I. Creation Celebrated at Sahmyook University  

Geoscience Research Institute Newsletter, Feb. 9:

The Geoscience Research Institute (GRI) organized a Celebration of Creation November 7-8 at Sahmyook University in Seoul, Korea. The program featured lectures from 3 members of GRI, along with an anthropologist from the Philippines, and four Koreans, including the GRI branch office Director for Asia, Dr. Choi Chong Geol. Celebrations of Creation are held each year, and sponsored by the Faith and Science Council and the GRI. Dr. Tim Standish of GRI and translator address the group at the Celebration of Creation. II. Gospel Outreach Director Visits Philippines

Fred L. Webb <sulads@suladsgroup.org> Feb. 4:

I am currently in the Philippines on my annual visit to the workers for Gospel Outreach and the SULADS. The next few reports will be from these workers.

I arrived in Manila Monday night, February 2 and went directly to North Philippine Union Conference where I had a reserved guestroom. February 3, I made contact with John Blake, Jeff Jordan, and Larry Evans who had preceded me in Manila. After a nourishing breakfast at the Manila Adventist Medical Center cafeteria and making a few arrangements, we were transported to the Southern Asia-Pacific Division headquarters in Silang, Cavite by the NPUC van.

We met with Pastor Doug Venn, Missions Director, and Pastor Hermogenous Villanueva, who among other titles is the Director of Deaf Ministries. We discussed what is happening in the deaf work in the Philippines, some of the problems and the successes of the program. Most of all, we discussed what we could do to advance the work for the deaf.

Larry Evans, General Conference Director for Deaf Ministries, reported on the work for the deaf around the world which lead into a discussion about what could be done in the Philippines. Doug Venn told of his burning desire to reach the deaf within the territories of SSD and particularly within the Philippines. Within the Philippines, Gospel Outreach is sponsoring two young ladies, Lychele and Cheard Gabuco, in the Manila area and Sarah and Daryl Famisaran with Sunny Suan in Mindanao.

Pastors Venn and Villanueva are cooperating and collaborating to improve and expand the work for the deaf within SSD territory. While Pastor Venn has had a long-time interest in the deaf since studying American Sign Language under Jeff Jordan at Andrews University, Pastor Villanueva is just beginning his work as the Director for Deaf Ministries and has much yet to learn about working for the deaf. Both seem to be very interested in seeing this work expand.

Pastor Venn revealed a fund that could be made available for the work for the deaf as well as other evangelistic activity. The guidelines for application for the funds are not yet well in place. All of us present expressed interest in the work for the deaf to avail of some of these funds.

I will seek further information regarding this.
Pastor Venn had postponed a trip out of the country in order to meet with us for the morning. At noon, he excused himself to prepare for his departure. Pastor Villanueva escorted us to a wonderful outdoor restaurant nearby that provided us with a delicious meal.

We then proceeded to AIIAS (Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies) where I obtained the domestic tickets for the balance of my itinerary here in the Philippines. After a brief tour of the campus, we proceeded to Tagaytay and took a quick look at Ta'al Lake and volcano. We then went on to Adventist University of the Philippines for a quick look at the campus. After a short drive around the campus we returned to NPUC for the night.

February 4, we met with Lychel and Cheard Gabuco along with their parents, all of whom are involved in working for the deaf in Manila. Pastor Gabuco presented a short history of the deaf in the Philippines. Lychel gave a report of the work they are doing in Manila. Currently they have about 150 deaf people attending church services each week in 13 churches. Thirty-five of those are now baptized Seventh-day Adventists. Five years ago, when the Gospel Outreach launched this work under Lychel, there were only 4 deaf Adventists involved. They now have 9 persons trained in sign language so they can function as interpreters.

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III. Remembering Pastor John Lu

Larry Colburn <larry@larrycolburn.com> Feb. 9:

We were saddened to learn of the passing of our dear friend and former neighbor, Pastor John Lu. Our deepest sympathy is extended to wife, Karen, and each of the children. With the passing of yet another of God’s warriors, what a wonderful day the second coming of Jesus will be! As we reflect on our years together in Taiwan, each time Pastor John Lu shared a sermon, or a message, seems the Holy Spirit used him directly and we were always blessed and inspired anew. His messages came from a fully committed heart. Again, that great reunion in heaven will not only be a huge blessing for Karen and his immediate family, but also for each one in the family of God.

