



Messenger

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Handling Our Witness

BY R. D. RICHES

My office had just been painted and there were new pictures on the wall and a new carpet on the floor. A potted plant decorated the desk in front of me. I needed six new chairs to complete the transformation. My wife and I visited several showrooms before finding what we wanted. Perfection! The colour was right and the design, though not old-fashioned, was contemporary enough. They were at the back of the shop behind a confusion of other furniture. A salesman approached and asked if he could help. When we pointed out the chairs to him he remarked, "Oh, those are expensive chairs. You wouldn't want *those*."

Now, that hurt! True, it was Friday afternoon and I was not wearing a tie, but my trousers were neatly pressed and my shoes were shining—and!—I had carefully combed my hair. Pulling myself up to my full height I said, "I am buying them for my office. I want six!" His attitude changed immediately and he walked eagerly away to get a sample chair for me to see. I, however, walked out of the shop in a high degree of

indignation! He lost a good sale and I am still searching for the right chairs! I never *did* find out how much they cost but would have bought them had they been twice the price!

A week or so later I read an advertisement for a special phone link, and made an appointment for someone to visit me. I was a salesman's dream! He did not have to persuade me to buy anything because I already wanted what he had to offer. Even before he entered my office I was convinced he was going to save me a great deal of money. On time for his appointment, he was nicely dressed in shirt and tie and was courteous and polite—in fact, everything a salesman should be, except for one thing: he couldn't have *given* a plate of noodles to a starving beggar! For twenty minutes he sat opposite me and

answered questions when I asked them. Apart from that he had nothing at all to say for himself or his product! I bought into the system because I wanted it and not because he sold it to me!

Those two experiences gave

me food for thought. We Christians are God's sales people. How well do we handle our witness? How effectively do we communicate our religious beliefs to others? With conviction and certainty? Do we speak, from experience, of hearing God's voice every day in His Word and of meeting Him in worship week by week? Do we show

courage and strength in the presence of personal tragedy? Is there a smile on our face and joy in our heart? Some of us volunteer little of our faith. We answer questions when asked, but that is all. We have forgotten how good

our "product" really is. For too many the Gospel has ceased to be good, joyful, news. We are no longer excited by it. People may join the church, but it will be in spite of us! There are all sorts of people in our personal world who would welcome our witness—especially if it bubbles over from personal experience. Invite them round for a chat, a shopping trip. Promise them good times at a small group meeting in your home.

Many Adventists today—some pastors included—feel that their belief system makes too high demands. It is too costly in terms of lifestyle and commitment: the Sabbath, tithing, and healthful living. Our attitudes say to others, *You won't want it. It's too expensive!* We rationalize that people are too poor to pay an honest

Our attitudes say to others, "You won't want it, it's too expensive!"

About
The
Cover

These are the headquarters for Adventists in Southeast Asia. 251 Upper Serangoon Road has been the location of Southeast Asia Union Mission since 1919.



tite, that in their circumstances God does not expect them to keep a good Sabbath. Why demand a change from people who have eaten certain items in their diet since childhood, and remain healthy and well?

Surprisingly, statistics show the fastest growing churches in the world today are the ones that make the most demands on their members by way of money, time, leadership, belief, witness, and lifestyle. **In the final analysis, the faith that really counts is the faith that costs.** We have a message that is attractive and compelling—even in its most demanding aspects. We should never be afraid of rejection because the price is too high. Salvation is cheap at any price!

How well do you handle your witness? ☒



R. D. Riches, right, at the recent Sabah Session. Translating for him is Pastor Felix Liew.

On page 465 of pop star Boy George's controversial new book *Boy Man*, he mentions "getting on well" with a Seventh-day Adventist missionary on a plane flight to Kathmandu. The missionary later brings him to a leper colony there. That "missionary" was R. D. Riches, currently president of

SAUM. Pastor Riches and his wife Lamorna served in the Southern Asia Division for over 25 years.

WE NEED YOUR ADDRESS! If you have not yet sent in the **Mailing List Update** form included in the last issue of *Messenger*, you still have until **May 15, 1996** to do so. We realized that it takes some of you longer to receive *Messenger*! *The Editors.*

CYBERWEDDING FOLLOWS CYBERPROPOSAL.

CompuServe's first live cyberwedding took place December 22, 1995 when Rachel Twing and Randal Terwillegar were married on the

SDAs Online Forum by Pastor Ralph Blodgett, sysop of the SDA Church's CompuServe forum. Rachel and Randy met in cyberspace, using computers and modems to connect electronically inside the SDA Forum allowing them to "talk" to one another. The on-line cyberwedding—their legal wedding—was followed the next morning by a second wedding at the Camelback SDA church in Arizona for local relatives and friends not on CompuServe. ☒

ANN

Editor's Note: SAUM's CompuServe number is 74532,3242.

GC RELEASES STATEMENT ON GLOBAL WARMING. Excerpt from a recently released statement from the General Conference Administrative Committee on Global Warming:

"Scientists warn that the gradual warming of the atmosphere as a result of human activity will have serious environmental consequences. The climate will change, resulting in more storms, more floods and more droughts... The Seventh-day Adventist Church requests that the governments concerned take steps necessary to avert the danger by fulfilling the agreement reached in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1992 Convention on Climate Change). By signing this statement SDAs declare their advocacy of a simple, wholesome lifestyle, where people do not step on the treadmill of unbridled consumerism and production of waste. They call for respect of creation, restraint in the use of the world's resources, reevaluation of our needs as individuals, and the joining with other religious organizations worldwide in encouraging governments to act responsibly in the stewardship of this Earth."

