Why Sam Miller flies

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

Announcements

Spring chapter meetings

Both ASI Southern Union and ASI Lake Union will hold spring meetings during the month of
chapter meetings.

New ASI website

ASI's new website is up and running. It has been redesigned and reformat ed for easier use and access. Please visit the new site and let us know if you see any changes that need to be made or glitches that should be fixed. The ASI website is designed to serve as both a source of information and an outreach tool. If you have questions about navigating the new site, please call 406-210-3208 or e-mail asi@nad.adventist.org.

ASI membership & information

Visit the ASI website for:

- For Membership Information or to download a Membership Application
- To watch Convention Media and other Media programming
- To visit the Bulletin Board for member needs, events and announcements
- To read recent issues of the ASI Update e-newsletter and Inside ASI magazine
- For ASI News & Events or to read about Projects
- To register for the 2011 ASI International Convention in Sacramento, California

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

New seminary church dedicated in Cuba
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Project Report: Missionary Assistance Plan
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Why Sam Miller flies

Posted on Apr 01, 2011

In 2006, Heritage Academy principal Doug Baker was attending the ASI convention in Houston when someone asked him, "Can Heritage Academy help with the growing need for missionary pilots?" At that time the academy didn't have any of the components for such a program.

The following year, Heritage Academy sent history teacher and former commercial pilot Sam Miller to the ASI convention in Louisville to represent the academy's granola industry—and to search for someone interested in helping the academy develop a missionary aviation program.

Things happened quickly after that. In June 2008, the academy took delivery of its first airplane. The next fall, 14 students—one-fourth of the academy's enrollment—started private pilot ground school.

"It is amazing what God can do when we offer our lives to him," Miller shared with Adventist World Aviation that same year. "So many times I find myself getting wrapped up in the details, overwhelmed with the workload, and forget that through Christ all things are possible. He has agents working in every corner of the world for our benefit. All we need to do is commit our ways and offer our services, and He works the miracles."

Recently, Miller reflected on what led him to turn his back on a career as a commercial pilot and become a history teacher and flying instructor at Heritage Academy. He'd been reminiscing one day with one of the students about his former career when the student asked, "Do you ever miss flying the jets?"

That question brought to mind a significant event in Miller's life. Six years earlier, he'd piloted a charter flight to Gunnison, Colorado, a small town at the foot of Crested Butte Ski Resort. The group who'd chartered the flight planned to stay over the weekend. Miller had just begun attending an Adventist church a couple of months earlier, so he looked the local church up in Gunnison's Yellow Pages.

The church was a short mile-and-a-half hike down the road, so he headed out under a cloudless sky in -15-degree weather. "It was one of the most beautiful Sabbath mornings I had ever seen," he recalls.

The Gunnison church was small, with only about 15 people attending. A local carpenter and lay pastor gave the sermon and then invited the whole church home for Sabbath dinner. Miller remembers that afternoon well.

"We sat in a circle in the warm rustic home, sharing stories from our pasts, when Edwin, the pastor, shared his own story," Miller recalls. "He told how he had always had a passion for skiing, and living in the Rockies fed right into that passion. When he and his wife moved to Gunnison, the church was in need of leadership, and he felt God calling him, a carpenter, to serve the church on weekends in a larger capacity. But that meant taking away from the time he usually set aside for skiing. He shared how he wrestled with the idea of giving up his season ski pass to dedicate more time to the Lord. After much prayer, he told the Lord he was willing.

"A few months later, he received a phone call from a man who was looking for the pastor of the local Seventh-day Adventist Church. The man was the manager of a ski resort and needed someone to preach Sunday mornings for the resort staff and guests. Most of the other local pastors were busy on Sunday mornings. The resort didn't have money to
pay Edwin, but they offered him a season ski pass for his services.

"Edwin then said something that has remained with me ever since," Miller continues. "He said, 'When you give something you love to the Lord, He will return it in a purer, more refined form that will bring glory to Him.'"

Two years later, Miller was faced with a similar decision. He felt impressed to leave his chief pilot position and teach history at Heritage Academy. He believed leaving his position would mean leaving aviation for good. The Lord continued to impress him and to open and close doors that made Sam's decision easy. Sam and his wife packed up their family and possessions and moved to the Heritage Academy campus in Monterey, Tennessee.

A year later, Miller was preparing to fly once more, but this time for God's glory. He would help develop the academy's mission aviation program and prepare young people to serve as mission pilots all over the world.

That day as he reminisced, Miller told his student, "Yes, I miss flying the jets, but I don't miss the job. The job didn't seem to have much of a greater purpose."

He explained to the student how some jobs can be fun and exciting, but unless you're making a difference in people's lives, the excitement can fade quickly. "My new aviation career has nothing but greater purpose," he said.

Miller shared his testimony last summer during an interview on Wednesday night at the 2010 ASI convention in Orlando.

Meanwhile, Heritage Academy continues to make vast improvements to its mission aviation program. The school is in the process of building a 2500-foot runway and hangar, and is purchasing and installing a weather station. They plan to add a second airplane to their fleet and to purchase a base radio and flight simulator.

