James Thurmon was president of Sabah Mission from 1974-1980.

Average nightly attendance was 1,962. However, on 24 November, the recorded attendance was 2,562 and the next day, Sabbath, over 3,000 came, from as far south as Keningau and Papar. ☒

Women's Ministry Holds Cooking Demonstration

Fifty-five ladies from seven Adventist churches in Singapore gathered at the Southeast Asia Union College cafeteria on October 29 for a demonstration in healthy cooking. As a result, five non-Adventist ladies decided to become vegetarians and are now learning more about Jesus. The programme was led by Dorothy Massengill, an instructor in the English Department at SAUC. Organized by the Women's Ministry of the Singapore Mission, all dishes demonstrated were vegetarian, both Western and Asian. Healthful tips were also presented.

Leading out were Brenda Flemmer, Carol Ryan, Peggy Gupta, Millie Thorman, Dottie Massengill, Lamorna Riches, Sharron Ford, Irene Duroe, Maria Banyie and Sheila Fanwar. Many of those who participated requested the Women's Ministry to continue such demonstrations and suggested that each church hold cooking and health classes at the various community centres in Singapore so that more people in the community may be reached. ☒

Festival of Praise Receives Positive Response

Witnessing Through Music was the theme of the Festival of Praise meeting conducted at Ayer Manis School on August 4.

Edmund Dais, a church member from the Kuching English Church, spoke on the importance of music in church worship, and Edmund Liah, mission president, portrayed a similar praise festival to be conducted in heaven around the throne of God.

The Festival of Praise is an annual event of the Sarawak Mission. Among its objectives are to encourage churches to form singing groups to enrich their worship services, to use songs for witnessing, and to help church members value Christian songs and music.

Fifteen singing groups from the Kuching and Serian churches provided the music and many personal testimonies were heard. Among them was one by Jobi Asong, a headmaster of a government school in a remote village:

He and a group of teachers were on a two-hour walk to Bengoh Station. Suddenly a snake appeared in the middle of their path—it was about one foot in circumference, and was ready to strike. They moved around to try to distract the snake, throwing sticks and stones but with little success. The snake did not move. Then it happened. A loud crackling sound was heard and a huge dead branch fell on the spot they had been standing on just a few seconds before. "If God hadn't sent the snake to distract us we would have been dead men," concluded Jobi Asong thankfully. ☞

Training at Tatau

by Lawrence Randig

About 30 men and women attended a weekend village lay preacher's training at Nanga Kelam SDA Church in Tatau on July 20 and 21. Participants came from Bintulu and along the Tatau River.

The training, conducted by Edmund Liah, mission president, emphasized the giving of Bible studies. "Interests should be made to understand every point," he emphasized, "and they must be given the opportunity to accept the truth."

One lay preacher enthused after the training was over, "I have one particular village in mind as my Global Mission project." By God's grace we pray that he will be successful. ☞

Lawrence Randig is communications director of the Sarawak Mission.

PREACH Seminar Brings Different Faiths Together

The Ministerial Association of the Sarawak Mission recently organized a one-day PREACH seminar and invited leaders of other denominations to attend. Pastors of the Sarawak Mission together with religious leaders from the Roman Catholic Mission, the Anglican Mission, the Methodist Mission and the Borneo Evangelical Mission met to hear Dr. Abdulmajid Abdulmusin and Dr. Simon Tomarare from the Asia-Pacific Division speak on stress and lifestyle related themes.

At lunchtime, both speakers were given a chance to elaborate even more on their chosen diet over a vegetarian meal. Discussion swayed from the advantages of being vegetarian to spiritual life. ☞



Participants of the lay training at Tatau.

The Rainbow in the Night

by Samuel Money

In October, James Sagit, pastor in the Tatau-Bintulu Area, and I held a Daniel and Revelation seminar in Pasir Nangka. About 150 people attended. However, a strange occurrence happened at 9:15 on a Wednesday night.

We were in the middle of the series when suddenly there was a loud explosion. The lights went out and people who were listening to us jumped up and scattered in fear. Pastor Sagit and I were very confused. At the time, there were conflicting reports about the explosion. A witch doctor thought that the spirits were angry because of our meetings. Others said it was a bomb threat to stop the meetings. Still others explained that a TV set had probably exploded. Soon kerosene lights were brought to us. We called the people back from their houses so that we could continue our meetings. Half an hour later we learned that lightning had struck the coconut tree in front of our meeting hall. A generator in the shelter below the tree had been damaged. What was strange, however, was the fact that at the time of the explosion, it had neither been raining nor had there been strong winds. I could hardly believe that lightning could strike at a time when the weather was so calm and cool.

