

# FLIGHT LOG

SPRING 2004

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 10 No. 2

FOR THE FRIENDS OF ADVENTIST WORLD AVIATION

## PATHFINDERS, ATTENTION!

If you've heard or read about missionary aviation, and would like to know more – this is a great opportunity to experience a taste of it!

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Look for more information on AWA's website [www.flyawa.org](http://www.flyawa.org)



Pathfinders hold up the wing while mechanics install bolts.



Pathfinders clean the firewall.

## MEMORIALS

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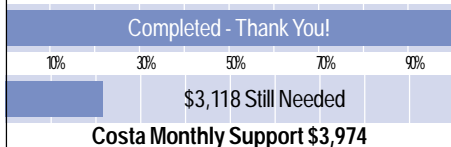
DR. DON WHITTLE  
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GOD FOR MILLIE NOCHBAR'S HEALING FROM CANCER  
THE BROOKS FAMILY  
OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR  
ROBERT FOLKENBURG  
OUR 40TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY  
TO GOD'S GLORY TO REACH SOULS

## GUYANA PROJECT



Marcio & Jane Costa

Costa Launching Expenses \$68,418



Costa Monthly Support \$3,974

Project AirPower Aircraft/Equipment \$185,000



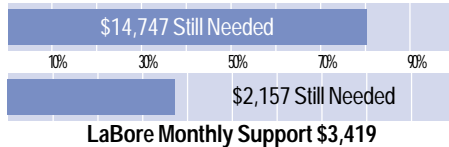
\* \$250 per month per village will provide air and communications services to Bible workers in one of the 56 unreached jungles villages in Guyana.

### Missionaries



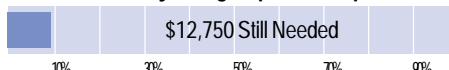
Bill and Laura LaBore

LaBore Launching Expenses \$74,819



LaBore Monthly Support \$3,419

Monthly Village Sponsorship\*



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Adventist World Aviation exists  
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**Adventist World Aviation**  
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**COLOR**



# PATHFINDER MEMORIES

by Laura LaBore



Pathfinder Camporee Patch for 1999.

I grew up with missionary parents in Peru and Bolivia. My dad, Jerry Kopitzke, was the East Peru Mission Youth Director. I have good memories of all my experiences with Pathfinders. Even though I was too young to join, I often went on the camping trips with my parents. I remember the “big kids” working on their carving honor on one



Pathfinders work on the beacon assembly.

of the trips. I found a discarded piece of soap that they were working on, and started carving too. I also remember wishing I could participate in the fire and shelter building contests!

I remember becoming old enough to join Pathfinders and finally getting to wear my uniform. Of course, all the songs and pledges were learned in Spanish and I had to relearn them when I returned to the states!

Yes, I have fond memories of being a Pathfinder and am honored to pilot the plane we’ll be flying in Guyana with the Pathfinder logos on the doors. The Pathfinders were highly involved in getting the mission plane ready for service. In fact, in 1999, Pathfinders from all over the world helped raise funds for its refurbishment. Pathfinder clubs close

enough to Berrien Springs, MI, came to the Andrews University Airpark, to help mechanics clean dirt, strip off the old paint, tighten nuts and bolts as well as other tasks.

Five years ago, Elder Al McClure, President of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, dedicated the plane to God’s service at the “Discover the Power” International Pathfinder Camporee by pouring Demerara River water from Guyana over the plane’s prop during the ceremony. In December 1999, the plane was flown to Guyana with the plan of registering it in the country. On board were evangelistic materials including broadcast tapes that aired in Guyana.

Over the next two years, a factory recall on the new engine and complications in the registration process warranted flying the plane back to the states where it could receive the needed attention. Since returning, the plane has been busy at Pathfinder Camporees, helping with missionary aviation emphasis week-ends in local churches and training missionary pilots. Once we are stationed in Guyana we again plan to tackle the challenge of getting the plane approved for service.

