The gift that keeps on giving

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Dean Luyt (pronounced "Layt"), the treasurer for Riverside Farm Institute in Zambia, Africa, recently sent an e-mail to ASI. You may recall his story, "From Jet-setter to Jesus," published in the Summer 2010 issue of Inside ASI, accompanied by "Pioneer Stories From Riverside Farm."

Luyt shared the following update on how those published stories have continued to impact Riverside Farm:

"Recently we had a visit from the Ministry of Finance to assess our viability as a Public Benefit Organization (PBO). Being classified as a PBO means that we are zero rated for import duties on One-Day Churches and Schools and other materials benefitting our ministry here in Zambia. The system had been reorganized, and we have had to go through a whole process to re-establish ourselves as a PBO again. Read More

Watch Episode 14 of ASI Video Magazine featuring Riverside Farm.

SCROLL DOWN to read this issue's announcements and inspiring news stories.

Announcements

Share your story with Inside ASI readers

The next issue of Inside ASI is on the drawing board. If you have a ministry story that would
ASl@nad.adventist.org. For reference, visit the ASI website to download recent issues of Inside ASI.

Chapter meetings this month

Chapter meetings occurring this month include ASI Columbia Union and ASI Mid-America. Visit the Chapters page on the ASI website to find out more information about ASI chapter meetings being held near you.

ASI membership & information

For Membership Information or to download a Membership Application, visit the ASI website. Visit the Multimedia page on the ASI website to listen to or download general sessions and seminars from the 2010 ASI Convention in various formats. Also available for download are two new episodes of ASI Video Magazine, filmed on location in Southern Africa. Visit the Member Events & Announcements page on the ASI website to learn about events, needs, products and services of interest to ASI members. Submit your own ministry announcements to asi@nad.adventist.org.

Contact the ASI office at 301-680-6450 to order copies of ASI's brochure and promotional DVD for sharing with friends and potential members. Each promotional DVD includes The ASI Convention Experience video and several episodes of ASI Video Magazine.

Share the ASI Update with friends and family and encourage them to subscribe to this bimonthly e-newsletter full of ASI news, announcements and inspirational stories. E-mail your own ministry news and stories to asi@nad.adventist.org.

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The gift that keeps on giving

Posted on Mar 04, 2011

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"When the Ministry of Finance came to do a site inspection, we had the opportunity to share the Riverside Farm feature from Inside ASI. They were most impressed, and we believe that with the help of the presentation (and the testimony of [Zambia's] ex-president Kenneth Kaunda) we should very shortly receive our PBO rating.

"We regularly use this feature to give people a quick view of what is done here at Riverside. This is a gift that keeps on giving. Thanks once again for your efforts."

Luyt also shared that there is a high demand in Zambia for books by Ellen White. He hopes to coordinate a project to fill a container with second-hand Ellen White books donated by people in North America and have it sent to Riverside Farm.

"I know that many people have these books lurking, unread on their bookshelves," said Luyt. "These books are needed and wanted in Africa."

He plans to establish a collection point at the Outpost Centers International office in Apison, Tennessee. Clearly, the written word continues to have immense value in mission efforts around the world.

ASI member ministries are invited to submit ministry news and inspirational stories for possible publication in ASI's bimonthly ASI Update e-newsletter and Inside ASI magazine.

Read the Summer 2010 and Winter 2011 issues of Inside ASI magazine.

Watch Episode 14 of ASI Video Magazine featuring Riverside Farm Institute.

Visit the Riverside Farm Institute and Outpost Centers International websites.

Story submissions may be sent to ASI@nad.adventist.org.

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ASI and ASI Missions, Inc. boards meet at Southern

Posted on Mar 04, 2011

ASI National and ASI Missions, Inc. board members met February 18–20 in Lynnwood Hall on the campus of Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee. Meetings were held to determine this year’s ASI convention offering goal and to select the 2011 ASI special projects from the many applications submitted.

The event also provided a weekend spiritual retreat for those who attended, which included ASI national officers and regional chapter presidents. Southern Adventist University president Gordon Bietz joined the group on Friday evening.

