



LINK

LINKING former Wesleyan missionaries to each other and to Global Partners/Wesleyan World Missions

Volume 4, Issue 2

Summer 2005



The Florida Area WMAF annual meeting was held in the Elliott Community Center at the Wesleyan Village in Brooksville, FL.

There were 55 missionary alumni in attendance. After a wonderful meal in the dining room and a time of fellowship and getting acquainted, Bob Smith (Philippines/Indonesia) had a short devotional. Donna Lockard (Australia) gave some interesting experiences from Australia.



Virginia Wright with Paul & Nancy Swauger



Ed & Wilma Wissbroecker with Barbara Benninger

Ed Wissbroecker (Zambia) recounted some exciting hunting stories from Africa and how these times provided the needed thrust to start several new Wesleyan Churches. This was a wonderful time to get reacquainted with friends of years past. The group voted to have a meeting like this every year.



MEET THE BENNINGERS

It has been our goal to live our lives to fulfill God's call and purpose for us. Both Barbara and I, converted at a very young age, felt His call to Christian service. Years passed before this came into full focus. The last goal I had ever entertained for myself was a career in medicine.

Upon returning from military service in WWII God began to impress on me the impossible task of becoming a missionary doctor. Finally saying "yes" to God began a series of literal miracles. While in training, in one of many hospitals, I met a young nurse, Barbara, who was also in training. She, too, felt a call to missionary service. She was just finishing her nurse's training. At the time both of us were attending the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Buffalo, NY. We were married on August 20, 1942

In August 1951 I was ordained as a minister in the Stoneboro Campmeeting. It was then in September we boarded a Cunard Liner bound for the west coast of Africa. In the course of the journey we passed through England. This short pause gave me a chance to complete my course in Tropical Diseases at the University of London. After landing in Freetown, Sierra Leone, we traveled by truck and finally by dug out canoe to arrive in The Wesleyan Methodist hospital in Kamakwie. During our time there, Barbara was involved in nursing and teaching children's classes. On Sunday mornings I served as pastor of a small church.

Following our three-year term, as we were preparing to leave for the U.S.A., a violent revolution occurred. After Marshall Law was declared it was safe for us to proceed to Freetown to eventually board a small Norwegian freighter for Norfolk, VA. We were the only passengers.

When we returned to the States I began a medical practice. Soon I was contacted by the Evangelical Bible Mission to come on their board as medical advisor. This developed into trips to Haiti, New Guinea, and South Korea. Later it was possible for me to return to Buffalo and complete my specialty training in Orthopaedic Surgery. In 1980 we returned to Kamakwie Hospital for one month of service. We have now lived in Brooksville for four years.

Reported by Dr. Bob Benninger



MEET THE MYERS

My husband, Philip, and I came to Florida approximately 10 years ago to take care of my mother-in-law. About a year later we began attending The Salvation Army Corps in Clearwater, FL.

Earlier this year an appeal was made for a missions group to go to Mexico. Eight people including Philip and me volunteered and began meetings preparing us for evangelism.

On April 4th we flew to Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, a city on the West Coast of Mexico. We were met by a Salvation Army Captain and his wife who had started the work in this city just a few months prior among the very poor in the city.

Each weekday morning about 25 children came dressed in their uniforms, carrying backpacks with homework, which needed completion before going to their afternoon school session.

After finishing their studies and a noon meal, they were taught to wash and dry their dishes, sweep the floors and tidy up the room. Later in the day there were child evangelism classes with choruses, a Bible story, crafts, and games.

The ladies of the area met together several times in which our missions group gave personal testimonies and then they learned how to make piñatas.

On Sunday morning the small meeting hall was packed with several having to sit in the entrance area. On April 14th our group left Puerto Vallarta, thankful for the opportunity to share and be blessed by the smiles and "thank yous" from our new friends in another needy part of God's great Kingdom.
Reported by Elsie (Kilmer) Myers

NEWS AND REPORTS

Please send any news/report to Bob Smith, 22275 Woodlawn Ave, Brooksville, FL 34601-2702 or E-mail: bobsmith2004@earthlink.net

PARTNER POINTS

(Adapted from CURRENTS, Newsletter
for Missionaries, May 2005)

NEWS FROM ACTIVE MISSIONARIES

ALBANIA

On Sunday morning, you will find a group of men in the park. There are several groups here every Sunday. They gather to play chess, dominoes, or cards. This is a real social event and probably more are observing than playing. Some of them wear suits and nearly all are probably dressed up to some extent. It is interesting to see the settings in which the middle aged and older men wear a sport's or suit coat.

GO-Net Volunteer

BOUGAINVILLE

Every Sunday morning we go to various churches. We ride to the northern tip of the island and launch out in the college boat. As we head out into the ocean the salt-water breeze blows in my face, and I catch sight of a school of over 20 dolphins. They join us on our ride and jump up and down at the bow of the boat leading us onward to church. As we continue the 45-minute boat ride to four churches, I see many small islands with white sandy beaches and towering palm trees. Through this experience I have realized that it's not "just a trip to church," but it's an opportunity to worship our wonderful God.

I pray that each of you meets God in a real way this next Sunday morning and learns the valuable lesson that I did: that worship begins long before you enter the service; it begins in your heart as you encounter our awesome Maker in creation.

Zachary S. Szmara, GO-Net Volunteer

MACEDONIA

The present day country of Macedonia is part of former Yugoslavia. It is located just north of Greece with Albania (West), Serbia/Montenegro (North), and Bulgaria (East). This small country of two million is 70% Orthodox and 30% Muslim. That same 70/30 split can be found in the city of Skopje, the country's capital. In fact, Skopje has a population of 600,000, but only eight evangelical churches! And there are said to be less than 0.5% born-again believers in the country!