**This August the Pathfinder plane will return to Oshkosh for the Faith on Fire Camporee.** Our goal is to share the needs and opportunities in missions with young people who are preparing for a life of service. Pathfinders from all around the world will be there. Our hope is that every Pathfinder can take back with



The assembled Project AirPower plane.

them the idea that they too can work for God, whether it’s right where they currently live or in a foreign country.

One of the biggest challenges is finding personnel willing to make the commitments necessary to be involved in missions. Frontier mission work is not for everyone. However, if young people, beginning at Pathfinder age, could catch the vision of what God wants to accomplish through them and then order their lives to receive the training and qualifications necessary to accomplish this work, how much quicker Jesus could come to take us home!!! This work is so important – to let EVERY person hear the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Please pray that God’s spirit will be poured out upon Pathfinders and AWA personnel alike as we move forward in serving Him.



A Pathfinder cleans dirt from hinges.



# THE LANDS DOWN UNDER

by Greg Thompson

Our excursion to Australia and New Zealand in January was a marathon effort with four kids, a pregnant wife and a grumpy husband, but we made it back!

The trip was intended to visit family and friends we've not seen for nearly six years. It rapidly escalated into an opportunity to share AWA's mission and goals with churches in Australia and New Zealand.

We left Kalamazoo in a snowstorm. Upon arriving in Chicago, we discovered the airline had changed our departure. We ended up on an ancient DC9 but were delayed while they resolved an overload problem by offloading 8 people and their bags – aaaahhh, the joys of airline travel! When we finally arrived in Sydney some 28 hours later the temperature was 85°F! It was absolutely beautiful after the frigid wastes of O'Hare Airport (3°F and a 25mph wind). We were melting, but happy.

We had a half-day of rest with Angie's cousin and then it was up to Avondale on Friday afternoon to check out the church and airport.

On Sabbath we presented AWA projects and drew a crowd of about sixty people for the afternoon program. There were several pilots in the group, including a couple of retired missionary pilots. One of them, Len Barnard, wrote a book on mission flying. I found it to be a great introduction for a mission pilot course as it portrays realistically the difficulties associated with evangelizing and bringing medical help to third-world countries.

After our presentation, we visited "Sunnyside", Ellen White's Australian home. We spoke with the caretaker/guide, who turned out to be an former missionary pilot. The aircraft he flew has quite a history and is mounted on a pylon at the rear of the house for all to see. This chap was the pastor at the Tamworth church around the time we lived there in the early 90's, but of course we never met, as Angie and I were not members of the church yet.

From Avondale, we traveled to Canberra via Tamworth, Gunnedah and Cowra. That Sabbath we met the head elder and one of his friends. They had been students at the flying college where I worked in Tamworth.

Both expressed an interest in being involved with AWA. One had prayed the night before with his fiancée for direction relative to missionary aviation. Imagine his surprise upon being introduced to AWA's Chief Pilot the very next morning!

From Canberra, we traveled via Hay and Adelaide to Mount Gambier, my hometown. On Friday, I met with the pastor. As I was leaving, I gave him a phone number should he be able to organize a vespers program. I had intended to simply go along, but the

accepted the invitation to attend Net '98 at the Kalamazoo SDA church.

Rex arranged an invitation to speak at the "Palmy" church. It turned out that I was to give the entire service that Sabbath – a task that still leaves me more than a little nervous. We invited our old neighbors to attend. They were not quite prepared for the change that has taken place in our lives, and they were quite shocked to see how God has been at work (no more shocked than me of course). They were very happy to see the transforma-


tion. We had much to talk about over the next couple of days.

Family reunions and similar meetings with long-neglected friends kept us busy much of the time. Danielle contracted Chickenpox in Angie's hometown of Orewa. I stayed home with stricken Danielle on Sabbath while Angie and Sara went off to find the church. As it turned out, the church was only a couple of blocks from her original home! She returned with an invitation for me to speak there on the following Sabbath! This I did, and it was an interesting experience with only a dozen or so people in the congregation of this tiny

church. However, they were all very interested in hearing more. Now they are waiting to receive the latest Flight Log.