At the same time, many of the other villagers were cooking a newly killed deer in the kitchen of the longhouse. They were the first people to see the rainbow, brightly lit and beautiful set against the dark sky. Later, others at the meeting told me that they had also seen this rainbow and that it had appeared between 9:15 and 9:30. The rainbow had stood in full colour for 15 minutes.

The night before I had spoken on God's promises and covered the prophecies of Revelation 10. The villagers who saw the rainbow now said they believed that God would keep His promises and would not fail them. They continue to believe that God is able to control the circumstances in nature and will keep His promises to shield His people from danger. At the close of the series three adults were baptized. ☞

BLIND WOMAN HEALED: In September, Pastor R. D. Riches, SAUM president, and a group of visitors from the USA visited Pasir Nangka. During the visit a blind woman was brought to Pastor Riches. Pastor Riches prayed for her and the group left soon after to visit other areas. As the blind woman walked home, she felt a cooling sensation in her eyes. Soon after, she received her full eyesight! When I arrived at Pasir Nangka a month later, I discovered that this miracle had prepared the way for the people to attend my seminar. God's Spirit is indeed working in this vast mission field—*Samuel Money, Personal Ministries director*

Family Unharmed in Near-Fatal Crash

by Lawrence Randig

Pastor Joseph Sapok had come to Kuching with his wife to renew their identity cards as required by Malaysian law. Everything went smoothly and they headed home. With them was their daughter, Marla, her husband, and their three grandchildren. They had come along to make birth certificates for the children. It had been raining heavily that day and the rain made visibility poor. They were going up a steep, winding hill near Kampong Petag when everything happened quickly. As he was rounding a curve Pastor Joseph suddenly saw several figures directly in front of him. He swerved to avoid hitting them and in doing so, the station wagon plunged into a ravine 60 feet deep.

The car tumbled several times down the steep incline before hitting the bottom of the ravine. It landed on its back. The impact caused all four doors to open and the stunned passengers managed to crawl out of the car, hardly believing everyone was okay save for a few bruises. Although most of their important documents were burnt, there was no big explosion which was inconceivable under the circumstances.

The family managed to climb up the steep ravine and flag an oncoming vehicle to take them to the hospital. It is truly a miracle that the whole family is alive and well today and able to tell the story of Jesus' protecting power. ☞

New Believers

From the remote village of Sual comes this story:

MacRoy Aboi ak Timbang was an active layman of the Borneo Evangelical Church. One day, as he was studying the Bible, he discovered the seventh-day Sabbath. Curious to learn more, Aboi enrolled in several Bible courses. Finally, he came to the conclusion that Saturday was the true day of worship and decided to be baptized into the SDA Church. Being an influential man, Aboi caused quite a commotion over his change of religion in Sual. Just recently, he called SDA pastors to conduct 10 nights of religious meetings in his village. As a result of his discovery and faithfulness, four other families are now learning to become Adventists! Aboi's own wife and daughter were baptized in November. ☞ *by Stephen Agong.*

PKAH Opens Health Club

On September 21, 1995 Phuket Adventist Hospital's president Dr. Rapeepan Wangchumtong declared open the hospital's new health club, called the Mission Club.

Established by PKAH's health education department, the club has facilities for aerobic exercise and massage, and provides exercise equipment. The club is open to the staff of the hospital as well as the community. ☞ *by N. Korpil and S. Choomkong, marketing department.*

Adventists Exchange Worship Information With Buddhists

November 11 marked an unprecedented exchange between the Seventh-day Adventist church and the most distinguished Buddhist university in Bangkok. For the first time, six Adventist scholars and 50 Thai Adventist members met with university administrators and monks to exchange information on worship practices and values.

The Adventists—among them scholar Jon Dybdahl, and director of Buddhist Religious Study Centre Clifton Maberly—presented information about Christian practices such as baptism, communion, and the Sabbath. ☞

VOICE OF PROPHECY

by Samuel Money

ENROLLMENT. During the past three years, VOP received a total of 41,343 applications to enroll in courses. Of these, 8,221 were enrolled which is 19.88 % of the total number of applications received. Most applications come from our active literature evangelists and young people who have been involved in regular enrollment campaigns in their churches. Even though enrollment is small when compared to what it used to be in the early '60s, I am happy to report that the work of the VOP is still going strong in a silent way, reaching many hearts through our lessons.