Like Edwin, Miller got his "season pass" back. And today, more than ever, Sam Miller has a reason to fly.

Visit the Heritage Academy website.

View Sam Miller's testimony at the 2010 ASI International Convention in Orlando.

Adapted from an article by Sam Miller in the Winter 2010 issue of Adventist World Aviation's Flight Log.

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New seminary church dedicated in Cuba

Posted on Apr 01, 2011

Maranatha Volunteers International dedicated the Cuba Seventh-day Adventist Seminary’s first-ever church building in Havana on March 26. The event was the culmination of a long process of obtaining building permits and raising the necessary funds.

The nonprofit organization, a supporting ministry of the Adventist Church, built the Seminary ten years ago. A church was part of the master plan, but could not be built at that time. Maranatha broke ground on the new church three years ago and worked on the building as funds were available. When donations ran out, progress halted.

Most Adventist pastors currently serving in Cuba’s 294 Adventist churches are trained at the Havana Seminary. Seminary students have spent the past several years reaching out to their communities in anticipation of a church. They visited every home in their neighborhoods, giving Bible studies and inviting people to worship.

“A Seventh-day Adventist Church in a climate like Cuba can make a tremendous impact,” said Maranatha President Don Noble. “Every time Maranatha has constructed a church building in Cuba over the past 17 years, the congregation has grown quickly, and the positive impact on the community is wonderful to observe. Life is often challenging for the people, and knowing that the world church cares and has provided them a place to worship gives them hope and inspires them to witness to their neighbors and friends.”

“This building is a palpable example of how religious liberty has made progress in Cuba,” Caridad Diego, minister of religion for Cuba, told the congregation. “The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s presence here has been a blessing to our communities. This building and the Seminary will contribute to society so we’ll all be better off.”

The remaining dollars to fund the building came in just before the dedication service, answering the prayers of many.

“The building is fabulous. It’s beautiful. It’s exactly what we hoped it would be,” Noble said. “From the time we walked on this campus 15 years ago when it was just trees, to the point now where it’s a full seminary, they’ve graduated hundreds of students, and now they finally have a church and an auditorium. Praise God that the project has come to completion and that it’s been fully funded by generous donors.”

Students will use their new church during the week to study and practice preaching, and community members will meet there for small group sessions. The Adventist Church in Cuba will also use the building for meetings and training sessions.

“People from all over Inter America study theology in Cuba,” said Israel Leito, president of the Adventist Church in Inter America. “Many of our former leaders were educated here. Since we have this church here now, we are saying, ‘This will again become the center of theological studies.’”

In 1994, church membership in Cuba was 11,000 members. Today, that number is more than 31,000, and church members in the country are excited to continue growing.

“The vitality of the people, the excitement, the happiness, is certainly something that is just contagious,” said Ted Wilson, president of the Adventist world church and main speaker for the dedication. “Maranatha has been so instrumental, not only in this particular jewel of the seminary campus, but in so many places throughout this island nation of Cuba and for
only in this particular jewel of the seminary campus, but in so many places throughout this island nation of Cuba and far beyond in so many countries of the world."

Several government and church leaders attended the dedication service, including the chief of mission for the U.S. Interests Section in Cuba and the leader of the Presbyterian Church in Cuba. A group of Maranatha volunteers who had supported the project also attended.

The new church includes theater-style seats and will seat 336 people. “The Cuba Seventh-day Adventist Seminary Church will be much more than just a building; it will be a vibrant part of the community,” Noble said.

Visit the Maranatha Volunteers International website.

Reported by Wendi Rogers
Congo Frontline Mission reaches people of the forest

Posted on Apr 01, 2011

Congo Frontline Missions director Keith Mosier and his wife, Tammy, recently visited people living deep in the forest of Africa’s Democratic Republic of Congo. Tammy shared their experience:

"Keith and I just got back from a trip to see the pygmy* people. We enjoyed it so much! I had not been overnight to any place away from home for seven months!

"The pygmies are a quiet people of the forest. The men hunt for food, and the women stay home, taking care of the kids and cooking. These people are amazing in their ability to sustain themselves in the forest. Unfortunately, the forest that has been home to them for a long time is now being cut down. They are being forced to move closer to the roads, where they do manual labor for dirt cheap just to get enough to eat.

"Fifty years ago, they were actually cannibalized by other tribes and were thought of as less than human. These hardships have made them look for other methods of survival, and they are now open to education. Most of all, they are open to the gospel. Now is the perfect time to reach them.

"Much to my delight, they speak good Swahili. I am still a beginner in speaking Swahili, but it is such a blessing to speak to people who are good Swahili speakers. It makes it so much easier for me to understand when they are not using Lingal or French words mixed in.

"Their medical needs are great. Their teeth are rotting, and they often have a cough from sleeping in little houses filled with smoke. They don’t have blankets, and the fire keeps them warm and the mosquitoes away.

