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I. Letter
   1. Michael Campbell <campbellm@aiias.edu> July 21:

Dear Adventist Scholars & Colleagues,

I want to take this opportunity to introduce you to the Journal of Asia Adventist Studies (JAAS), the peer-reviewed journal for the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIIAS) Seminary. Established in 1998 by Edwin Reynolds, the journal is published biannually in the context of a faith community, quality biblical-theological research, including studies in biblical theology, archaeology of the biblical world, systematic and historical theology, applied theology, and missiology. JAAS is currently indexed in Index Theologicus (Universität Tübingen, Germany), International Review of Biblical Studies (Brill, Netherlands; Universität Paderborn, Germany), Religious and Theological Abstracts, Old Testament Abstracts, New Testament Abstracts, BiBIL (Bibliographie biblique informatisée de Lausanne, Switzerland), Bulletin de Bibliographie Biblique, and THEOLDI (Theological Literature Documented In Innsbruck, Austria).

In addition to familiarizing you with our journal, I want to invite you to considering submitting your research for potential publication in JAAS.

The deadline to submit content for the next issue is August 31, 2014. The journal publishes research articles (generally 10-25 pages, double-spaced) and book reviews (through pre-arrangement). Each issue includes a list of recent dissertation abstracts from recently completed AIIAS doctoral dissertations. If you have a specific piece of research that you would like to consider publishing, please feel free to contact me.

Some of you may also want to consider subscribing, or encouraging your college library to subscribe to JAAS. We offer a cooperative journal exchange program. Institutional subscriptions are USD $45, individual subscriptions are USD $30.

Thank you for considering JAAS as we together seek excellence in Christian scholarship.

II. Ralph Watts & Arlind Hackett Visit Vietnam

   (2nd of several installments!)

   Arlind Hackett <arlind.hackett@yahoo.com> June 27:

Travel Report No. 2
Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 1:26 AM

Dear All:

Had a great day yesterday! Breakfast with Ralph was exceptional. The breakfast buffet is included in the price of the room, so I indulged! Had a great omelet, jack fruit, papaya, a small waffle and some Danish. After breakfast we had a meeting with Khoi Tran and Le Kong Giou (sp?). Planned our trips for the upcoming days. Then for lunch Khoi took us to a beautiful vegetarian restaurant. His wife met us there, and ordered the meal. She is a real cutie. Her name is Puong. We are trying to come up with a Western first name for her. She is the publishing director for the mission, and I gave her the devotional book for literature evangelists that she had requested. Don’t even know the names of all the food we had. Of course, there were spring rolls, which we wrapped in lettuce to eat. Then we had a deep-fried tofu dish that was excellent. Also, had rice and veggies that was cooked in a banana leaf. Also, had a dish that was boiled on our table over a flame.
While it was cooking Puong added some green leaves that looked kind of like spinach, and let that cook for a while. I had a drink that was a mixture of soy milk, strawberry syrup, and mandarin orange over ice. I had to have two! For desert, Ralph and I had durian ice cream. As you can see, we’re not starving.

After lunch we went to the Central Church, which is on the grounds with the former publishing house, and the old mission hospital. They have added a building with classrooms and hotel type rooms for pastors to stay when they come for meetings. They have really packed a lot of buildings into a small space! Unfortunately, when the North took over Saigon they confiscated our printing presses and shipped them North. So now we have to print our books through the government presses. Then we met with Elder Tran, the mission president, who is Khoi’s Father. He is very ill so Ralph had a special prayer for him. After that we went on a tour of our former SDA properties.

Saw the US army hospital that was given to us operate.

Then went to the former compound where our school and mission housing were when I visited Saigon in 1968. After I was there they built a new hospital on the same grounds. Of course, this property was confiscated when the North "liberated" the South. We are now negotiating with the government to return these properties. The government is saying that they can't give these back, but will give us property of equal size somewhere else in the city. That is a poor bargain for us, but with things the way they are now, we will probably be lucky to get that!

When we got back to the Church they ushered us into the pastor's office, and there were a large tray piled with mango steins and another tray with the innards from two durians. What a feast we had. Marleen, wish you could have been with us to enjoy the mango steins. They were just as delicious as I remembered. After the feast we came back to the hotel for a little R & R.

I couldn't sleep, so went for a little swim. They have a beautiful outdoor pool on the 7th floor. I estimate it is about 30 meters long. They weather is warm enough so the cooler water felt good.

