



Newest Addition to the Staff

We welcome **Alyssa Soule** to the front desk at the World Mission Resource Center. Alyssa is administrative secretary and receptionist for both World Mission Associates and MFL. She has been happily married to her husband Andrew for nearly five years. Alyssa is a graduate of Lancaster Bible College and has previously worked as an Assistant Director at a child care center. We are sad to say goodbye to Sara Costalas who did a tremendous job for us in a number of roles. Thanks, Sara and welcome Alyssa!



Alyssa Soule



WMA PERSPECTIVES

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August/September 2010

Cultural Identity and New Found Faith

WMA / MFL UPCOMING EVENTS

**LANCASTER MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP
for 2010**

Friday, September 17th

Glenn Schwartz and Jean Johnson

"Should We Support 'National' Church Leaders?"

Friday, October 15th

Dr. Tom Telford

"Mission Trends in the Past 40 Years"

Friday, November 19th

Dr. Keith Gammon

"Sustainability Issues Related to Mission Hospitals in India"

Place: The World Mission Resource Center

Time: 12:00 – 1:30 pm each session

Lunch: Will be provided for a donation, or bring your own lunch.

If you plan to attend, contact us at (717) 299-1427 or e-mailing wmausa@wmausa.org

***Note: LMF will not meet in December but will resume in January 2011.

**MISSIONS FEST LANCASTER
2011 February Conference**

Missions Fest's 2nd February Conference is scheduled to take place on **February 18-20, 2011** at the new Lancaster County Convention Center in downtown Lancaster. Speakers on schedule are **Gracia Burnham, Paul Borthwick, Chuck Bentley** and **Dr. Oscar Lopez**. Admission to the event is free of charge, and complimentary parking tickets will be available upon request.

ANNUAL WMA PROMOTIONAL BANQUET

Tickets are now available

Date: Friday, September 24, 2010

Time: 6:00 PM—9:00 PM

Venue: Four Seasons Banquet Facility, Landisville

Speaker: Ms. Jean Johnson, WMA Associate and missionary to Cambodia

Cost: A free-will offering will be taken.

Complimentary tickets are available. We invite you to join us for this night of encouragement where you will learn about what is happening in WMA ministry.

Contact the World Mission Resource Center with your ticket order at (717) 299-1427 or register on-line at www.wmausa.org

WMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The World Mission Associates Board of Directors plan to meet

Saturday, September 25, 2010.

Remember to pray for the WMA board, asking God for wisdom and discernment for all who are involved.



Jean Johnson

I feel as though I lost a part of myself. Why did it have to happen to me? I can't make sense of life anymore. Why didn't I see the signs? If only I had been more attentive. What could I have done differently? I feel like I was betrayed, or did I betray someone else? I am desperate to know how to deal with my loss. Oh, that I could feel whole again. It should not have to be this way.

This grieving man did not lose a son or his spouse; he suffered the loss of his cultural identity—through his decision to become a Christian. He gained Christianity, but lost something of the cohesion which his own culture provided. This feeling of loss affects many families throughout the world due to the way we as cross-cultural missionaries "do mission" or present the Gospel. When God's kingdom touches people, cultural changes are inevitable. But, the loss of cultural identity can destroy someone's psychological well-being and affect the growth of God's kingdom. Thank God for the new identity that comes through being in Christ.

When I visited churches in Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Mongolia and other parts of the world, I have seen churches that look and feel like my home country, instead of being an expression of their own respective cultures. The negative effects of conceptualizing and organizing the church based on the missionaries' cultures is a sure way to stifle the church of Jesus Christ in those countries. Glenn Schwartz, my colleague in ministry, states the following:

An indigenous Church should look and sound like the society of which it is a part. In other words, it should not stand out as something culturally different or foreign. It should stand out in other ways. It ought to be seen as a group of people concerned to carry out God's priorities in their communities. Believers should stand apart from the average person in the neighborhood because of their obedience

"An indigenous church looks and sounds like the society of which it is a part."

to God's Word. But the church should not look like a culturally foreign institution. Unfortunately, many mission-established churches simply look and sound foreign to the eyes and ears of local people.¹

According to Glenn's statement, we recognize at least one ingredient of the indigenous church: "An indigenous church looks and sounds like the society of which it is a part." Beyond reflecting the culture, an indigenous church relates to how the church implements and stewards the activities of the church. Professor Alan Tippett measures the indigenous nature of a church by evaluating the following factors: self-image, self-function, self-determination, self-support, self-propagation, and self-giving.²

How do churches become culturally foreign and what are the consequences of such?

There is a direct correlation between money freely given from the West and the lack of indigeneity among the recipients. Resources sent to or brought into other countries from the outside contribute to planting churches and imple-

(Continued on page 2)



(Continued from page 1)

menting church ministry in accordance to a foreign style. The “easy” money causes indigenous leaders to dream and develop the church in ways that are not compatible with the society around them; rather, they copy church styles and structures from another culture. Donors often have a say in or influence upon recipient churches. Inevitably they introduce, import and model a foreign culture. Money poured in from the outside can often stifle innovation, creativity, teamwork, giving, work ethic, and stewardship among mission-planted churches. A seeming pipeline of money from the West can cause the members of local churches to view their churches as belonging to their “providers” rather than as a means to give and share. Churches that are birthed and grow with foreign money are often not reproducible by those within their respective cultures. Thus, the West has often sent a message to indigenous disciples within their countries: “You can’t birth churches or steward them without outside help.”