"We have truly fallen in love with these simple people. They are near to our hearts, and we want to do everything we can to help them get to know Jesus as their personal friend and Savor. We want to give them hope. They are more than 90 percent illiterate and most are animists who worship a big gorilla in the forest as their god. They desperately need Jesus.

"We want to reach them through educating the children in Adventist schools. We currently are working with 30 small villages."

CFM is dedicated to bringing hope and salvation to people in the Democratic Republic of Congo through preaching, teaching and medical missionary work. Because the DRC has been at war and politically unstable for more than a decade, CFM truly functions at the frontlines of mission work.

CFM is one of ASI’s 2010 Projects selected to receive funds from the 2010 ASI International Convention offering.

Visit the Congo Frontline Mission website.

*Pygmy is a term used for various ethnic groups around the world whose average height is unusually low. Most groups prefer to be called by their actual ethnic group names.
2010 Project Report: Missionary Assistance Plan

Posted on Mar 30, 2011

Missionary Assistance Plan was selected for another year of assistance as a 2010 ASI project funds recipient. MAP originally began when ASI had a vision to provide funds for individuals and families serving overseas in mission work. The program is funded by ASI donations and managed by Outpost Centers International. Currently, there are about 30 recipients of MAP funds.

The program supports missionaries who come from all over the world including the United States, Switzerland, Romania, Norway, Belgium, Germany, France, and South Africa. These individuals have embraced a life of service far from home, some for more than 20 years, serving OCI ministries in places such as Zambia, Tanzania, Brazil, India, Peru, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In Revelation 14:6, we are told that the everlasting gospel will be preached to every nation, tribe, tongue and people, and in Matthew 28:19, Jesus commissions us to "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations." MAP is designed to financially assist those who feel God's leading to answer this call. Many families and individuals leave the familiarity of their homes and learn a new language and a new way of life, all for the joy of winning more souls for the kingdom.

Sarah Enders is a teacher and MAP funds recipient at Springs of Life orphanage and school, a branch of Living Springs Overseas Mission in Kolkata, India. She shares that, as a teenager, she wasn't particularly fond of children. While other girls earned money babysitting, Sarah preferred to mow lawns. Eventually, she decided she never wanted to have children, but today she works with 26 young boys at Springs of Life.

"God has a way of surprising us," Sarah says. "Instead of my own one or two children to clothe, train, and love, I have a whole group of orphaned children to care for. On Sabbaths, instead of sitting between my own children in church, I'm surrounded by a group of books who look up to me. Each evening after worship, I tuck all 26 of my young boys into their beds and wish them good night. And the strangest part is that I love it!"

Thanks to MAP, Sarah is able to volunteer at Springs of Life with assurance that her financial needs are provided for.

Visit the Outpost Centers International website.
How Myanmar Frontier Mission began

Posted on Apr 01, 2011

Large-scale mission projects often begin when one humble servant follows the call to service one step at a time. Myanmar Frontier Mission is the lifework of Saw Thein, who recently shared in an e-mail to ASI how MFM began:

Some who are interested in our work have asked me how Myanmar Frontier Mission began. I would like to express my humblest thanks to God for giving me this lifework.

After finishing the ministerial training course at the seminary in Myaungmya in 1982, I worked as a literature evangelist for eight years. In 1992, I completed my bachelor's degree in religion and pursued further study in the Philippines, receiving support from two scholarships and also from the Burma American Christian Association (BACA).

While in the Philippines, I had made contact with Elder Clyde Morgan, then the executive director of Adventist Frontier Missions. Eventually, Elder Morgan and Pastor Sandy, Dee, the Myanmar Union Mission president, helped make my dreams of establishing a mission work in Myanmar come true.

MFM works specifically in Meiktila in Middle Myanmar. We have 14 projects between the towns of Yamethin and Shwe Bo. We operate ten nursery schools and use various approaches to evangelism throughout the region. We work in response to BACA's appeal for us 'to propose, plan, and fund work specifically for the Burmans.'

We are now entering our thirteenth year of service and have been able to rent a separate office building in Yangon. We have a board of trustees who oversee our donations and manages our progress.

According to the Scriptures, we are living at the end time of this earth's history. We meet monthly and discuss how to make our work grow. Right now, we're working to establish twelve churches in Middle Myanmar, thanks to the prayers and financial support of our donors.

Saw Thein recounted a story told to him by Daw Tin, a nursery teacher hired by MFM. One day she made a long trip to shop in the town of NgaPe', and the bus she had taken got stuck in the sand. The driver tried for four hours to get the bus out of the sand, but finally gave up. Daw Tin went to the driver and said, "Please try one more time and I'll call to my God in prayer." Then she prayed as the bus drier made one final attempt, and when she opened her eyes the bus was no longer stuck.

"All the people on the bus rejoiced to see the miracle," she said.

"Daw Tin loves to share her faith with others," says Saw Thein. "We encourage her to continue to serve the Lord, but she thinks very little of herself because she doesn't have much education. But her faith is strong, and she has been able to bring her two daughters and many other people to Christ."

Contact Myanmar Frontier Mission by e-mailing sawthein2009@gmail.com.