From the GC President, 5.2.96

OVER 2,500 BAPTIZED IN KENYA. Adventists in Nairobi, Kenya, recently worked together in a citywide evangelistic series that resulted in nearly 2,500 baptisms and the start of a new Adventist congregation. The *Amazing Discoveries* series featured Australian evangelists Anthony Kent and John Jeremic. Average nightly attendance totalled 10,000. ☒

Adventist Review, 15.2.96

FISHERMAN GETS CAUGHT UP IN BAPTISM. When setting up an outdoor baptism at a pond in Moscow, Russia, church pastor Vernon Putz noticed a man relaxing in a chair nearby, all ready for an afternoon's fishing. *He expects a quiet afternoon's fishing*, thought Pastor Putz as he made preparations for the baptism. In no time the place was crowded with people. Prayers were said and speeches given. But the fisherman was listening—fish forgotten. Pastor Putz made a call at the conclusion of the baptism for those who wanted to know the Lord to come forward. Up stepped the fisherman. He wanted to know where the church was and what he had to do to get baptized. ☒

Record, 20.1.96

News In Brief...

around the world

Prostitution, Violence, Drugs

BY COLIN RADFORD

occurred after their house burned down. One day, without her knowledge the restaurateur sold her to a policeman working in a prison. The policeman forced her to have sex but later returned her to the restaurant—he claimed she had not been a virgin and refused to pay the agreed fee of \$200. The abuse continued until finally devastated, devoid of personal esteem, and fearful for her life, she ran away.

Many types of child abuse problems in Cambodia have not been addressed as there are few laws and very few resources to enforce the laws it does have. Child prostitution and trafficking, abduction, exploitation, and physical abuse are all common. What can be done to address the crying injustice of these issues?

In 1990, an estimated 1,500 commercial sex workers operated in Phnom Penh. By 1992, with the arrival of the UNTAC forces, the number jumped to 20,000. Despite the withdrawal of the UNTAC forces in 1993, by late 1994 there were still up to 17,000 commercial sex workers in the city. Up to 65% of current prostitutes are non-Khmer women—either young Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese or Filipino women who are trafficked into Cambodia and become part of the revolving bonded labour brothel network which links a number of the major cities in the country.

More than 70% of the women surveyed were unhappy with their situation, 47% having been sold into the industry. Another 63% had been abused by clients or owners, while 13% said they were forced to live like animals. While the minimum age of prostitutes surveyed in 1992 was 18 years, by 1994 35% of those surveyed were under 18 years of age. Studies in 1995 showed that young girls aged 12-17 years comprise 31% of the sex workers in these areas. What can be done about this issue?

ISSUE 2. "How many people in this conference room know first-hand of situations involving domestic violence in Cambodia?" Almost 95% of the hands went up. Domestic

ISSUE 1. Choking back the tears the young 15-year-old girl trembled as she shared her story. Her stepmother had sold her to a Phnom Penh restaurant owner for US\$500 because of a severe debt problem that

violence is set to become a major focus in public health in the next 10 years. The most typical scenario is a husband who becomes physically, verbally, sexually, or psychologically abusive of his wife.

Alternatively, the abuse may be directed towards children or the elderly. Most people try to work out what the victim of the abused did in order to be beaten up and abused. However, the victim is hardly ever the cause of the abuse. The abusive person has a problem and is the cause of the violence. The abusive person doesn't beat up on their boss, their workmates, or the policeman when these people may cause them to get angry. Yet they beat up their spouse, children, or parents in a far less provocative situation. So who really is the one causing the problem, who is the one most in need of help, and how do we best deal with situations like this?

ISSUE 3. With drugs streaming via the Mekong River into Cambodia, the country is fast becoming an important transit shipment centre for drugs from the Golden Triangle to the USA and Europe. Cambodian anti-drugs authorities and security officials say they are overwhelmed by the volume of the trade. A recent bust yielded 71 kilograms of heroin in Sre Ambal with a street value in the US of \$15.6 million. While papers report the government has jailed at least one gang of international smugglers and proudly announced several large seizures of heroin in recent months, the chief of Cambodia's Anti-Drug Squad admits that hundreds of kilograms of illegal drugs pass through Cambodia every week. Local drug use is on the rise and heroin and cocaine are now available in Phnom Penh's night clubs and casinos. What can be done about this problem, and how can public health personnel help?

ISSUE 4. An estimated 25 million abortions are performed each year in the developing world, most as "backyard" procedures in unsafe conditions. In Cambodia, an alarming number of women die each year as a result of complications arising from illegal abortions. The Ministry of Health reports that some of these "backyard" abortions include hitting pregnant women with a wooden plank. Others go to unskilled midwives who practice the breakneck abortion method, locating the head and neck of the fetus within the pregnant woman, then violently twisting and breaking its neck. Still others encourage the women to drink two liters of strong white wine with papaya resin daily.