Having acclimated to the temperatures of Australia and New Zealand, it was brutal to dig my house out of the snow upon returning to Kalamazoo on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February. This was a minor inconvenience however, compared to the time zone change. It was over a week before we felt able to function in the mornings.

Now we're home getting back into a work routine. Our contact list has expanded. This will help to better service the needs of Australia and her near neighbors - something AWA has needed for some time. Looking back on our trip and the many people we got to know in the heavenly-arranged meetings, it still amazes us that God has been so obviously at work.

Let's not let him down. 

The Thompsons, Greg, Angie, Keryn, Danielle, Joelle, and Matthew (not pictured, born April 26th, congratulations Greg and Angie).



adult Sabbath School coordinator asked if I could provide a testimony prior to the worship service. At the Sabbath morning presentation the pastor asked the congregation if they would be interested in staying after the potluck lunch and hearing more about AWA! It turned out to be a full weekend.

We left Australia January 26 and traveled to Auckland, NZ. We had covered 2,800 miles in Australia and were about to do another 1,000 in New Zealand. After a day and a half in Auckland, we set off for Palmerston North, in the lower-central portion of the North Island where we had lived for 3 ½ years before moving to the States. While there we had become friends with a retired couple. At the time they hadn't told us they were Adventists, but were always friendly and gracious, providing the occasional fruit and vegetables from their extensive garden. They invited Angie to vegetarian cooking classes and became main reason that, years later, we

**Editor's Note:** The success of the two-way radio network, which has now grown to serve a dozen frontier missionary teams working among ten tribal groups, and the imminent commencement of regular air sup-

port have both encouraged and challenged the frontier missionaries to push further into the mountains.

Abner Dizon, Director of Philippine Frontier Missions submitted the following letter

to AWA. The case is so strong that Clifton feels he would only clutter the matter. At the risk of losing valuable exposure for his own family's needs, Clif has requested that we publish this letter. God Bless you Clif.



## PHILIPPINE FRONTIER MISSIONS

Putingkahoy, Silang, Cavite, Philippines

October 2, 2003

Clifton Brooks, General Manager  
Adventist World Aviation Foundation, Inc.

Dear Clif:

Recently you asked me about some of our transportation and communication needs. Allow me to submit this letter to you as a formal appeal for help.

### PFM DUMAGAT PROJECT

The Dumagat project was started in 1993. Several teams of church planting missionaries have worked on the project. In the last five years the effort has begun to pay off. There are currently 34 baptized members in this semi-nomadic tribe located a day's travel away from PFM's home office.

Recently, one of the most rewarding steps in frontier church planting occurred. Some of the Dumagat converts have asked PFM missionaries to train them to become missionaries to other Dumagat villages! The PFM Supervision Department decided to become involved in the actual training of Dumagats for leadership and evangelism. We have been doing this type of training with the Adventist Frontier Missions-Alangan project in Mindoro for the past 3-4 years. Now, we feel it's time for us to use what materials we have developed to train our own converts.

Our plan is to go to the Dumagat village every weekend to conduct a Friday-Sunday leadership and evangelism workshop. Roger (our field supervisor), Ernesto (missionary) and I will take turns visiting and conducting the workshop. It will be a 2-3 year program (starting in November) with the goal of seeing the Dumagat converts planting other Dumagat congregations.

Our biggest challenge is how to reach the village by Friday afternoon and then return to the office by Sunday evening (so we can work from Monday to Thursday). Travel time, if we don't have our own vehicle is as follows:

- From PFM to the last jeepney ride (excluding waiting time) = 5-6 hours
- Walking time from base of mountain to village = 3 hours

If we had access to a vehicle we can easily cut the travel time by half (3.5 hrs. from PFM to the base of the mountain). If we can bring a vehicle direct to the village (there is a logging road that leads to the village), then, not only will we significantly cut the travel time, those doing the seminar will no longer have to worry about the exhausting 3 hour hike with his back pack of books and training materials.