GRADUATES. During the past three years 3,876 students graduated from VOP courses. As soon as students graduate from the Bible course, the VOP sends their names and particulars to our churches for follow-up work. These graduates are the best interests for our churches to visit. A total of 369 VOP students were baptized during the past three years.

Six new courses have recently been introduced. They are:

- Good Health
- Sex Education for Young People
- The Science of Prayer
- New Light of the World
- The Prophetic Truth
- The Science of Prayer (*English, Tamil*)

Samuel Money is the director of the Voice of Prophecy at SAUM.

PUBLISHING

by A. J. Oberholster

Since January 1995 more than 60 new literature evangelists have been trained in the Southeast Asia Union territory. This is the beginning of making our literature evangelists professional workers for God. We have seen a remarkable improvement in the sales of our publications this year. What is needed now is more and more—and more!—dedicated men and women answering God's call to become literature evangelists for Him. Join God's army in the literature ministry and enjoy the fellowship of angels, the presence of the Holy Spirit, the blessings of working full-time for the Lord and the joy of winning souls for heaven.

Literature evangelists in the Southeast Asia Union have reported the following results during the past five years:

LEs:	88
Sales:	\$3,543,000
Tracts:	322,000
VOP:	59,000
Prayers:	24,000
Bible Studies:	17,700
Baptisms:	393

Just imagine what would have happened if we had 888 literature evangelists! ☞

A. J. Oberholster is the publishing director of SAUM.

AWR Honors Founder

Adventist World Radio recently paid tribute to the lifetime achievements and vision of Voice of Prophecy founder H. M. S. Richards. This year marks the 65th anniversary of Richards' founding of the Voice of Prophecy. A Silver Trumpet Award was presented to Mrs. Mabel Richards during the August 23 meeting of the AMC Board. Said GC president Robert S. Folkenberg, "His shining faith and deep commitment were, and continue to be an inspiration to generations of Adventists."

At the ceremony, special note was given to Richards' dream of broadcasts for China which became the dream of other people and the church, and finally became a reality. Unfortunately, he died before AWR Asia went on the air, but his dream was fulfilled. ☞

NOTE: Bulgarian, Farsi, Punjabi, Pidgin English and Motu are some of the new languages to be added to the AWR international programme schedule.

Del Delker Recognized

The 1995 Charles Elliot Weniger Award for Excellence was given to Del Delker during worship services at the Loma Linda University Church on August 19. The Weniger Award honours persons whose life has been committed to excellence. Del Delker joined the Voice of Prophecy team in 1947. Her rich contralto voice has inspired hundreds of thousands, and she continues to sing on the broadcast and in public meetings. Thanks to

international phonetic characters, she has been able to sing in 15 languages of Europe, Asia, and Africa. ☞



Del Delker (right).

Reports by Eldyn Karr, public relations director for VOP International.

The following are excerpts of a letter recently received by Isaiah Duong, producer of the Vietnamese broadcast aired on AWR Asia. The writer sent this from a Hong Kong refugee camp.

Letter from a Listener

"We received your package recently. We thank God so much for His blessings. We know in our heart that God is with us always. We were in tears when we saw the precious Bible studies you sent us."

"As you know, the government and UN plan to close all refugee camps. But the prospect of going back to Vietnam is so terrible that no one wants to cooperate. The situation in the camp is getting darker and darker. No pastor is allowed to enter the camp. Food and other supplies have been reduced to the very least. We prayed and prayed to be guided by God and found the answer in His words, 'Submit to the government.' We—my family and 100 more families in the church—made the decision to follow the order to go back to Vietnam. We decided to trust and obey God, to walk by faith and not by sight. We were scheduled to fly on May 21, 1995. But there was a last minute postponement from Hanoi and we had to [wait] for the next order. While waiting, God's gifts came. We received the Bible, books and magazines from your radio programme. No word can express our thanks. You have given us new strength and reassured our faith in God. Literature is forbidden in refugee camps, but who can stop God from helping His children listen to His word?"

"We have a very old, small radio which has been hidden very carefully from the guards."