Despite their desire to limit the number of children they bear, more than 100 million married women in the



"The challenges are enormous!" writes Colin Radford, ADRA Cambodia's health programme coordinator.

developing countries do not have access to contraceptives. A recent Family Planning International Assistance (FPIA) study in Cambodia shows that the high number of abortions underscores the desperation many women find themselves in when they already have six or more children. They have no access to reliable family-planning services and supplies of modern contraceptives. Each year, more than 500,000 of these women will die of pregnancy-related causes. That means that every minute of the day, one woman dies of pregnancy or childbirth—almost 1,400 per day. What can public health professionals do about this problem?

These issues are just a small sampling from a week filled with more than 20 public health topics of current significance and importance in Cambodia. The seminar was held in the Ministry of Health conference room in October last year and was designed to provide exposure to a wide variety of current public health issues, problems and challenges. More than 40 independent resource people came to give presentations, sharing their own personal opinions and experience with regard to selected topics of particular significance to public health in Cambodia.

Ordinarily, these classes are only for the attendance of the 18 full-time Master of Public Health (MPH) degree students selected by the Ministry of Health. However, due to the nature of this course, the lectures were open to all government international organizations and non-government organization health workers who wished to attend the presentations. Each lecture averaged an attendance of 65 public health professionals. In addition, many Cambodian journalists attended, resulting in prominent articles in the papers.

Learning these issues will only truly become effective when these MPH students graduate [on March 28 this year] and begin doing something about these problems in their own work environment. ☞

Another Sunday Church Becomes Adventist^Δ

BY M. DANIEL WALTER

Over a year ago, having no trained leaders or affiliation with other church organizations, a group of 40 Christians regrouped and built themselves a small church in the town of Takayo, about 50 miles south of Phnom Penh. Somehow, they had managed to survive the Khmer Rouge purging.

Longing for Christian fellowship, the group began praying that God would help them find His true church. One day, someone told them about the Seventh-day Adventist church and for the next three months the group prayed God would help them find the Adventists.

One Friday, two of the members were walking down a street in Phnom Penh when they chanced to look up and saw the sign *Seventh-day Adventist Headquarters*. Immediately they entered and inquired if a representative could visit their group and study with them. The next day, the director and some staff went to visit this little group. Arrangements were then made for a lay Bible worker to move to their town and study with them.

More than satisfied with the direct Bible answers, solid doctrines and warm fellowship, the members of Takayo Church were baptized on December 16, 1995 as Seventh-day Adventists. ☞



Newly baptized Takayo church members.

community. They have built a small jungle chapel on a hill considered to be haunted! Whoever "haunted" the hill before has apparently moved away, and the witness of these dedicated Christians is bringing a growing interest to the religion that really works!

^Δ See also Oct-Dec 1995 issue of *Messenger*.

M. Daniel Walter is director of the Cambodia Attached District.

SPECIAL REPORT: Adventists in Bo Keow

Bo Keow is the most north-western province of Laos. It is part of the Golden Triangle, and borders on Thailand, Myanmar (Burma), and China. Adventist work began here in the adjoining Luang Namtha province in 1957. Soon there was a fledgling church among the Hmong and the Black Thai peoples. When the work was closed down by the Pathet Lao socialist forces in 1962, many of the church members fled westward toward Thailand. A community of Hmong Adventists established themselves near the Mae Khong River and built a church and a school. The community of faith continued to grow there and is now the only open Christian Church in the north of Laos.

From the beginning Christianity in Laos was identified with the enemies of the revolution. The Indo-China war was fought as a secret war by the USA, with ethnic minorities as their fifth column. Hmongs were the closest partners with the CIA in their battle against the increasingly powerful Pathet Lao. It was not surprising that the USA was seen as the enemy, and Christians as their "running dogs."

The Pathet Lao were radical Marxists. For them religion was the opiate of the people. At first all religion and superstition was suppressed. Later, the administration relented and permitted 'original beliefs,' and recently accepted Buddhism as 'ancient religion.' Only Buddhists are permitted to proselytize in the north.

In the early 80's our members were informed that their church would be taken over as a social and 'reeducation' centre for the youths of the district. The furniture was removed and transported to the army's headquarters 10 kilometres away. A dance was announced for the coming weekend.

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On Friday evening many young people in the district turned up for the event, dancing to blaring music until late, and eventually settling down on the floor to sleep out the rest of the night. At around midnight one of the sleepy revellers happened to glance to the front of the church. A transparent being materialized out of the curtains and stood, towering, at the front of the platform. The frightened youth woke others, and

they all saw the spectral being. Terrified, they leapt up and fled. The soldiers and youth hurried to the army camp, and carried all the furniture back to the church. "It has its owner," they said, "The church has its guardian spirit." The members met for church the next morning, as usual and have worshipped there ever since. It is the only church open in the six northern provinces of Laos, an anomaly. There is no doubt in the mind of our members that God wanted to keep it open.

While remaining open, however, it has not been without its difficulties. It has not had trained leadership for nearly 20 years! But work has expanded slowly. There are now believers in five villages. Recently, nine families in a distant village committed themselves to God, and abandoned the spirits that had dominated their lives.

The Lao PDR officially recognizes only five religions: Buddhism as the ancient faith, the Roman Catholics, the Evangelical Church of Laos, the Seventh-day Adventists, and the Ba'hai religion. Hundreds of other denominations would love to begin work there. But the government has declared there are only five approved 'indigenous' religions for now and the international religious community has been asked not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Lao religions. Local congregations are permitted to worship only in their churches.