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IV. Jesus for Asia’s New Project in Philippines

Dede Van Buren <Dede@Jesus4Asia.org> Feb. 6:

In the mountains of Mindoro Island, in the Philippines, live a group of people who are either ignored or abused by civilization and who have almost no access to education. Considered just a little higher than the monkeys, this group of people is taken advantage of, due to their minority status and not being able to read, write or count. They do not bathe and have no idea of germs. They don’t wash plates, but rather just let the dogs lick their bowls, then continue to eat out of the bowl without cleaning it first. As you can imagine, the infant mortality rate is high. They bury their dead in the trees and believe that a monster will come out of the dead body, so they then have to move the village for fear of the monster.

Three years ago Jon Wood gave two hundred dollars out of his travel money to the uncle of an HCBN volunteer, who is a missionary in Mindoro. This uncle is Filipino and, in general, Filipinos look down on these Mangyans, but this man was a missionary to them; he had a heart to serve them. Out of Jon’s gift, the villagers started making and selling soy milk, which financed a school built in one of the Mangyan villages. Also, they have begun wearing clothes, something they did not feel comfortable with originally, and they are also now getting an education to help sustain themselves.

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V. Thailand’s University Hosts Eye Clinic

ANN News, Feb. 10:

A Seventh-day Adventist university in Thailand recently hosted a group of volunteer ophthalmologists who offered free eye care for more than 250 nearby elderly residents in need.

The Church’s Asia-Pacific International University in the Saraburi province hosted the Mobile Eye Surgery Eye Clinic, sponsored by the province's Red Cross Society February 2 to 6.
Patients were diagnosed with cases of cataract, pterygium, and other eye-related conditions. The surgeries for most cases took five to 10 minutes to complete, while more challenging cases took up to an hour.

The mobile clinic was set up in various spots around campus, including a multi-use room, the dining room and the church parking lot.

The clinic served underprivileged elderly from five districts-Muak Lek, Nhong Kae, Khaeng Koi, Wihan Dang and Wang Muang.

The program was also supported by Dr. Varangkna Tongkamsai, an ophthalmologist for Nations Relief and Community Health Protection Society, who conducted the eye operations.

Organizers said the highlight of the five-day event was a February 4 appearance by Phan Wannamethee, secretary general of the Thai Red Cross Society and a representative of Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, Executive Vice-President of the Thai Red Cross Society.

University President Loren Agrey accompanied Wannamethee as he observed the different functions of the mobile clinic.

Saraburi Governor Wichian Puttiwinyu also attended the event, delivering remarks at the opening ceremony on February 2.

"We praise God for an opportunity to take part in this project," said Diana Riesenberger, a university spokeswoman.

The Princess Sirindhorn Mobile Eye Surgery Clinic was established in 1995 to commemorate Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn’s 40th Birthday. The project has advanced to be a surgical mobile unit to provide free eye treatment for people with cataracts, glaucoma and disease of eyelids. So far the project has provided treatment for more than 158,000 people and performed operations for 40,000 patients.

VI. SULADS Story--A Killer Seeks the Savior

By Reynante Dayagro

Gospel Outreach Evangelist, Culion, Palawan

I was given an opportunity to work with AWA (Adventist World Aviation) as translator for two weeks during their Evangelistic Effort held at Narra District. I was the translator for Mrs. Charlene West, Director of Evangelism of AWA Ministry and her son, Mr. Aaron West with his wife, Mrs. Melissa West. Every night Mrs. West and her son plead with the church members, appealing to them to accept the responsibility of being a disciple of Jesus. We must share the message of Hope with those who are in the darkness of sin. Many people don't know the truth that will set them free when Christ will come.

I know that the Holy Spirit was working in the heart of each church member, because every night of sharing the good news of salvation through the word of God, there were more people coming to the church to listen in the calling of the Holy Spirit. Even the little children responded. They were so happy listening to the stories from the Bible and earning some new songs. I hoped and I prayed that this ministry might give our young children a chance to accept Jesus as their Redeemer. After two weeks of meetings there were 20 souls who decided to accept Jesus as their Savior through Holy Baptism.