In summary, PFM has a Dumagat village requesting to be trained for leadership and evangelism. We have staff with experience and the materials to train the Dumagats. The largest challenge is the time required to travel back and forth each weekend (because all of us are working fulltime at the Home Office).

May I therefore request you, your friends and your organization to help meet this need? If you can help us in this matter, it will make a very big difference in enabling PFM to achieve its goal of establishing self-propagating native SDA churches among the Dumagat people.

Yours in Christian Service,  
Abner Dizon  
Executive Director

**Editor's Post Script:** Since receiving this request, two vehicles have been donated to AWA for this project. All that is needed now are volunteers to help pre-

pare the vehicles for shipping and funds to cover mechanical upgrades, shipping, import duties and installation of Filipino fabricated bodies on the chassis to make them useable

in the Philippines. If you would like to contribute to this worthy cause please contact AWA or mark your gift "Philippines Vehicles". Thank you!



# "Travelog"

by Andy Klein

Following the flight out to California, a profitable week of mountain training and interfacing with Pacific Union College students and faculty, Clif and I departed Angwin for Hayward Executive Airport on Sunday November 16, 2003 for aircraft disassembly and crating. I spent the next two weeks installing Monarch long-range fuel tanks in the wings. Then back to Berrien Springs thankful that the plane was ready to ship.

In December a partially completed Van's RV-4 kit plane was donated to benefit the project. A friend in Washington State volunteered to complete the aircraft for AWA. At about the same time a 1988 Ford E-250 extended van was donated to the Philippines project and I soon found myself

State Police called for a tow truck. The owner knew of a shop that charged reasonable rates and could get me right in. While they were replacing the fuel pump I inspected the underside of the vehicle and



The plane with wings removed.

I spent the weekend with friends in College Place. My friend had duties for Sabbath school and asked if I'd like to present the project. Nervous and somewhat unprepared, I shared about how God has called His people to finish the Great Commission given nearly 2000 years ago and specifically what that means in the Philippines. We (you, me and others) can make a difference. It *is* our job and well worth the effort. On Sunday, a classmate, who now runs the Walla Walla College auto tech program, let me use the shop to stick a new set of shocks on the van. A fellow could get spoiled



Chevy 4-wheel-drive donated to project.

discovered two broken leaf springs in the right rear. No wonder the thing acted a little strange! So a fuel pump and set of springs later I was back on the road at 6:30 that evening. Thankfully, the journey from there to College Place, WA was uneventful.

with a hydraulic lift!

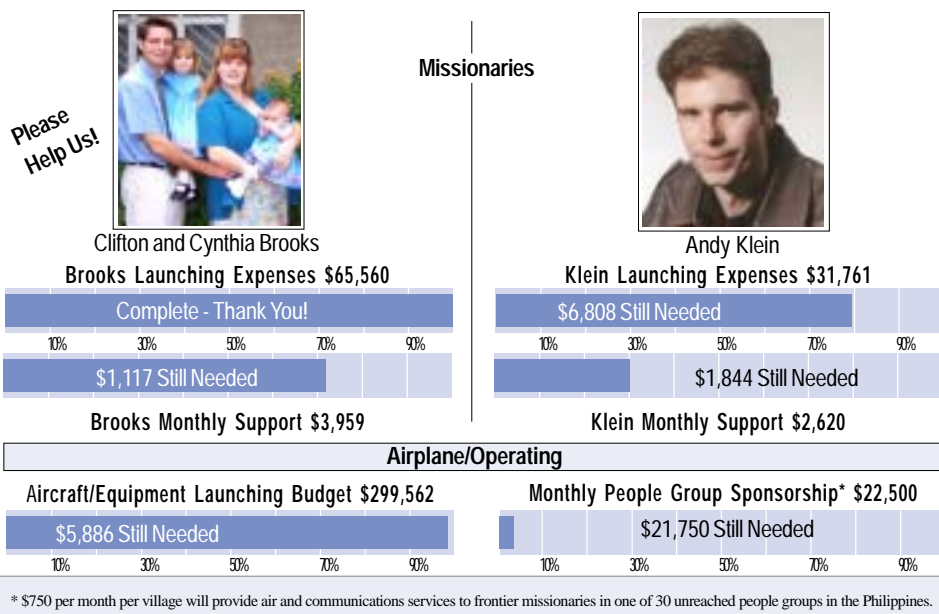
On Monday I headed for the home of our plane building volunteer. This is where I realized the engine had a capricious side to it! Up until then it had leaked only about a quart of oil every three or four tanks of gas. Now, after having missed his driveway and starting up a particularly steep hill, the thing screeched, rattled, moaned and died! I thought, "that's the end of that, now what"? Again I was being towed. Arriving