"We have a very old, small radio which has been hidden very carefully from the guards. Every day we gather at 11:00 p.m. ready for the nightly worship service. Pastor Duong is our teacher and our friend. [The programme] is spiritual food we cannot miss. Here is what we do to obtain this food. The camp guards are always on the chase of people who violate the rules. Many young people accept the punishment for the distraction they make in order to give us enough time to hide the radio and leave. Once, we got caught. But this guard was also a Christian, he understood what we were doing. Since then he has tried to protect us from the other guards so that we can listen to the programme every night. We are so grateful to our Father for the way He is taking care of us."

". . . Our lives have been so bad in the camp. . . We are going back with a small bag on the shoulder, nothing more. However, everyone is hopeful and in good spirits because in that bag is a fortune: a Bible and some books about God. What else do we need anyway..?" ☞

STORY: The Sinking Rig.

The heavy rains soaked Savuth and his co-workers as they wrestled to lift the drilling rig. It had sunk 30 meters and sand had caved in. The flood waters were rising quickly. Soon the rig would be completely submerged. They tried desperately to get it out, but to no avail. The other villagers stood by, waiting for directions. Though normally hot and sweaty, Savuth and his supervisors shivered with cold as the hours passed. The situation was fast becoming critical.

An engineer for ADRA Cambodia, Savuth had been helping to install wells in several villages. The people were desperate for water during the dry season and ADRA had come to their aid.

In the rain Savuth quietly slipped away and under a tree he bowed his head and prayed for wisdom. The villagers looked on questioningly. Returning he called for the block and tackle, and erected two large wooden poles with a huge steel cross-beam. Soon the bar snapped under the stress. He called for a stronger one. It too crumpled. Reluctantly, the villagers found a third, but again the pressure was too much. The rig had not budged an inch.

The rains continued. The cold reached Savuth's bones and his teeth chattered. The others were ready to go home, but not Savuth. Again he prayed that God would



Vietnamese children enjoying the water system made possible by ADRA.

give him some idea of how to get the rig out. The people began to joke, "Do you think God will lift it out for you?"

Then an idea came to him. Taking several long thin pipes, he pushed them thirty metres inside the drill. He called for the air pump and connected it to the pipes. Within minutes the drill was out! Savuth was elated. God had heard his plea. He and others went home rejoicing. Seeds of faith had been planted. ✠ *by Ruth Millar*

ADRA RESPONDS TO FLOODS. Beginning September 23, heavy rains and high tides caused the Mekong Delta in Vietnam to flood. ADRA Vietnam responded quickly by providing emergency provisions to the flood victims. Packages of noodles, milk and blankets were distributed. According to the Public Security News, water rose up to 4.27 metres in the province of An Giang. As a result 55,307 houses were under water and several were destroyed. It left over 62,000 people hungry and waiting for help. ✠

GRAVITY WATER SYSTEMS COMPLETED IN SABAH.

Two gravity water systems were recently constructed in the remote villages of Bambangan and Tungab in Sabah. Up to 500 people are benefitting directly from these projects. In June and July, 15 college volunteers from Walla Walla College along with a special task force from Sabah Adventist Secondary School (SASS) came together to help build the water system and a small church in Bambangan (see also story on page 6). Funds came from ADRA Canada. At Tungab, the villagers were assisted again by the SASS group, with funds provided by ADRA South Pacific in Australia. ✠



Savuth is the ADRA well project manager in Cambodia. He and his wife plan to be baptized "as soon as it can be arranged."

southeast asia
ADRAnews

ADRAnews, cont.

VIETNAMESE PROJECTS

EVALUATED. In September, an inspection was made of three ADRA projects in the Danang and Quang Ngai provinces of central Vietnam. Those involved were Dennis Tidwell, Paul Smart and Nguyen Kim Mai of ADRA Vietnam, and R. D. Riches from SAUM.

- In Dai Hoa, the team took part in the opening ceremonies of a **new health centre** funded through ADRA.

- Thirty miles to the west, taps were turned on to officially inaugurate a new **potable water system** to benefit a rural community of 4,000 residents. Pipes had been run four miles down the side of a mountain from a large holding tank above the village. Residents now enjoy a year-long continuous supply of fresh water.