Story continues on page 14...

Youth Camp Brings On 91 Baptisms

BY FRANCIS AMER

Youth throughout the southern region in Sarawak held a Voice of Youth camp in Kampung Simboh from November 20-25 last year. As a result of the camp, 91 youth were baptized.

Although it rained quite often, approximately 450 young people camped around the church compound. In an opening speech, YB Encik William Tanyuh, a representative from the government, said that he was happy to see Adventist young people having this kind of gathering whereby they are trained on how to be a useful person not only to the church, but to society as a whole.

Jesus is the Answer was the theme of the camp. The guest speaker was Pastor Houtman Sinaga from the West Indonesia Union Conference. Nightly attendance averaged 550-600.

The highlight of the camp took place on November 25 when the 91 youth were baptized. Many other young people showed an interest in baptism after witnessing their friends being baptized that day. ☺

Francis Amer is the new communications director of the Sarawak Mission. He is also in charge of Youth.



Camp leaders Lawrence Randig, Houtman Sinaga, Edmund Liah.

O T H E R n e w s

MIRI CHURCH HOLDS VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL. Miri Church conducted a Vacation Bible School during the year-end school holidays recently. The 21 children enrolled were divided into Cradle Roll, Kindergarten and Primary. Each student was able to repeat the days of creation from memory, and the happy children received certificates. "It was a wonderful experience to see the children enjoying every moment," says Deirdre Saul, a kindergarten teacher. ☺

SARAWAK PATHFINDERS REGISTERED AS CLUB. The Sarawak Pathfinder Club is now recognized as a registered club by the Registrar of Societies in Malaysia. With this recognition, the Pathfinder Club in Sarawak is able to inculcate its activities with the state government. ☺

Ayer Manis Establishes Endowment Fund

BY MATTHEW MAMBU

During the Ayer Manis School HomeComing 1995 held at the school auditorium on November 26, about 400 former students and teachers unanimously resolved to establish the Ayer Manis School Endowment Trust Fund (AMS-ETF).

Officially launched by YB Encik Frederick Bayoi Manggie (who has himself promised to grant RM\$8,000), the AMS-ETF is a common trust fund and shall remain as such as long as Ayer Manis School exists. The trust fund shall be invested in the money market and other viable projects. Only the proceeds from these investments shall be channelled to the school management for its operation and future development. Thus everyone is assured that their contribution will always be there—meaning he or she is a permanent supporter of the school and giving a feeling of satisfaction.

Among the objectives of the AMS-ETF are to utilize the proceeds for school operation, school development, staff upgrading and to support worthy needy students. ☺

- Those wishing to contribute to AMS-ETF should write to:

Ayer Manis School
Box 2
94700 Serian, Sarawak

Matthew Mambu is principal of the Ayer Manis School.

The SAUM Communications Department is looking for NEWS from YOU—the missions, educational institutions, medical institutions, churches and free-lance

wanted

writers— from all over the Union field. News and articles that are **inspiring, encouraging and uplifting** are especially solicited, as well as news regarding the Lord's work in your area or church. Wouldn't you like to read about what's happening in your own locality every time the *Messenger* comes out? Besides the *Messenger*, the news that you share with us may also get into the monthly Union newsletter, or *From the APD President* newsletter, or the Division *Outlook*. News that is of global interest may even find its way to the *Adventist Review*!

Below are the people to get into contact with—the local mission communication directors:

Cambodia
Peninsular Malaysia
Sabah
Sarawak
Singapore
Thailand
SAUM

Daniel Walter
 David Leoh
 James Lai
 Francis Amer
 Wann Fanwar
 Anucha Saeyong
 Edmund Siagian

NOTE: As a freelance writer you may send news and articles in to any level of church organization. However, please send a duplicate copy to the mission and union communication directors so that they will know what news has already been reported.

LE Convention Captures the Vision

BY A. J. OBERHOLSTER

With the theme *Capture the Vision*, January 24-28, 1996 will long be remembered by the 60 dedicated literature evangelists who met at Port Dickson for a most inspiring convention. Also present were SAUM officers and APD publishing directors.

The LEs in the Southeast Asia Union had a very successful year of soul-winning in 1995 as the following list shows:

Free Tracts Given Away	66,454
VOP Enrollments	13,105
Customers Attending Church	1,562
Prayer with People	9,479
Bible Studies by LE's	11,052
Customers Baptized	146

This is indeed a winning team—a soul-winning team! Several LEs reported winning souls for Christ. One LE reported winning 36 souls and another 76 souls! The LEs were then challenged by SAUM president Robin Riches and secretary Joshua Mok to capture the vision Ellen White had in 1848 to take God's message in printed form to millions in Southeast Asia.

We challenge you, dear reader, to capture the vision with us and to join God's team of literature evangelists today. ☩



L-R: Ann Wan Hee, Chian Fong Ying, Lim Gim Chew. These three LEs have a combined total of more than 100 years in the literature ministry. Wan Hee, 80, is the oldest active LE among the more than 7,000 LE's in the Division. He plans to work another five years.



Campers at Port Dickson.

