I. Remembering Leonard Simon

Johnson S. Christian <JSCFRUIT@aol.com> Jan. 7:
The death of my former student, Leonard Simon, has been a great shock to me.
Leonard and his good wife were my former students in Bangalore Middle School. Leonard was such a wonderful student, always a cheerful and hard-working person.

We had a boarding school and many students from different parts of India came to Bangalore Middle School. I was in charge of the boys at that time, Later I served as principal when I had finished my masters degree from Andrews University in 1961.

Leonard used to take my little daughter Margaret for walks in her stroller. (She's a doctor now, as is her husband, Kenneth Peterson; they always admired Leonard and his wife Rani.)

His funeral was held in the Southern Asian Church in Maryland. I was invited to speak; I could hardly believe that he is gone at so early an age.

I am sure the Lord knows it all, that he lived a very good life in every way, a real blessing to the church and community.

He leaves his wife Rani, his sister Rainu, his brother Mohan, and a host of relatives and friends. The Golden Morning is fast approaching; Jesus soon will come. Let's be prepared to meet our Lord in peace on that wonderful day.

II. Letters

1. Ruth Sipkens <ruthsipkens@gmail.com>

Good for you, Raj Attiken; many blessings for your retirement. Forty years! What an accomplishment. How time travels from when you were a youth in Sri Lanka, the Bethel Chapel and youth camps enjoyed by all. We look forward to meeting again when Jesus comes - if not before.

III. Death of P. Samuel, Pioneer Kerala Adventist, at 96

Sunny Wycliffe <sunnywycliffe@gmail.com> Jan. 4:

My cousin, K. S. Premprathap (Thankamony)'s dad, Mr. P. Samuel (96) passed away in his sleep Sabbath morning, December 4, 2014 at Mangarthala House, Vadacode, Neyyattinkara, Kerala State, India. Till his death, he was in good health. He retired from the Kerala State Government Public Works Department. He was a faithful member and Elder of the Vadacode, the FIRST SDA church established in Kerala State. This year we were hoping to have him with us to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kerala State.

Mr. Samuel was married to my mother’s (Rangabai Japagnanam John) only sister, late D. Ressalamma, the first daughter of Mrs. D. Mary & A. David (Devadas). Mrs. Mary was the first teacher at the FIRST Seventh-day Adventist school in Adventpuram, Kerala. Mr. A. David was one of the first colporteurs in Vadacode under the tutelage of Mr. M. Abel, the FIRST person to accept the Seventh-day Adventist faith in Kerala in 1914.
Thankamony can be reached at: 011-91-989-559-6812  
Address: Mangarthala House, Vadicode, Neyyattinkara Post, Kerala State, India  
Please pray for the family in a special way. Thank you.--J. John (Sunny) Wycliffe

Pastor Sanal conducted the funeral service. He was buried next to his wife in our property and awaiting the Arch Angel's Trumpet call. He leaves behind a lot of relatives and friends around the globe -- USA, England, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Middle East and other countries. We all are looking forward to that bright Morning for the family reunion and live with Jesus eternally.

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IV. Indian Missionary in Africa Honored  
Patrick Manu <patrickmanu56@live.com> January 6:  
On October 9, 2013, the President of the Republic of Uganda where I am serving as the President of our SDA University awarded me with a Presidential Medal for my contribution to governance in the area of University Education. It was indeed a surprise for me and my family. I was invited for the Independent celebration where the medal was presented by the President of the Republic. Those who would like to see a picture of the same can visit our university website <www.bugemauniv.ac.ug>. Continue to pray for us even as we pray for you all.  
Happy New Year

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V. Edison Samraj addresses Adventist Youth-Three Southern States  
Edison Samraj <adventistmediacentre@gmail.com>  
A group of IT and medical professionals convened in the city of Erode for spiritual nurture and growth for 3 days-27th to 29th of December, 2013. The meeting was held at St Mount Carmel Adventist Seminary. It was coordinated by John Sundaraj and the Southeast India Union. The theme of the entire weekend was 'On the Road to Eternity'. It was a call to follow the principles of Jesus Christ for our Adventist professionals. Different presidents were called with different perspectives. It was well presented and the response was very good. We had union presidents, ministerial directors, extra-ordinary Bible students and testimonies, workshops and symposium were organized for them. The group discussions that were led were by various group leaders and it did make an impact. I believe that this kind of nurture for outside universities are essential to nurture our young generation in the truth. It was my privilege to participate in the entire exercise of nurture and outlining to them spiritual growth. It was a well-spent event and everyone went back with a lot of zeal and enthusiasm to work for the church along side with the professional career.

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VI. Report on Adrian Zahid  
Joseph Zahid <josuna4@gmail.com> Jan. 5:  
Just informing you, our family members, relatives, friends, and well-wishers that Adrian Zahid is still in the hospital - Loma Linda University Medical Center. His whole chest from left to right has an incision. He has oxygen connected to him. He is not able to breathe well without it, and, also, he has a hard time walking since his surgery. LLUMC allows visitors 24 hours, but the only restriction is that they let 2 visitors into his room at one time. Since his surgery, Dec. 27, some of you have sent us letters, others have brought us cooked food, and still some others have visited and prayed for him. We, his parents, are there with him in Room 7110 (on the 7th Floor) daily 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Please do pray for him, so that he would soon be discharged and in normal health.