- In the province of Quang Ngai the team visited a few of the beneficiaries of an ADRA-sponsored **cow bank scheme**. This project provided two cows for each of 170 poor families. The first two calves from the two cows are, in turn, to be given to other poor families. In time the whole community will thus own cows. All three projects were managed and supervised by Nguyen Kim Mai, assistant director for ADRA Vietnam. Since 1992 US\$2 million worth of projects have been completed in the country. ☞

Staff Retreat

by Ritha Maidom-Lampadan

The faculty and staff of Southeast Asia Union College attended a Faculty Retreat from September 3-5 at the NTUC Sentosa Beach Resort. Dr. Phoon Chek Yat, president of SAUC, said that the main objective of the retreat was relaxation. The college administration had organized the retreat in recognition of the hard work that the faculty and staff had done in supporting Christian education.

Vice-president Dr. Wong Yew Chong led two sessions on personal spiritual growth in which participants engaged in constructive discussion and shared with each other their spiritual journey. Similarly, talks by faculty members Pham Kow Seng and Wann Fanwar generated lively discussions.

The 50-hour retreat refreshed and physically reinvigorated the faculty enough to start the 4th Quarter. ☞

Ritha Maidom-Lampadan is an instructor in the English Department of SAUC.

Class of '95 Largest in 10 Years: SAUC Graduates 34

by Mark Wong

The weekend November 17-19, 1995 saw the largest number of graduates in the last decade proudly receiving their hard-earned diplomas. Thirty-four students completed degrees and diplomas in business, computer information systems, elementary education, Teaching English as a Second Language and Religion. Four students graduated with honours.

Rise Above Yourself was the theme chosen by the Class of '95. The speakers of the event included Dr. Wong Yew Chong, SAUC's vice-president, who challenged the graduates to "look upon the future as a world of opportunities rather than one of uncertainties," and Dr. Linda Koh, associate director for Women's Ministry at the Asia-Pacific Division, who in turn challenged the graduates to trust in God to propel them to greater heights. Dr. W. G. Nelson, president of Walla Walla College, addressed the graduates at the commencement service on Sunday.



Haris Mintu, graduate in religion, and Dr. Phoon Chek Yat, college president, exchange high fives.

As a parting gift the graduates presented the college with a cheque of S\$11,288.88. This sum will go into the Class of 1995 Scholarship Fund which will help needy students finance their studies here at SAUC. The first recipient of the Scholarship was Clarie Gura, a TESL major. ☞

Mark Wong is editor of *Contact*.

- The first thing you do when you are introduced to a woman is look at her ears.
- You are trying to follow the health message by being a vegetarian, but you go for seconds when dessert comes around!

You won't drink Coke
(or Pepsi),
but you can't pass up
that Snickers bar.

- You wear a Rolex watch but consider a wedding ring to be ostentatious.
- Your high school principal was an expert in female hemlines.

You define "lay activities"
as a Saturday afternoon
nap.

- You know 101 ways to prepare FriChik.
- You're a kid wondering if the earth will last long enough to get a girl or boyfriend.
- You couldn't wait until your parents said you were old enough to get some juice and crackers on Communion Sabbath!
- You deliberately look for work in hospitals because Sabbath work is "justified."
- When conversing with a priest you find yourself stammering "Fa..., Bro..., Pas..., I mean, Sir..."
- Your first date was to Vespers.

How pECuLiAr Are We?

How many of the following
"eccentricities" would you,
as an SDA, admit to?:

- Your first Bible is plastered full of teeny-tiny bits of paper that have Bible references printed on them that you cut out, licked, then glued during Juniors.

You went to banquets
instead of dances in
college.

- You wonder whether videotaping a programme on Sabbath and watching it on Sunday is a sin!
- You feel slightly uncomfortable saying Saturday instead of Sabbath because it's of pagan origin.
- You won't watch a movie until it's on video.
- You've ever gone on a nature hike on a Sabbath afternoon.
- The only word you'll say while someone else is praying is "Amen." (If even that.)

You know an
Uncle Arthur,
Uncle Dan,
Aunt Sue
and Aunt Carol.

- You understand the following terms: APD, SAUM, SAUC, ADRA, GC, NAD, R&H, VOP, AU, LLU, etc.
- You have forgotten that the food you eat is much less important than the food you share.
- You think you're the only one who has had these thoughts.
- You get sad reading some of these responses.

Potpourri

"He disliked emotion, not because he felt lightly, but because he felt deeply."