Schools Raise Funds For Kidney Patients

During 1995, Singapore Mission's two secondary schools were involved in special fund raising efforts for the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) of Singapore. San Yu High School raised a total of S\$2,244 while the SDA School raised S\$2,054. For their efforts in this national project, both schools were awarded Bronze Plaques by the NKF.

The schools were also listed among the award winners in the NKF special publication *Lifeforce*. All educational institutions in Singapore participated in this country-wide drive. ☒

Christmas Cantata

Choir members from several churches in Singapore came together on November 11 and December 15 last year to present John W. Peterson's popular Christmas cantata *Born a King*. The special choir, organized by Pastor Wann Fanwar and the Music Ministry of the Singapore Mission, had practiced monthly since May. "The sounds were glorious!" exclaimed one churchgoer after the performance at SAUC Church. The cantata was a timely reminder of the birth of Jesus.

Both performances had a distinctly Indian flavour—the choir had chosen Punjabi suits as their uniform. ☒

Preparing for the Advent: SAM Holds Campmeeting

BY WANN M. FANWAR

From December 7-10, 1995 the Singapore Mission organized a campmeeting at the Golden Sands Baptist Assembly in Port Dickson. Over 130 campers responded. The theme: *Preparing for the Advent*.

There were eight presentations on the topic by guest speaker Douglas Martin, a volunteer missionary in South Australia. His talks were interspersed with discussion sessions and social fellowship programmes. Martin proved a most enjoyable speaker and kept most of his audience in perpetual laughter. He also conveyed some very frank messages and touched on sensitive issues. The general consensus among the campers was that they felt greatly blessed by his ministry.

Martin had previously served as a volunteer missionary for several years in Indonesia. He established such good rapport with the youth at the meeting that he has been invited to the Mission Youth Congress that will be held in December this year.

After such a successful campmeeting, the Mission eagerly anticipates its next campmeeting in 1997. ☒

All news supplied by Wann M. Fanwar, who is ministries coordinator and communications director of the Singapore Mission.

Honoured Teacher Bids Farewell

Sawasdee Karp, Achaarn Helen. Farewell, Honoured Teacher. These were the sentiments of teachers and students at Mission College as Dr. Helen Sprengel took leave to return to her homeland. She was vice-president for public relations, recruitment and development at Muak Lek from 1990-1995.

She first began to develop the college curriculum in 1987, and the college was then just a small tract of land in the countryside. Visits to the campus included crossing four-wheel drive terrain and keeping clear of

king cobras. Even though it took up more time and energy than many would be willing to put into on full pay, Dr.

Sprengel worked for a fifty-percent salary. She continued to accept the responsibilities that her job entailed because for her there were few joys greater than the pleasure of seeing Mission College develop its potential. The dream is becoming a reality but the vision has not yet been completely fulfilled. Even after her return to the United States, Dr. Sprengel is continuing to work for the benefit of the college. Her infectious optimism and belief in the value of Christian education has made this project so real to people that they have entrusted her with their hard-earned means and enabled us to build a magnificent monument to the glory of God.

Mission College has honoured Dr. Helen Sprengel by appointing her Vice-President Emeritus. Her self-giving and the self-giving she engenders in others will certainly have consequences of great magnitude for the lives of many young people here today. ☺

John Matthews



Drs. Reuben and Helen Sprengel.

Mission College Outreach

BY EMIL KACHCHAP

Mission College's outreach programme includes the following activities:

- **On-Campus Outreach.** Studies of SDA doctrines for non-Adventist students have become a biweekly programme on the Muak Lek campus. Regular baptisms are conducted every year.
- **Prison Ministry.** Several months ago, a prison ministry was begun 70 km away. Students and staff held a regular worship service and five prisoners attended. Today that number has increased to 12 and some of those watching and listening from outside have asked to join the meetings.
- **Off-Campus Outreach.** During the school break recently, two groups of students spent time reaching out to people in the faraway provinces of Mae Ram and Dek Udom. In Dek Udom they visited with backsliders from the church. However, at Mae Ram, a Hmong village in the mountains, it was the first time villagers had been exposed to the Adventist message. They commented that our Christianity was "different" and many young people asked for Bible studies. We have no pastor within 100 km so many enrolled in the Voice of Prophecy correspondence

course. Said an elder at the village: "We've been worshipping the spirits for many years but are not satisfied. We want something more. Perhaps you have the answer. If you can show that your God is greater than our spirits, we will all become Christians."

Our God is indeed greater than the evil spirits. We need your prayers for our young people, faculty and staff at Mission College. ☺

Emil Kachchap is an English instructor at Mission College Muak Lek.

F A C T S About Mission College

- Mission College has two campuses: The campus in Bangkok offers a nursing degree, while the campus in Muak Lek, approximately 130 km away, offers degrees in business, English and religion. These programmes are recognized by the Thai Education Ministry and approved by the Adventist Accrediting Association.
- MC Muak Lek was founded in 1987. The nursing school in Bangkok began operating in 1947.
- Currently 171 students are enrolled on the Muak Lek Campus; 195 on the Bangkok Campus.
- 40% of those enrolled in Muak Lek are Buddhist; the figure is almost 90% in Bangkok.

Layperson Impressed to Open Training Centre

BY SAMUEL MONEY

Mr. Sutichet Chanpisut, a layperson, recently organized a training centre for the training of lay people in Thailand.