I would like to tell the story of one of our interest who regularly attended the meeting with his family. His name was Brother Arnel Dacasin.

Brother Arnel had been a backslider for twenty years along with his father, brothers, and sisters. It happened that one of the venues for the Evangelistic Effort of AWA was just two miles from their home. The Elder of the church invited Brother Arnel and his family to come to our nightly meeting. They responded to the invitation. That gave an opportunity for the Speaker and the District Pastor to visit the whole family. We spent more than an hour sharing the word of God. We remind them that Jesus is coming soon and we must prepare ourselves for that blessed hope so that we will have the privilege of being with Him in the heavenly home eternally.

They continued coming to our meeting but a tragedy came to Brother Arnel that could hinder his decision to follow Jesus. He killed someone. That someone may have been used by the enemy, Satan, to stop Brother Arnel from coming to our meetings. Then he could not listen to the word of God anymore.

Not only Brother Arnel but also his family might be affected. A big problem came to the whole family, and they stopped coming to the meeting except his father.

I asked his father what happened that they were no longer attending. We learned from his father that Brother Arnel killed someone and he was in the prison for safety reasons. The family of the guy he killed were angry and they wanted revenge. Brother Arnel was in prison for 24 hours. According to the law, after Twenty-four hours without complaining
from the victim's family, the convict will be released from the prison. Upon knowing the situation of Brother Arnel we brought the problem to the church and to the group of AWA to pray for the situation. We knew that God is more powerful than the enemy, Satan. For twenty-four hours no one complained so Arnel was released from the prison and went to Puerto Princesa City to hide for the meantime.

After 2 days brother Arnel went back to Princess Urduja where we were having the meetings and continued to listen to the word of God. I talked personally to Brother Arnel and asked him what happened and why he killed that person. Brother Arnel told me the whole story that he was just defending himself from the enemy.

After attending the meeting one night, Brother Arnel went home and ate supper. After eating, the Barangay Captain called Brother Arnel for his duty in the barangay because he was one of the tanod (officers of the barangay). There was an occasion that needed protection that night. Brother Arnel went home from his duty at two o'clock in the morning. He was with his two companions riding on a motorcycle. While travelling home, someone ambushed them from the dark. The guy that came out from the dark had covered his face and was holding a sharp bolo in his right hand and a sharp chain saw chain in his left hand, signifying that he was really going to kill someone. While attacking Brother Arnel the motorcycle fell down and his two companions were able to run away asking for help. Brother Arnel was left alone trying to defend himself from the attacking guy. At first the guy with a sharp bolo struck the motorcycle and chopped it. Brother Arnel asked the guy "Who are you?" because the guy had covered his face and could not be recognized. He did not respond. After hitting the motorcycle, the guy turned toward Brother Arnel and attacked him. There was a piece of wood nearby which Arnel picked up and used it to defend himself. While fighting, Brother Arnel hit the attacker on the head. They both fell down because Brother Arnel was also trying to grab the sharp bolo from the guy. When they fell down, Brother Arnel was on the top of the guy and was able to lock the right hand of that guy with the wood so his hand could not move and he could not strike Brother Arnel anymore. But The guy’s left hand was still holding the sharp chain and was hitting brother Arnel’s back. After fifteen minutes of fighting and struggling to defend his life Arnel killed the guy who ambushed them with a strike on the head.

Immediately after the incident Brother Arnel ran to the police station and told them what happened and he was detained for twenty-four hours in prison. While telling me the story tears were flowing from his eyes. He was unhappy about what had happened. He did not want to kill the guy, he was just defending himself.

Arnel wanted to change his life and follow Jesus Christ as his Savior. Yet the enemy did something to stop brother Arnel. But God is more powerful. Through faith and the prayers of the brethren the decision of Brother Arnel was unstoppable. He continued attending the meetings and finally on the last call from the Holy Spirit he accepted the Savior Jesus Christ. Six precious souls from Brother Arnel's family were baptized.

Please continue to pray for Brother Arnel and his family. He cannot work on his farm. He is away from his family and there is a threat on his life right now. The family of the victim wants to take revenge.

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