God has not forgotten this country though! He seems, in fact, to be preparing it for revival. You see, the former president (2000-2003) was a born-again believer. Everyone seemed to be pleased with him, but when he died suddenly in a plane crash, he became a martyr. And since he hadn't kept his faith a secret, he helped to give the evangelical church a valid place in the people's eyes.

Then, also, in the year 2000, a cross was built on the highest point in Skopje – a cross that can be seen from almost anywhere in the city. So here is this symbol of Christ's love for the people and a tool for evangelism found right there in their own land!

It was, in fact, this cross that God used to speak to me last summer. My hotel was part of the way up the hill that led to the cross, so we were daily walking toward the cross. It was on one of our walks "home" that I first sensed God telling me that I would be there some day to help the people understand what the cross on their hill really symbolizes. I would be coming back to share Christ's love with these people!

Rachelle Blake

SOUTHEN AFRICA

On a lighter side!!! Chatting as we gazed out the kitchen window, Sandra (kitchen helper/friend) and I stood preparing yet another meal for the Pulaski team. Fluttering clothes drying on the line peaked the curiosity of a heifer that had meandered into the yard. The investigation turned into a smorgasbord when the young cow began munching a pair of undies. Sandra bolted through the door flapping her arms cackling like a chicken. The African workers joined the chase in an attempt to rescue the "wear." The cow dodged hither and yon trying to out maneuver her assailants, all the while increasing chewing speed until the delicacy slipped down like "silk." The workers stood in dazed amazement as Sandra and I curled up in laughter. In a debriefing meeting the team roared as Sandra narrated the "moo-ving experience."

Epilogue – The following day the cow, whom I fondly called Lace, returned to a new buffet of clothing drying on the line and latched onto a shoe lace which slipped down like a piece of spaghetti. This time the workers, Sandra, and I had a very good laugh together as Lace ambled off into the sunset!

The exciting life of a missionary!!!

Jerry and Jody Manwaring

SRI LANKA

In obedience to the leading of the Lord, I took a prayer drive with four others from the city of Colombo along the southern coast of Sri Lank all the way to the North East of the country. We left home on Tuesday at 2:45 A.M. On the first day we completed praying for a stretch of 514 kilometers. This prayer drive covered areas also hit by the tsunami.

We took courage and went into areas controlled by non-government soldiers and prayed declaring peace in the name of Jesus. We shared the good news with one cadre and provided transport for him in their controlled area, and ministered to some other officers.

Cedric and Sharlini Rodrigo

The following excerpts have been taken from various E-mail messages from appointed missionaries.

*Pray for **Juan Morillo**, our Venezuelan leader, as he is contemplating studying for a Masters degree in Colombia. We pray that God would provide key leadership for Venezuela.

*Pray for recently elected National Superintendent **Carlos Moreno** as he gives leadership in Colombia and works through some challenging issues.

***Tom Hines** reports, "We had a great meeting with **Hugo** new pastor of the church in Cuenca, Ecuador. A major breakthrough with the local church board. We had a positive meeting with a couple that is considering working with us. God protected us in a very dangerous situation on Tuesday, reminding us again of how vital your prayers are."

***Pastor Luis Martinez** held revival services in Pocono Lake, PA. Nine souls came to the Lord. Over the past several months, as Pastor Luis has been in churches leading mission's conferences, many have expressed an interest in bringing teams to Guatemala and providing prayer support for **Impacto**. The doctor says Pastor Luis needs at least 3 weeks "down time" to help his medical problems ease up some. Andrea will be graduating from high school on June 17.

WHERE ARE THEY - WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

***Malcolm and Lois Ellis** have been teaching at SWU in the Adult Education Program.

***Steve and Carolyn Saunders** have accepted the pastorate of The Wesleyan Church in Burlington, NC. They will be moving in July. Also their first grandchild, Madison Grace, was born Feb. 10 to Ryan and Carla East.

***Bob and Brenda Bagley** are moving to Iowa in June, where Bob will be the Academic Dean at Vennard College

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Paul and Darlene Meeks with their son Stephen paid a visit to Wesleyan Village last month. We rejoice in the healing touch of the Great Physician for Paul. She seems to have no residual effects from her recent strokes. To God be the glory!

MEDICAL REPORTS FROM RETIRED MISSIONARIES

***DON KINDE (Sierra Leone)** has finally completed a 2nd five-week course of radiation treatment. This 5-week regimen was accompanied by a lot of digestive unrest, a great sense of fatigue, reddened skin in the upper chest, and a sore throat. Thank you so much for your faithful prayer support and communications to us. So what is ahead? Weekly lab appointments through June 13 for blood checkups, a CT scan and a follow-up chemo-oncologist appointment on June 13 and an upper GI endoscopy sometime in September. Again they are so grateful for your love and support.

***HAROLD JOHNSON (Japan)** had brain surgery on Nov. 21. Then more physical problems indicated the need for another, more invasive surgery. The CAT scan on Mar. 8 showed great improvement. He says; "Finally yesterday I received my OK to drive again! PTL. When is the next WMAF meeting in IN?"

HERE THEY GO AGAIN!

- Ed & Wilma Wissbroecker are returning to Zimba, Zambia, Africa for at least 6 months on June 14.
- * Ruth and Chuck Pierson, on June 23, are going to Sierra Leone to work in the hospital in Kamakwie.



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