Sutichet, born in China, moved often with his family while young. They went from China to Vietnam, to Laos, and then finally to Chiangmai in northern Thailand. Sutichet left Thailand once to work as a construction manager in the Middle East. After he returned he started a business in Bangkok. One day he prayed to God for help, asking what he should do to advance the cause of God in Thailand. He felt impressed to serve God as a lay leader for the people of Thailand.

Then one night, he had a dream. In the dream he seemed to fall from a great height. Before he could reach the ground however, an angel miraculously lifted him up and took him back to his original position. The angel said to him, "You see, I am able to protect you and provide for you. Why is it that many people do not believe in God? Please tell the people what God means to you."

From then on Sutichet made a covenant with God to serve him in every way possible. He visited Pastor Steve Bassham (Thailand Mission president at that time) and obtained permission from him to go to every church to encourage other laypersons to work. When certain churches needed financial help, he helped them. He also helped to renovate many church buildings.

One day an idea came to him. He decided to be committed to train workers for the lay ministry. After much prayer he bought a piece of land in Aden, near Mae Tang, Chiangmai which was approximately 35 acres. For almost four years he used his builders to clear the land, build his own house, and some shelters consisting of classrooms and sleeping quarters. He even planted some mango trees.



Attentive young men and women at the centre.

It was his desire to set up a centre there for training lay leaders and lay evangelists in Thailand.

A few months ago Pastor John Duroe and I visited the centre. We had the privilege of helping to train 12 students from the northern part of Thailand. Some had come 200 miles for their training. With the help of Global Mission, a new church and classroom were opened.

Sutichet's work is being supported by Mission and Union personnel, and by extra financial help from other concerned lay people. Please keep them in your prayers. ☸



Brand new training centre built with the help of Global Mission.

Samuel Money is the director of personal ministries and Sabbath School for SAUM.

B R I E F L Y

• **CHURCH DEDICATIONS.** In the past month three churches have been dedicated—in Mae Jum, a Thai/Karen church seating 80 people, in Bae Klaw, a Burmese/Karen church seating 200, and in Prankatai, a Thai church seating 100 people. *Jenny Thompson*

• **CHANGE OF NAME.** Ekamai Adventist English Church in Bangkok is now known as Bangkok International Church of Seventh-day Adventists. *Gratien Perera*

AUSTRALIAN AID UPGRADES

NAM HA HOSPITAL. A new outpatient building was opened recently in Phu Ly, near Hanoi, Vietnam. It is part of a major upgrading of Ha Nam Hospital funded by the Australian Agency for International Development. Susan Boyd, Australian ambassador to Vietnam, and representatives from the Ministry of Public Health officiated at the opening. Costing more than US\$150,000, the new building will enable the hospital to more effectively serve a population of over one million. The upgrading project of the hospital also consists of the procurement of basic hospital equipment and upgrading of staff. The project's total value is over US\$675,000. ☒

ADRA LAOS TO DISTRIBUTE 600 TONNES OF RICE. ADRA Laos will soon distribute 600 tonnes of rice to flood victims in the country. The heavy rains in the summer of 1995 caused widespread flooding causing hectares of paddy rice fields to be destroyed. In September ADRA distributed rice to over 13,000 people in 16 villages. In November, ADRA Canada provided CAN\$5,000 for the purchase of 14 tonnes of rice seed. This was distributed to over 400 farmers in 15 different villages. A new European project—with a budget of US\$290,000—will distribute 25 kgs per person to each family who had their fields destroyed. This is enough rice for two months and at least 24,000 people will benefit from this project. Thomas Petracek, project director from ADRA Germany arrived in Laos on January 23 and will manage this distribution. It is expected that all activities will be completed by April. ☒

ADRA PROVIDES CLEAN WATER IN NORTHERN LAOS.

On a plateau where two rivers converge close to the Chinese border lies the Lao village of Luang Namtha. It was here that the Adventist message of hope first took hold about 30 years ago. Pastor Dick Hall, assisted by Mun Lansri, a young Thai pastor, pioneered this unentered area. In 1994, ADRA was able to begin working here. Once again, Dick Hall and Mun Lansri were important figures in making this possible. Dick Hall was able to raise some funding to support a small water supply project and Mun Lansri established the necessary government contacts and approval so that ADRA could work in Luang Namtha. From these small beginnings in Luang Namtha, ADRA Laos was able to get funding from ADRA Canada to implement a larger well-digging project

ADRA^{southeast asia}news

A well-digging project will soon provide clean water to 4,500 people.

that will provide clean water to about 4,500 people. The Christian message is quiet in Laos. Freedom of religion is constitutional, but Christianity is not encouraged, especially in the provinces away from the big towns. ADRA Laos is helping to meet the needs for clean water in Luang Namtha. Please pray that the spiritual needs of those who benefit from this project will also be met. ☒ *Todd Bruce*

ADRA INVITED TO HIGH PLACES: The White House. On January 29 ADRA International representatives Harold Seidl and Tamara Pleitez were invited to the White House for the first time by Hillary Clinton. The First Lady honoured non-governmental

organizations for their ongoing efforts to provide humanitarian relief in the former Yugoslavia, where ADRA has been operating since 1991. It has distributed more than US\$15 million in emergency relief in the war-torn region. **Buckingham Palace.** The Queen of England recently invited John Arthur, director of ADRA Trans-Europe to the Palace for meetings with other aid leaders. They also spoke regarding ADRA's work in Sarajevo. "Sometimes members of the royal family appear to be aloof, but I was very impressed with their friendliness and their keen interest in humanitarian matters," said Arthur. ☒ *Beth Schaefer/ANR*

New Posts

☞ **Roy Richardson** is the new ADRA director for Thailand. Richardson, a former college professor, replaces **Nick Brightman**, now director of ADRA in the East Africa Division.