On Sabbath morning, a special feature was presented by Steve Dickman, ASI’s vice president for membership and recruitment, followed by the Sabbath school lesson, which was taught by Calvin Thrash, president of ASI Southern Union.

Michael Hasel, a well-known archaeology and religion professor at Southern, presented a sermon based on Isaiah 6. He urged the group to recognize that the harder they work, the more deaf people may seem to become to the message.

"It was a remarkable sermon," said Danny Houghton, ASI's vice president for communication. "Dr. Hasel urged us to press on, despite the fact that we will likely not see our reward until heaven."

The group was given a tour of the Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum on Sabbath afternoon, followed by a tour of Southern Adventist University's new origins exhibit, hosted by Dr. Bietz. The exhibit has been developed to promote belief in and understanding of a six-day biblical creation event.

During the same weekend, Southern’s board voted to accept a new "Statement on Creation" that clearly affirms "the supernatural creation of a beautiful and perfect world in one literal week of six consecutive, contiguous, 24-hour days of creative activity, followed by the Sabbath of rest."
New Zealand earthquake opens doors to mission

Posted on Feb 24, 2011

A magnitude 6.3 earthquake struck Christchurch, New Zealand, at 1 p.m. local time on February 22. Reports concerning the death toll have been updated regularly since the quake, with the number of deaths expected to rise above 200.

The quake struck Christchurch's Central Business District at one of the busiest times of day, causing fires, collapsed buildings, cracked and buckled roads, and flooded streets. The downtown population was left in a state of confusion, with aftershocks continuing as crowds gathered for safety in Latimer Square.

Local Adventists quickly joined humanitarian rescue and relief efforts, providing shelter, food, and water to injured and displaced citizens. Craig Gillis, president of the South New Zealand Conference, began posting online updates within two hours of the quake. His first order of business was to verify that all Adventist workers were alive and accounted for.

"I have no reports of any of our members being seriously injured—though there have been many stories of near misses," Gillis wrote on February 25. Inspections of Adventist churches and schools have so far revealed only minor structural damage and some liquefaction.

Gillis listed the many ways local church workers and members are working to provide aid during the ongoing crisis. In addition to clean-up and visitation, they are cooperating with ADRA and Sanitarium Health Food Company to set up triage and distribution centers for water, food, and other basic necessities. Sanitarium has provided breakfast to hundreds of people on a daily basis at various emergency shelters. The church's youth camp is providing shelter for students wanting to get out of the city.

"I am incredibly proud of the positive attitude and servant oriented hearts of our people here in Christchurch, young and old," said Gillis.

Evangelist and ARISE director David Asscherick was in New Zealand with his family to present an evangelistic series. When the quake hit without warning, he was in his rental house in downtown Christchurch, preparing his evening sermon.

"I made my way down the street toward Latimer Square," he shared in a February 22 ARISE Frontline Report. "Just as I arrived at Latimer Square, a large aftershock (5.0 magnitude) shook the ground sharply. Thousands of people let out a collective and terrible scream. It looked and felt like a scene straight out of the Second Coming. It is difficult to communicate the palpable confusion and fear that hung in the air. Some people were running here and there; others were just standing or sitting in a kind of bewildered resignation."

After gathering a few essentials from his rental house, Asscherick left the city on foot to meet up with his wife and sons who were visiting friends 12 kilometers outside the city. As he walked, he surveyed a scene he believes will sharpen people's interest in the messages he is there to present.

"There was plenty more devastation to see along the way," he reported. "Bricks, debris, crushed cars, water, and liquefaction filled the streets. So did people. Some were on bikes, some on skateboards, but most were, like me, just walking. The scene was perfectly apocalyptic, complete with fires, collapsed buildings, thousands of terrified people, helicopters buzzing overhead, and toxic, smoke-filled air.... This quake shook me and many thousands literally. I hope it will shake us all up spiritually as well!"