At 7:30 Khoi came to the hotel and we went by taxi to play badminton. It was great fun, but I was definitely not at my best. Hadn’t played for over two months, and with the heat, humidity, and jet lag I didn’t really hold up my end very well. After playing, Khoi brought me back to the hotel on his Honda motor scooter. That was an unforgettable experience! You have to be here to really get the picture! You are competing for road space with the other 6 million motor scooters, the cars, taxis and buses. Often you are driving within inches of each other. You are weaving in and out—cutting people off, and being cut off. Khoi is an excellent driver, and I felt that perhaps he was being a little more cautious for my sake. When we started out he said, "Now, just relax!" Easy for him to say! Anyway, it was a blast, and I hope to play again on Saturday night.

Well, it's just about time for breakfast, so I'd better sign off for now. I check out of the hotel at 10 o'clock and Khoi and I leave by van for the North. Ralph will be flying up this afternoon. Don't know what the Wi-Fi situation is at the hotel up North, so may not be able to write tomorrow.

Love,
Arlind (Dad)

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III. Karen Campmeeting in America (Part 2 of 4)

Scott Griswold <scott.griswold@asapministries.org> July 17:

On Friday I was pretty surprised by the group that was there. They were primarily high school and college students. But I didn't need to entertain them. They readily joined in, eager to learn how to share their faith. They asked questions and we wrestled with the challenges they face. One of their biggest questions was about dating non-Christians. I asked them, what seems to be the purpose for dating in America? They said, because it's fun. We talked about how most of the fun ends in disappointment. We talked about how the typical dating in America is really good at breaking hearts. It frequently leads to a superficial intimacy that leaves scars, maybe stops schooling and can shame the family.

I had just learned that back in the villages of Burma many youth get married in their teens. Some children are even made to marry at ages 10-12.

I said, "You don't have to do that anymore. So many responsibilities come when you get married. Right now you are free to study and work. So use your freedom not for the heartbreak of casual dating. Use your freedom to live for God. Then you'll be ready for that person that God is also making strong—and it will be someone of your faith.

I was startled by their applause. They seemed excited to challenge their new culture with God's culture of total dedication.

This is their great challenge—to look back at their home Karen culture, to look around at their new American culture and then to look deeply into the Bible and forge a truly Christian culture that combines the best of Karen and American
while rejecting the negative from each. Even though we just had a few hours together, I felt so privileged, so excited to be part of that process.

But the greatest amount of energy was concentrated in one other room. Were there really forty children in that classroom or did it just feel like it? ASAP Ministries founder Judy Aitken joined her daughter Jolene Roosenberg and her grandchildren to put on the children's program. Maybe you remember this family from our podcast Family Blessings in Refugee Ministry. If not, you should watch it at our Youtube channel. They've really been involved in reaching out to refugees together as a family. Two Karen ladies Paw Ree Say and Hser Nyu lah helped a lot too.

Anyway they planned a program with the theme, "The Armor of God," based on Ephesians 6. The children absolutely loved making their own armor. They laid out felt and tin foil and paper and glue and glitter all over the place. Plastic swords and shields were the biggest hit and for the most part they were used for good spiritual purposes. At least there were no fatalities.

I got recruited to help out with stories and I loved that. Here is a generation of tiny children. They've soaked up the English language and are now translating for their moms. Few of them remember the refugee camps. They will grow up in America. Might likely look and act like everyone else. But is that good? What will be the status of their relationship with God? Will they love Him and serve Him with the passion of their grandparents? It's programs like this camp meeting that will make the difference. On Sabbath morning I shared the story of Peter and Jesus. For a half an hour the children stayed with me, soaking up the way Jesus loved Peter even through his mistakes. They could tell Jesus loved them too. As I looked at them I could picture this group as a little army for God, taking this most awesome of stories to other children right here in America. [end of Part 2 of 4] ~~~~~~~~~~~~~ IV. Korean Church Opens in Bangkok

from June's "Shining Light in Thailand"

"On March 8, 2014, the Korean Church held their grand opening and dedication of their new church building. The church is located inside the Mission compound. We thank the Korean Union Conference who supports the Korean work in Bangkok. They sent Pastor Kim Jin Suk to lead the Korean work in Bangkok. We praise God that the construction of the Korean Church building is completed. We pray that by God's guidance many Korean businessmen in Bangkok will be reached with the message of salvation.