☞ **Dennis Tidwell**, of ADRA Vietnam, recently accepted a call to lead ADRA India. **Roger Kopitzke** has agreed to continue the work in Vietnam.

☞ **Warren Scale** and family left Singapore January 15 for Australia. Scale, associate director of ADRA APD since 1993, is now associate director of ADRA in the South Pacific Division.

It's so quiet, I mused riding on the back of a motorbike heading out with my ADRA health team for a mass Vitamin A distribution in the village of Tipo. To me quiet has always meant serenity, peace, rest, but to the Cambodians quiet means fear, uneasiness, and danger. I began to look around me as the sunlight danced in the harvested rice fields, and a strange uneasiness gripped me. We were going to a village where security hadn't always been the best. I had obtained all the necessary security clearances. Hadn't the District Leader assured me that the Khmer Rouge had not been in the area for a long time? Irritated and a bit uneasy that our police escort had decided to go ahead of us I whispered another silent prayer for safety and God's blessing.

When we arrived at Tipo we saw that the village had called the morning a holiday. People gathered around us. "Since we had the Vitamin A with us we decided to begin without you—we just finished," the local clinic workers informed us.

Our team got together to decide where to go instead. "We should go to Samroung Village and distribute Vitamin A there. They are the poorest village in the whole community. It's only about 5 km from here."

"Before you go though, could you check a few people for us?" one of the clinic workers asked.

As our health team began examining people, the crowd drew in closer. "Has anyone done any teaching in this village?" I inquired, and shortly commenced teaching. While teaching I realized something strange was taking place.

The people are so quiet, I thought to myself. They are all listening to me. This has never happened before. No one is talking about how white my skin is or how beautiful my nose is. Lord, is this You? Are You making the people quiet? Is there an extra special reason why these people need to hear my health messages?

I finished and everyone remained unmoving and quiet. "Do you want to learn more?" I asked, amazed.

They discussed this a minute then shrugged, "Sure."

Seeing some men smoking in the back I jumped into one of my favourite topics, "What causes respiratory

problems in children?..."

When I finished, my team approached me. "Cheryl, there's now not enough time to go to Samroung—let's just go to the small village down the road and then one more village on the way back."

At the next village the people behaved as "usual", swarming around us and all wanting to pet the hair on my arms. They discussed thoroughly my nose, hair, and language ability, chattering away like any other normal group of Cambodians. Health teaching was attempted and boycotted because it proved no competition for the topic under discussion—me!

A few days later Thira entered our room with a strange expression. "Cheryl," she said, "I was just speaking to some of the villagers. You know the day we were in Tipo?" I nodded. "Well, that same day the Khmer Rouge attacked Samroung Village and killed two people."

She paused briefly. "The only reason we didn't go that day was because you taught for too long in Tipo village."

The implications of her words struck me. *Terrorism... a visiting organization that supports the local government... a foreigner...* My thoughts were racing as a numbness spread over me. "That's why." It came as a whisper and a sense of awe filled me.

"Thira, that's why the people in the village were so strangely quiet and attentive."

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death (and don't even realize it), I will fear no evil for Thou art with me. *Lord, I'm amazed. Thank you.* ☺

Yea Though I Walk Through the Valley of the Shadow of Death

BY CHERYL QUILLIN



Cheryl Quillin is a health training coordinator for ADRA Cambodia.

LAOS . . .

continued from page 6

And so the local Adventist congregation continues to worship, and the elder freely visits the villages with believers.

The Lao PDR officially recognizes only five religions: Buddhism, the Roman Catholics, the Evangelical Church of Laos, the Ba'hai religion and the Seventh-day Adventists.

International Adventist Church. Since then ADRA has completed many projects. An upcoming project involves Bo Keow province.

In cooperation with Bangkok Adventist Hospital, ADRA will begin a basic health program in 10 villages in the Nam Yon district. We have first to do a health survey, then present a proposal for a two-year project to the government. So far Global Mission donors have given us US\$20,000 for the initial project, hardly enough to get a serious hearing. ADRA Laos is seeking funding for a more significant project to follow through, but this will take some time.

Please continue to pray for the Lao people. These accounts show that God *is* leading in Laos. ☺

While the PDR Lao have requested that the international churches not interfere in the religious observances of Lao people, they have welcomed relief and development aid from church organizations. ADRA has made its impact in Laos. It was accorded official recognition in 1992 as the official relief and development arm of the

Silent pews

Late 30's, well dressed—she walked in and sat down in the pew. She was alone. I couldn't remember seeing her before. The sermon ended, the service was over. Then someone behind leaned up to greet her. I eavesdropped a little. The two chatted a bit about nothing terribly important. The visitor mentioned that she used to come to this church about five years ago, but stopped when she was met by a cold, unfeeling congregation and a perception of a cold, angry God. She wasn't sure what drew her back that morning. The visitor then looked at the woman who had greeted her and said, "But perhaps things have changed. Thank you for noticing me."