driving cross-country with parts of an airplane in the van expecting to be back before Christmas.

The first night out in western Iowa I had a soft landing in the median at 3:00 a.m. Unknown to me the road had closed twice before I got there and again after I "arrived". High cross winds with blowing snow and extremely slick surfaces caused the mayhem. Tow trucks weren't allowed out until noon so I spent the early morning in the nearby truck stop. I learned that a Semi truck had slid to within 500 yards of me. Eighty-six dollars and twenty feet later I was on the road again.

After about 3.5 hours I had to stop and sleep, then it was back on the road again. At 1:00 a.m. the fuel pump quit. I spent the night in 18-degree weather snuggled in two sleeping bags and packing blankets. The

## PHILIPPINES PROJECT



\* \$750 per month per village will provide air and communications services to frontier missionaries in one of 30 unreached people groups in the Philippines.

at our benefactor's garage, we unloaded the wing and tail section, chatted a bit and went to bed. The next day I went out and checked the oil. After adding four quarts the engine started and performed as usual. Let's hear it for the 300 CID Ford inline six - better than a Timex! Actually, I did a lot of praying this trip. God is the One who is amazing.

Given the delays, a return to Berrien Springs before Christmas was now out of the question. I decided to head north into Canada to visit my grandmother and aunt & uncle. Suffering the final stages of terminal cancer, my uncle donated a ¾ ton Chevy 4x4 to the project. (He died several weeks later.) While waiting for the snow to quit I had new king pins, bushings, brackets and an alignment done on the van. Oh yah, much better! We celebrated Grandma's 99<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January. My father

blind corner with no shoulders to speak of - not real comfortable. A fellow in a Dodge pickup was kind enough to pull me to a ranch turn out where I was off the road. I walked down to the house. The rancher made a call to a trucking outfit that did repairs on the side. This time it was the pump in the fuel tank. I went for parts in his pickup as he started lowering the tank. I finally made it to College Place at midnight. My friends had left the door open



New Monarch tanks-no wrinkles!



Root rib fastened in place.

came from New Mexico so it turned out to be a good visit with friends and family.

The weather turned warmer so I hooked up the tow bar and headed out. About 50 km down the road the rear end of the 4X4 I was pulling seized up. I had the truck towed back to my cousins place and replaced the two pinion bearings. This turned out to be a blessing as I spent time with my cousin and his family that I would have missed if not for the breakdown. His three young sons kept me busy playing horsy every spare moment! All that is truly worthwhile in this world are the relationships we build with God and man.

It was a Friday morning when I left for Walla Walla again. My cousin and his wife urged me to spend the weekend but I felt the relatively short trip would be a good indicator of how things would go. The van quit when I was south and west of Coolee city in the middle of nowhere just past a

Sunday morning I checked the web cams along the route I planned to take in Oregon and decided to stay put. I enjoyed seeing my former technology and flight instructors. Midweek the road cleared enough to leave. I had a long and tiring journey to the Boise, Idaho area where I stopped to see my roommate from college. The next day I made it to Moab, Utah for the night.

With the mechanical trouble I was having, I wasn't excited about the prospects of towing a vehicle through the mountains in the dead of winter. My mom has been trying to sell a house in New Mexico so I headed there to spend time assessing our

donated vehicles and making a few improvements.