Churches that do not reflect their own culture sometimes attract only a minority of people while causing the majority to become uninterested or even resistant. The unbelieving communities shake their heads and say, “Our people have forsaken their culture to become a foreigner and to chase the money trails of those foreigners.” Dorje and Pasang, who are Tibetan and experienced the church in Tibet, share the following:

Dorje and Pasang heard that Christians were always trying to get people of other faiths to leave their own religion and become Christian. Friends had told them that wherever the Christians go, they start Western style schools, hospitals, and development programs, and that this was the way they got people to convert to Christianity. Both Tibetans agreed that Christians should not do this. From what they had seen, to become a Christian one would first have to stop being a Tibetan and become a foreigner. If that were the case, then it was better to remain a Buddhist.³

Dorje and Pasang’s reaction is the result of unhealthy dependency. Unhealthy dependency wreaks havoc on the indigenous nature of the church. Let us put our heads and hearts together and overcome unhealthy dependency through the strength and wisdom of God.

1. Glenn Schwartz, *When Charity Destroys Dignity* (Lancaster: World Mission Associates, 2007) p. 169.
2. Alan Tippett, *Verdict Theology in Missionary Theory* (Lincoln: Lincoln Christian College Press, 1969) p.133 ff.
3. Mark Tsering, *Sharing Christ in a Tibetan Buddhist World* (Tibet: Tibet Press, 2004) p. 127-128.

A brief word about Jean Johnson . . .

Upon graduating with a Cross-Cultural Communications degree from North Central University, Jean Johnson served as a church planter for six years among Cambodians in St. Paul-Minneapolis as a North American missionary. She eventually became a missionary in Cambodia with the Assemblies of God from 1991-2009. Presently, Jean is serving as an International Consultant with World Mission Associates, promoting indigenous church sustainability and multiplication. Jean coaches missionary personnel and international church leaders how to conceptualize and organize ministry by mobilizing local resources. Her upcoming opportunities for travel include Uganda, Nepal, India and various places in North America.

Glenn Schwartz’ Upcoming Travel

October 26—Perspectives Course, Portland, Oregon

November 11-13— Global Health Mission Conference, Louisville, Kentucky

November 16 –21— Global Self-Reliance Network, Kampala, Uganda

December 3-5 — Mission Leadership Forum, New Haven, Connecticut



Mission Aviation Fair Report John Bush

We are excited to see Missions Fest Lancaster continue to grow! The Mission Aviation Fair, held at Smoketown Airport August 20-22, was a wonderful time of sharing what God is doing in various parts of the world. About 3,000 people attended. This was in spite of the rain that appeared Sunday noon, which may have kept some people away.

The weekend began on Friday morning with missionary Russ Stendal speaking at the Eden Resort Inn kickoff breakfast. Friday evening we showed the film *End of the Spear* in Hangar Z at the airport, introduced by Steve Saint himself. As an added bonus, Steve personalized it by stopping part way through to point out people in the film who were part of the real life story!



On Saturday and Sunday attendees enjoyed a pancake breakfast, 36 exhibitors, air-plane and helicopter rides, flight demonstrations, a selection of various foods, and much more. We had the privilege of hearing again from Russ Stendal who shared how the Lord has opened incredible doors for ministry in Colombia after his capture there in the 80’s. Jim Leamer described how various technologies are facilitating ministries around the world. Paul Dye shared his nail-biting account of escape from kid-nappers in Colombia accompanied by the important lessons God taught him. And Steve Saint reported how the Lord is using his ministry through I-TEC—Indigenous People’s Technology and Training Center based in Ocala, Florida.

This year, a special program called Children’s Kingdom was directed by Brad and Maxine Waldman who brought with them a trained youth group from Allentown, Pennsylvania. With their explorer passes, children attended activity areas earning “cash” for the “store” and learning the Great Commission along the way. Many people reported how much they appreciated the program.

The focus now turns to the Fall schedule for Lancaster Missionary Fellowship luncheons and preparation for the February 18-20, 2011 MFL conference to be held at Lancaster County Convention Center in downtown Lancaster. We already have 26 agencies registered to be part of that event and anticipate as many as 100 by the time of the event. We are planning for a new section this year dealing with “Business as Mission” – groups that are developing creative ways to reach areas of the world where it has become more and more difficult to do mission work. It is our desire to bring together business people who have an interest in doing business as missions both internationally and in North America. We also plan to feature the sponsoring churches of Missions Fest Lancaster. Plans are also coming together for the Youth Night of the conference. We are delighted that the Lord is blessing us with wonderfully devoted speakers: **Gracia Burnham** who was held captive with her husband in the Philippines, **Paul Borthwick** with Development Associates International, **Chuck Bentley** from Crown Financial Ministries, and **Dr. Oscar Lopez** from CAM International.



Put the dates of February 18-20, 2011 in your calendar now.

**Have you logged on to one of our websites recently?
www.wmausa.org or www.missionsfestlancaster.org**