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VII. Spicer's Morning Watch Devotional for 2015  
Elisha Pulivarti <epulivarti@msn.com> January 8:  
I take this honor to invite community leaders to write a message for the Spicer Memorial College Centennial morning watch commentary 2015. one can write more than one message or reading. The devotional will contain your readings who have experienced God's leading hand in your life.  
Theme: "God's Leading Through Spicer."  
Length: 350 words. A title, a Bible text and a prayer at the end of your message.  
Deadline: January 30, 2014  
Thank you and appreciate your support and leadership. God bless.
Sincerely,
Elisha B. Pulivarti  
Spicer Memorial College Centennial Projects North America  
240-432-9612 (cell)  

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Please Note:  
Spicer Memorial College Centennial Project Celebrations:  
October 24-26, 2014 Washington DC area.  
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Centenary Celebration: January 28- February 1, 2015. Pune, India.  

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VIII. The Johnson Chrisrians Continue Long Time India Ministry  
        Johnson S. Christian <JSCFRUIT@aol.com>  
        Jan.14:  
               December is my favourite month, as it is perhaps for many others, though may be for different reasons, but the common thread uniting them could be Christmas (and the New Year trailing behind a week afar) and everything associated with it---holidays, family visits, parties, cards, gifts, good food and new clothes. Recently while visiting the Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai, with the School of Education students, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that almost all of the Indian scientists whose busts were erected there placing below brass plaques with brief life sketches etched on them, were born in the month of December or very close to it like the last week of November or first week of January increasing my infatuation with the month.  
               Well-known artists from other areas of life too, like the well noted musician, Beethoven, with whom I share my birthday (with any further resemblance with him ending just there) as well as my name sake, the first president of India, were also born in December, making me believe that the greatest person of all times, Jesus Christ was indeed born in this magic month of December. (Perhaps I should ask my students in the "Life Span Development" class to do a research on people born in December!)  
               One particular reason I am enamoured with this month is its pleasant climate, at least in India, very conducive for travel. Though not my original plan, but somehow I was dragged into leading 30 graduate students (MA Education/Religion & MBA) along with Dr. Mohanraj Israel on their roller-coaster educational tour to Jaipur, Hapur, Roorkee, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Delhi and Agra from December 11 to 18, 2013. Though I had been to these places several times earlier, this trip seemed quite significant as this time I happened to open my heart and soul more than my eyes and ears, to actively perceive, analyze and discern every locale, anecdote and personnel and thank the good Lord for this rich experience. It was elating to see our workers and laypersons (most of whom were either my former classmates, colleagues or students at Spicer) in all these churches, hospitals, schools and college of the North India Union quite vibrant and dynamic in the mission of the church and actively involved in developmental programmes for the glory of God. I was also quite impressed everywhere with their bonhomie, spirit of camaraderie and generosity, most of them freely opening their homes, facilities and coffers and providing our group good accommodation, nourishing food and even comfortable transport to visit places of historical interest in their cities.  
               Another memorable event, personally to me, was the President of Roorkee Adventist College, my former student and colleague at Spicer, somehow coming to know during supper on December 15th that it was the eve of my birthday, held a brief celebration for me and declared that the meal served then was going to be free in my honour. Later at the Roorkee station while awaiting our train to Delhi, two Puneet Singh's, one my former Chemistry student at Spicer and now a faculty at Roorkee College, and the other, an MBA student from Spicer, now part of the tour group, conspired together and smuggled in secretly a huge 'black forest cake' with a topping of "To Friend Sir" and had a surprise celebration of my birthday, cutting the cake on an improvised stand, and the whole group singing aloud the birthday
song, to the amusement of other passengers in the station, and repeating it the whole of next day especially during the mealtimes with the tourist guide also joining in, till we reached Spicer campus reminding me of giving them a treat...

Though I stayed back at Spicer for Christmas trying to complete all the pending office work, I left Pune once again on 26th evening travelling to Bangalore and Guntur visiting my folk there, before embarking on the rigorous task of making preparations for the centennial celebrations of the college hardly a year away. And during my return journey to Spicer on Jan 2, lying languorously on the side berth of the comparatively empty bogie of my train with the morning slanting sun rays gradually warming up my body while the wintry cool breeze wafted over me as I lazily surveyed the receding back drop of fields, farms, lakes, and waste land, I couldn't but help experiencing the peace and serenity of the constellations and thanking the Almighty most profoundly and sincerely for all His bountiful blessings, watch-care and protection over me, my family, my friends, and my people in the college and the church in India during the past hectic month of December and year 2013, and invoking His special blessings on all of us including the world-wide SDA church as it prepares earnestly to move closer to Him in the new year: to grant us good health and strength, wisdom and knowledge from above, peace and prosperity, and love, joy and courage; to help us spread His message to countless lost souls around us and bring them to His fold; and to protect us all from sickness and sorrow, and from all harm, evil and danger and to preserve us till another December, 2014, if His advent is delayed! Maranatha, Lord Jesus, Amen!

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