I thought of my very silent position at the end of the pew.

to
muse
on

Potpourri

"Tis always morning somewhere in the world!"

Richard Henry Horne

"No race can prosper until it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem."

Booker T. Washington

This is what you shall do: love the earth, and sun, and animals, despise riches, give alms to every one that asks, stand up for the stupid and crazy, devote your income and labour to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and indulgence towards people, take off your hat to nothing known or unknown, or to any man or number of men; go freely with powerful uneducated persons, and with the young, and mothers of families; reexamine all you have been told at school or church, or in any books, and dismiss whatever insults your own soul.

Walt Whitman

"I have learned silence from the talkative, tolerance from the intolerant, and kindness from the unkind. I should not be ungrateful to those teachers."

Kahlil Gibran

Did You Know... that the Jewish world population is shrinking? According to a recent study, the Jewish community never recovered numerically from the Holocaust. The percentage of Jewish people in the US has dropped from a postwar high of 4% to 2.3% because of intermarriage.

Religion News Service

%

Statistically Speaking

- 60% of new marriages will end in divorce or separation.
- Divorce contributes to as many as 3 in 4 teen suicides, and 4 in 5 teen psychiatric admissions.

USA Today, 29.1.96

Beyond Race and Gender. . .

Who are Seventh-day Adventists? We are:

- poor, rich, and very rich;
- men, women, and youth;
- married couples, singles, single parents, and surviving spouses;
- Russians, Hawaiians, Yapese, Africans, Brazilians, Rwandans, Finns, New Zealanders, and 199 other nationalities;
- tall, short, and very short;
- schooled, and unschooled;
- too young to work, working, and retired;
- physically fit, and physically challenged.

And this is just the beginning of our diversity—diversity that far surpasses simple race and gender distinctions. Yet through it all we are bound together, wherever we live, by a common, unified mission—to tell the world's population about our soon-coming Saviour, Jesus Christ. ☩

ROSA TAYLOR BANKS
Adventist Review—2.96

Your Comments

"Having been born in Singapore and lived in Borneo as a child of missionary parents, I enjoy the *Messenger*. Thank you for sending it to us. God bless you."

Jula Millard, U.S.A.

"I read it from cover to cover and pass it on!"

Richard Hall, U.S.A.

"Please let me know how I can start contributing as a subscriber."

J. E. Turner, Australia

"I like your quirky quote section!"

S.C., Singapore

"I very much appreciate receiving *Messenger* and am very interested in Southeast Asia news. Thanks for sending it!"

Izella Stuiwenga, U.S.A.

Keep those comments coming! We are continually striving to improve the quality of *Messenger*. Tell us your views on our articles/content/layout. You may write, fax ((65) 284-7757) or e-mail (74532.3242@compuserve.com).

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Like most of the general population I have the usual physical scars that someone semi-active would have: long scratches on my left foot for refusing to wear flippers snorkelling last December, teeth marks (of the canine kind) on my right wrist, the usual childhood abrasions on my knees (from falling off my bicycle, or off guava trees). I even have a little chickenpox bump on my stomach. More or less average life scars for someone almost a quarter of a century old. But on my right cheek is a small scar people like to ask about. I admit I get tired of telling the same story over and over but usually fake a grin and plod through a brief account of the following.

When I was four my brother and I were playing cowboys and horsies (or something to that effect) on our parents' double-bed. It was my turn to be the cowboy and he the horsie. My version is that while I was giddyapping away, he threw me (you know, like when a horse bucks?)—his version is that I simply fell off like an idiot. Any which way, I hit the sharp corner of the headboard of the bed and started bleeding heavily. I remember screaming—I think more of fright than of pain. My father rushed me to the nearby clinic where I continued yelling, especially when someone who didn't much look like a doctor produced a humongous elongated needle. I proceeded to kick and yell simultaneously with all my might. After a while I must have tired though, because somehow they managed to hold me down, stitch me up, tada! hence the scar.

needles & dimples

BY CHARMINE SIAGIAN

In my (early) youth a few moments were spent in front of a mirror, fretting. In exasperation my sister introduced the notion that scars are believed to lend depth to a person. Character. So, being gullible and (slightly) narcissistic, I briefly considered changing the story to sound like my scar was derived in some desperate heroic struggle to save another human being. I soon realized of course that in today's chauvinistic world, scars are only supposed to give character—i.e. look "good"—on men (like Harrison Ford). I am presently resigned to the fact that my scar is at best a misplaced dimple when I grin. Also, and more importantly, it's part of who I am today.

Someone Else we all profess to know has physical scars—on his hands, feet, forehead, his side. The story of how he got those scars is not mundane, often emotional, sometimes debatable. Many of us are however tired of hearing (or telling) it again and again. Then there are those who are immune and others who are simply embarrassed to share. I, for sure, need some quiet time—do you?—to comprehend again what happened on that little hill all those years ago. Because the next time someone unsuspecting asks "What'd you do to your face?" I just might end up telling them about a real hero. ☺

As this issue is Charmaine Siagian's last as assistant editor she would just like to say that she wishes she had Mr. Wu's eye for detail and Siew Fong's helpful spirit! She hopes to return soon to Southeast Asia.

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