John Buchan

"I, too, have ropes around my neck, I have them to this day, pulling me this way and that, **east and west**, the nooses tightening, commanding, choose, choose... I buck, I snort, I whinny, I rear, I kick. Ropes, I do not choose between you. Lassoes, lariats, I choose neither of you and both. Do you hear? I refuse to choose."

*Salman Rushdie
in his book East, West, 1994*

"I don't know how to sing Black—and I don't know how to sing White either... Music is not a colour to me. It's an art."

Whitney Houston

"So live that you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip."

Will Rogers

Reality Check: 500 million people around the world are either homeless or living in unfit housing that is life-threatening.

*United Nations study
on living conditions in cities
(The Straits Times—7.11.95)*

"We stand by as children starve by the millions because we lack the will to eliminate hunger. Yet we have found the will to develop missiles capable of flying over the polar cap and landing within a few hundred feet of their target. This is not innovation. It is a profound distortion of humanity's purpose on earth."

*Mark Hatfield
(US Senator)*

"Let us love others and let God make them good."

A. Marilyn Bass

STATISTICALLY SPEAKING...

Excerpts from a recent survey conducted among SDA youth in the Asia-Pacific Division:

The Good News

Family life is happy:	74%
Parents are supportive:	81%
Read Bible daily:	56%
Pray daily:	83%
Attend worship service once a week:	86%
Have meaningful relationship with Christ:	83%
Participate in Sabbath School:	79%
Participate in worship service:	77%
Encourage friends to attend church regularly:	58%

The Bad News

Do not have assurance of salvation:	59%
Not sure if they will make it to heaven:	33%
Would not be ready:	6%
Believe SDA standards are somewhat unattainable:	54%
Believe SDA faith is legalistic:	64%
Agree with SDA position on:	
Drugs:	60%
Alcohol:	59%
Caffeinated drinks:	55%
Jewelry:	53%
Movies:	52%
Premarital sex:	57%
Worldly music:	49%

The study also reports, "...more SDA youth backslide from the church than church leaders care to admit... 39% of baptized SDA youth apostatize each year [which means] for every five young people baptized, two will eventually apostatize." Reasons given include lack of personal worship, lack of fellowship or involvement in church, non-Adventist friends/partner and Sabbath problems.

The 108-item research instrument was designed to measure the perceptions of 16-30 year-olds on spirituality, the local church, Adventist church standards, etc. Number of respondents: 6,908. Male: 48%. Single: 86%. Taken from *Adventist Youth in the Asia-Pacific, A Mixed Profile*, by G. T. Ng, *Journal of Adventist Ministry*, Winter/Spring '95.

THE STAFF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA UNION MISSION AND
Messenger WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL ITS READERS A
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.



IMPORTANT: Please remember to fill in the attached card to tell us if you want to remain on our mailing list. Your prompt reply is appreciated.

In The Kingdom of the Blind The One-Eyed are Kings

by Carl Freund

I sat in the dining hall of our rustic lodge at camp, my eyes concealed with patches and a sleeping mask. I was feeling the full impact of living in a kingdom of blindness. I sat there, waiting for my partner to whisk me

away and guide me through this new and terrifying environment. She would have to be my *king* for the duration. She started by feeding me. Then she helped me do my chores. She took me to the bathroom. She canoed with me. She rode horses with me. She drove the ski boat which tossed me to and fro and then she helped me off the boat and soothed my nerves. I revered her. She was my *king*.

Then, because she is sneaky mean, she led me into the lake.

I stepped awkwardly off the bank and plunged my right foot right into the water. Stumbling, I got my left foot in as well. I heard laughter in the background as I stood there sulking, worried about my white Nikes. As I tried to recover from my humiliation, I ran through the sequence of events. A split second before my foot had unknowingly splashed through the cold spring water I had a feeling that something might be amiss. I had time to pull back. But, I had nothing to worry about because I knew my *king*

had eyes and I was in the kingdom of the blind. Boy, was I wrong. I wasn't necessarily wrong for trusting her, but I was wrong for not trusting myself. My senses had told me it didn't feel right, and yet I allowed my *king* to lead me to a lake and to discomfort—all because I felt incapable and inadequate.