"The opening, dedication and ribbon cutting were led by the President of the East Central Korean Conference, Pastor Lee Gyung Woo, together with Thailand Mission Officers."

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V. Wilson Encourages Pastors, Doctors and Politicians in Thailand from the current issue of Adventist Review:

Seventh-day Adventist world church President Ted N. C. Wilson has offered encouragement to hundreds of Adventist leaders at a historic pastoral convention in Bangkok and asked for prayers for the local Adventist hospital after months of political unrest led to a decline in patients.

Wilson, who visited the Thai capital last week, also prayed with the country's top politician for religious affairs and visited two Adventist schools that educate the children of some of the most influential people in Thailand.

The July 14-16 pastoral convention, titled "Revival and Reflecting God's Glory," gathered more than 1,200 Adventist pastors, church workers, administrators and spouses from across the Southern-Asia Pacific Division for the first meeting of its kind since the territory of the former Far Eastern Division was split into two divisions in 1997.

On the sidelines of the convention, Wilson visited the 200-bed Bangkok Adventist Hospital, which opened in 1937 and is known locally as Mission Hospital. It has lost much business over the past six to seven months because of its near proximity to government buildings buffeted by demonstrations and related road closures, "Unfortunately, it needs our prayers since it is so close to the government buildings where demonstrations take place," said Wilson, who ate lunch at the hospital with his wife, Nancy. "Now everything is quiet and peaceful, and they are regaining their patient load.".

Wilson later toured the Ekamai Thai School and the Ekamai International School, which opened in 1946 as a school for Christian missionaries' children and now teaches kindergarten through 12th grade. Today, both schools are progressive and thriving schools as they reach out to the students of the upper classes of Bangkok, Wilson said.

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VI. SULADS Story-- A SURPRISE FOR CRISEL

By: Sarah A. Famisaran, SULADS Comprehensive School for the Deaf
Crisel, a fifteen year old girl, comes from a non-Adventist home. But her uncles and aunts of her father's family are Adventists. It was her aunt who introduced her to us when she learned of our new Adventist SULADS School for the Deaf. She loves and enjoys school.

As this was her first time to be away from home, her father called one day to check on her. "How is my girl? Is she doing well? How is she doing in school? How about... ..." and a lot more questions making sure that his daughter was fine.

I assured him, "Crisel is in good hands as we treat every student as a member of our family."

I noticed that our students never mention going home. Everyone enjoys each other's company as a new family in this new home and school for the Deaf. Sometimes all of us go out as a school family visiting churches as invited. In this way the students can be exposed to people and they feel loved as church members express their love to them. This is also their first time to enjoy church as they have never been treated this way.

On the other hand, the brethren express their joy having experienced for the first time our Deaf students performing their songs heartily as they sing also with their hands in signs. They sing it as if they know the lyrics well as they voice it aloud in their mumbling which no one can understand. But the message is clear and penetrating into the hearts of the brethren as tears come to their eyes seeing that even these Deaf can praise and worship the Lord.

It was not known to us that as we visit churches, the brethren tell the story of having been blessed to hear the Deaf sing. This story reached Crisel's aunts and uncles. They told Crisel's father of his daughter's performance singing, reciting memory verses in churches with her hands in signs she learned from school.

"This sounds too good to be true!" her father said. "This is good news to me!" he further expressed. "Since the Adventist church is doing this to my daughter, I don't have any reason at all why I should not join this church. It is evident, now, that my daughter belongs to this church even if she is not yet baptized. I want to learn more of the doctrines. Do you have somebody to give us Bible study?" he asked. So Bible studies began for the whole family.

We were invited one Sabbath to the Pangantucan church, a place near Crisel's home. We were having Sabbath School and were in front. I was interpreting for them as a reader of the mission report was speaking. Crisel looked back, stood up, and ran out without paying any attention to the crowd. There in the entrance of the church she hugged a man, a lady, a boy, and a baby. It was as if they were in a surprise reunion as they wiped their tears from their eyes. Everybody looked back and watched this teary drama.

We later learned that this was Crisel's family, who came to see her and join her in worship in our church.

After the Sabbath worship, we had a long talk with her parents and there we learned that they had just been baptized to join Crisel in this church which loves and is taking care of her. What A SURPRISE FOR CRISEL and a joy to us as well and most especially to the host of Angels and Jesus in Heaven.

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