An estimated 600 people had attended Asscherick's first meeting at the Aurora Center for the Performing Arts on Tuesday, February 8. His theme for the campaign was "What Does the Future Hold?" and his presentations were built, in part, around the 7.1 magnitude earthquake that had hit Christchurch last September 4th. The city was still rebounding from the devastation of that event when the February 22 quake hit.

Since then, Asscherick has shot a one-hour video highlighting his earthquake experience and biblical perspective, and has also printed 10,000 earthquake-specific tracts for local church members and Bible workers to hand out. The tracts are entitled, "Hope When Your World is Shaken Apart."

Asscherick plans to return to the United States to conduct the annual Week of Spiritual Emphasis at the General Conference headquarters, to be held March 7 to 10, before rejoining his family in New Zealand to continue the evangelistic campaign as planned. The opening two nights will again take place in the Aurora Center, which has been serving as a shelter for quake victims. The first presentation is called, "In the Wake of the Quake: Where is God When it Hurts?"

He plans to return to New Zealand for a reaping event within the next year.

See Christchurch Earthquake updates posted by Craig Gillis, president of the South New Zealand Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Read the complete Frontline Report by David Asscherick.

See related report in the Adventist Review.

Photos by David Asscherick
Maranatha reaches out to Hispanic population

Maranatha Volunteers International hosted its first-ever Hispanic convention on February 26 at the Calvary Assembly Orlando Church in Winter Park, Florida. The event, which drew nearly 5,000 people from across the state, was an effort to involve more of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Spanish-speaking population in outreach.

The nonprofit organization, which has sent some 70,000 volunteers around the world to build churches and schools and to hold outreach programs since 1969, has worked in numerous Hispanic countries over the years. The crowd was enthused to hear how Maranatha is helping to grow the global church by building churches and schools in dozens of countries, Maranatha leaders said.

"Attendees were energetic and responsive to learn how they can personally get involved in mission work, both here at home and abroad," said Kyle Fiess, Maranatha vice president for marketing and projects.

"As a result of Maranatha's churches and schools, our baptisms have gone up, our tithe has gone up, and the life of the church has improved," Leonel Lozanno, president of the Adventist Church in Ecuador, told the congregation.

Other speakers included Alejandro Bullón, a well-known Adventist evangelist, Israel Leito, president of the Adventist Church in Inter-America, Melchor Ferreyra, field secretary for the church in Inter-America, Gilberto Araujo, vice president for the church in the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean region, Ron Watts, assistant to the church president in Southern Asia, and church evangelist Mark Finley. Popular Christian singer Steve Green provided the music.

Bullón challenged the crowd to get involved in missions. "It doesn't matter how much money you have. All of you have time. You need to give Maranatha your time, your money, your talents," he said.

"The event marked a new commitment to the Hispanic community to involve them more in missions, outreach, volunteering and donating," Fiess said. "Since Maranatha began, we've worked in Spanish-speaking countries. People walked away from this convention with a wider vision of mission work around the world and an awareness of how they can get involved in helping others."

Visit the Maranatha Volunteers International website.

Reported by Wendi Rogers
Elder Oliver J. McKinney passes away

Posted on Feb 24, 2011

Another reminder of life's tenuous nature came with the Southern Union's announcement that Elder Oliver J. McKinney died in his sleep early in the morning on Thursday, February 24.

The news shocked friends and coworkers. McKinney was currently serving as director of Stewardship, Prayer Ministries, and Children's Ministries for the Southern Union. He was also executive secretary/treasurer for the ASI Southern Union chapter.

"Elder McKinney was a great supporter of self-supporting ministries," said Charles Stark, communication director for ASI Southern Union. "He was always an active participant in the various ASI meetings held in the Southern Union."

A funeral was held at 11 a.m. Thursday, March 3, at the Berean Seventh-day Adventist Church in Atlanta, Georgia.

"Elder McKinney's passing is a tragic loss," wrote ASI Southern Union president Calvin Thrash in a notice to other chapter officers, "but we live in the hope of Christ's soon appearing."

Read the Official Notice concerning Elder Kinney's passing on the Southern Union website.