As Christians we are all in our own blind kingdom. As Christians we sometimes feel incapable of trusting our God unconditionally. As Christians we often look for "one-eyed's" to lead us to Christ. As Christians, by allowing these seemingly well-intended cyclops to guide us, we may end up in our own little lake with a mental discomfort far worse than soggy feet in well-worn Nikes.

Christ has given us a lot to guide us. We have the Holy Spirit always by our side—not necessarily physically, but as a sort of sense. Most important, we have the promise of the cross. Let's not make things like books, television, jobs, money, school, friends, or whatever, be one-eyed monsters to detract us from the senses God has given. In God's blind kingdom the one-eyed's are not kings because God has given a light for everyone to see. He has also given them the hearts to see it. All we have to do is use our good sense. ☪

Carl Freund teaches English at Valley Grande Academy in Texas, USA.

SOUTHEAST ASIA UNION MISSION

• Tel: (65) 284-7281 • Fax: (65) 284-7757

DIRECTORY

President, ADRA..... R. D. Riches
 Secretary, ASI, Stewardship/Trust..... Joshua W. Mok
 Treasurer..... Thomas J. Massengill
 Auditors..... Steven Goh, Eddie Heng
 Youth, Health & Temperance..... Lawrence Banyre
 Ministerial Secretary, Global Mission, PARL..... John Duroe
 VOP, Personal Ministry, Sabbath School..... Samuel Money
 Publishing, Spirit of Prophecy..... A. J. Oberholster
 Education, Communication..... Edmund Siagian
 Family & Children Ministries..... Dorothy Walter

Local Mission Directory

CAMBODIA. Box 488, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
 TEL: (855-23) 368082 FAX: (855-23) 428201.
 Director..... M. Daniel Walter
 Secretary..... Van Thorn Nhem
 Treasurer..... Rogelio Taer

PENINSULAR MALAYSIA. 166A Jalan Bukit Bintang, 55100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. TEL: 242-7795 FAX: 244-4600.
 President..... David Leoh
 Secretary..... Francis Lajinin
 Treasurer..... Lai Swee Chan

SABAH. Box 7, 89257 Tamparuli, Sabah, Malaysia.
 TEL: (088) 782-346 FAX: (088) 782-240.
 President..... Mansor Ginggong
 Secretary..... Nelver Silul
 Treasurer..... Lim See Him

SARAWAK. Box 41, 93700 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.
 TEL: (082) 242-340 FAX: (082) 242-343.
 President..... Edmund Liah
 Secretary..... Gilbert Tan
 Treasurer..... Clara Ho

SINGAPORE. 90 Jurong East St. 13, Singapore 609648.
 TEL: (65) 561-0022 FAX: (65) 562-4923.
 President..... Matthew Yuen
 Secretary..... Toh See Wei
 Treasurer..... John S. K. Ho

THAILAND. Box 11-234 Prakanong, Bangkok 10110, Thailand. TEL: (662) 391-0525 FAX: (662) 381-1424.
 President..... Rungsit Satayawalsakool
 Secretary..... Boonrat Moolkeo
 Treasurer..... Solomon Agdion

VIETNAM. 224 Phan Dang Luu, Phu Nhuan, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. TEL: (848) 440-179 FAX: (848) 447-602.
 Acting President..... Tran Cong Tan
 Secretary..... Tran Cong Tan
 Treasurer..... Duong Thuong

Institutional Directory

COLLEGES
 Mission College..... Siriporn Tantipoonvina
 Southeast Asia Union College..... Phoon Chek Yat

HEALTH FOOD
 Mission Health Food Company..... Kenneth Myers

HOSPITALS
 Bangkok Adventist Hospital..... T. Y. Billones
 Penang Adventist Hospital..... Ronald W. Brody
 Phuket Adventist Hospital..... Rapeepan Wangchumtong
 Youngberg Adventist Hospital..... Charles Loo

PUBLISHING HOUSES
 Southeast Asia Publishing House..... Peter Wong
 Thailand Publishing House..... Johnny Rueh

STAFF

Editor: C. Y. Wu
 Assistant Editor: Charmaine Siagan
 Circulation Manager: Wong Siew Fong

PUBLISHER: Joshua Mok

Printing by Thailand Publishing House

Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the Seventh-day Adventist Church. *Messenger* is produced quarterly by the Southeast Asia Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists. Letters, inquiries and manuscripts are welcome and should be directed to:

Messenger
 251 Upper Serangoon Road
 Singapore 347688