

## LINKING former Wesleyan missionaries to each other and to Global Partners

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### Cultural Connections

*By a Global Partners Missionary*

It's said that people in my adopted country are hard to get to know and appear cold and unfriendly. It's true, you won't get a cheerful greeting as you walk into a store, and those you pass on the sidewalk won't give a nod and smile. This doesn't mean the people are made of stone and have no heart. They just view relationships and friendships differently.

There are four words for 'friend', plus the female version of each. The list is overwhelming. I just want to call someone FRIEND.

How difficult can that be? It's a simple word. I *know* what it means, but as an American, I sometimes toss around 'friend' without a second thought. Who is a friend? My neighbor, the server at my favorite coffee place, my co-worker? I believe the word friend is losing its value and meaning in English. In my new country, the lines are clear.

The word choice matters and defines the status of the relationship. If I refer to one of my best friends as '*kmond*', it's like a slap in the face. I just called her an acquaintance.

The beautiful part of this complicated language is the power of the words and their meaning. Yes, it takes time to get to know people and it can be hard to get past the basic level of being *kmona*. Investing time into relationships makes all the difference.

One way we've been able to build relationships with people and invest in their lives is through English lessons in a group meeting. Over 400 people have joined our group in its 10 year history. As we gather weekly and chat about topics ranging from spring break to hope, we are able to dig below the surface of small talk and discuss things that really matter. We see this ministry as a way to help local people improve their English and also to find a place to connect with others. As conversations take place, trust builds and friendships are formed.

Now, a Bible Group has started. Several group people hang around after meetings for about an hour to sing some worship songs, read passages from the Bible and to learn more about who Jesus is. Most of these individuals aren't yet believers but they are on a faith journey.

Editorial Note: *Obviously we can't locate this missionary or their country of ministry, but the letter describes the simple yet profound opportunity of building relationships of trust and faith. We can pray intelligently because we take the time to make personal contact with missionaries. When did you last communicate with your partners in missions where just becoming friends is so important? Using the correct word for friend can make or break a relationship that can with God's blessing become an avenue to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Make that contact today with your missionary partners and ask the Lord to help them master the words for 'friend.'*

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## ***NORTH CENTRAL/IN REGIONAL MISSIONARY GATHERING***

The Central/IN Region of WMAF held a “Harvest Celebration” on Nov. 3, 2017 at Shunem House in Noblesville, Indiana. There were 39 people in attendance: 28 missionaries, 2 adult MK’s, 3 special guests and 6 members of the Global Partners Resource Team.

Adding their years of ministry together, this group represented 208 years of missionary service! The harvest theme was not just for the fall season, but also in recognition of the harvest of souls throughout the world (past and present).



The gathering included rejoicing in song, sharing stories from missionary life on the field, and devotions led by Dr. Dennis Jackson, Executive Director of Global Partners. Attendees were challenged to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s leading and speak into the lives of people who may be sensing God’s call to missionary service.

Everyone received a complete set of prayer cards along with a challenge to give prayer support for those now on the front lines. There was wonderful fellowship during a delicious lunch topped off with apple pie and ice cream!



*Clifton & Arletta Ashlock*



*Marcus & Ruth Phillippe, Steven & Eileen Nelson*



*Ruth Phillippe, Lorene Miller, Paul Swauger*

***----- by Jim & Jeanette Vermilya, GP Alumni, Central/IN Regional Coordinators***

### ***Robert & Kay Bickert – Baguio, Philippines***

Bob and Kay returned to the Philippines October 19, this time to establish the School of Evangelism in Baguio City with Evangelism Resources ministry. Their apartment is an excellent location to assist their ministry. The first Sunday at Balili Wesleyan Church encouraged them to see the growth of discipleship groups and outreaches. On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, they met with the District Pastor’s weekly afternoon prayer service for a great time of renewing fellowship. A day trip in the mountains to Abatan gave an opportunity to see laymen converts closing their large restaurant on Thursday afternoons for a worship service with 100+ attending of family and employees and friends. The Bickert’s ministry of years ago is bearing fruit.

Bickerts are working closely with the Wesleyan Church of the Philippines regarding educational studies for laity in pastoral ministry. Other Asian countries will be sending students for training in evangelism/ church planting to enable them to open their own SOE sites. Pray for Bob and Kay in this new opportunity for God’s blessing and anointing. Bob turned 80 last June and his passion for discipleship keeps tugging him forward.

## ***SOUTHEAST REGIONAL MISSIONARY ALUMNI MEETS***



The Southeast Regional Missionary Alumni met on the campus of Southern Wesleyan University Friday evening and Saturday morning, September 29 & 30, 2017. There was a good response and participation with 26 Missionary Alumni, 3 missionary children, 4 current active missionaries with Global Partners, 4 SWU students who had been on mission trips and 2 SWU officials in attendance! Several other missionary alumni sent apologies. There were 4 states represented.

We were warmly received by Rev. Joy Bryant, Executive Director of Alumni and Constituent Relations, SWU. President Todd Voss shared a glowing report of the many good things happening at SWU. It was great to have Dr. Chuck Paine present and bring greetings on behalf of the WMAF Executive Committee of which he is a member.

A special highlight of the meeting was hearing from two couples headed for Haiti – the Greg Edmonds and Dan and Deana Stanley. Our group gathered around the Stanley's, laid hands on them and prayed fervently for this newly-appointed couple.

This fine group of Wesleyan Missionary Alumni had a great time of RECONNECTING, REDISCOVERING they still have a role to play, and REDEDICATING themselves to “pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth reapers”. The consensus of the group was to plan to meet every 2 years, and also meet for only one day. Plans are to meet the Lord willing, in the fall of 2019 at approximately the same time in September.



*Joe Neyman & Jim Wiggins*

*Morris Davis*

*Orvan Link*

*Shirley Neyman & Roxana King*

***----- by Dr. Jim Wiggins, GP Alumnus, Southeast/SC Regional Coordinator***

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Grace Eva Cheney-Reeves has just published her life story, "*Treasured Memories of a Sandhills Girl.*" She and her husband, Bob Cheney, served in Africa--Swaziland, South Africa and Zimbabwe, 1970 to 1995. Their son Randal Cheney, was born in Swaziland in 1972 and is now serving with his family in Swaziland.

The book is Eva's life story and recounts their mission terms and furloughs up to Bob's death. She begins with her own birth when her grandmother Alice French attended as midwife. Lilacs were in full bloom and her Dad took her Mom a beautiful bouquet to celebrate. You will like the way Eva writes.

The 385 page book was published in August, costs \$11.99 and postage is \$3.12 from Eva. Her address is: P.O. Box 247, Lewellen, NE 69147. You can also find the book at Amazon.