By mid-March it was time to set a course Northeast. I left on a Thursday morning expecting to arrive in Berrien Springs late Friday. The van had one more trick up its sleeve and the ignition quit somewhere east of Moriarty, New Mexico. A long hike and another tow later we removed the distributor to get the TFI module replaced. The fasteners had corroded. Something so simple had disproportionate cost implications. Aargh! I spent two nights at a



The tank slid into position in the wing.

motel in Santa Rosa. Back on the road again, I drove night and day until I arrived back in Berrien Springs. A two-week trip became an Odyssey of over three months! I'm glad to be back, though I never thought I'd say that about Southwest Michigan!

So where do we stand regarding the donated vehicles?



AWA's purpose in the Philippines is to provide logistical support for frontier missionaries. You will notice that Philippine Frontier Missions has submitted a formal request to AWA for help not only with radio communications and air support, but also ground transportation necessary to reach the tribal peoples.

While we would prefer to ship new chassis, that is not what we've been given. The two vehicles, though older, do hold some advantages. The older designs are a bit more rugged and somewhat simpler to maintain than a new vehicle would be. Import duty on the older equipment is less. Filipinos are famous for crafting bodies to mount on imported chassis so stripping the vehicles down to their skivvies will allow lower cost importation and allow us to go native so as to maintain a low profile – something quite valuable these days.



Tank installation work area in Hayward, California.



Airplane parts in the container.

With all of the effort up to this point focusing on preparing the plane for delivery, we have not had time to deal with ground transportation issues. Ground transport is, however, critical to the project's overall success. The airplane can only be effective to the extent that we have the ground transportation to carry things back and forth to the plane. We need space in the Berrien Springs area where volunteers could help remove the bodies and perform other maintenance tasks in preparation for shipping. Volunteers to help do the work are welcome. And of course, we can always use cash.

I am planning to depart for the Philippines in May to help Clif reassemble the airplane. I'll then return to finish preparing the vehicles, tools and supplies for shipping.

Thank you for bringing my launching budget so close to completion. This seems a true miracle to me! 🙏



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# Around the World in 60 seconds

## Alaska

Mike and Fran Hansen are heading to Togiak in June for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual AWA mission trip to Alaska. The Vacation Bible School program organized by the Hansens and conducted by Pathfinders has been extremely well received by the native communities. Requests for more VBS teams exceed the number of volunteers available. If you have an interest in meeting a growing spiritual hunger among the native peoples of Alaska, please contact Fran at: [mikefran@mchsi.com](mailto:mikefran@mchsi.com) for more information. This is a great mission opportunity!

For over a year, AWA has entertained a request to launch a third aircraft to Alaska. If you or someone you know has a Cessna 152, 172 or 182 sitting forlornly in a hangar, please consider putting it to work expanding God's kingdom. The third plane would likely be stationed in Dillingham. This is a strategic location, as many opportunities for native ministries exist in the surrounding area. Please join us in prayer for such a tool. Full-time AWA missionary aviation personnel are also being sought.

## Guyana

Bill and Laura LaBore are counting down to a fourth quarter launch to Guyana. Laura is increasing her flight-training schedule. Bill is coordinating speaking appointments and interfacing with the Guyana Conference so they can hit the ground running. Both AWA and the Guyana Conference look forward to their deployment.

## YOU MAY SEND CONTRIBUTIONS ELECTRONICALLY

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Bank routing number, account number

Rest assured that your information will remain confidential.

## Kiribati

*Search for One* is seeking a missionary pilot/mechanic to operate their Piper Aztec in the Pacific. Please contact AWA for more information.

## Philippines

AWA's plane has at last left Oakland for Manila! Three formal petitions to the Department of Finance and Customs to import the plane duty free for missionary and humanitarian purposes were declined. Officials cited changes in the tax code since Cliff made the original arrangements. Finally they agreed to accept a declaration of the aircraft at a subsidized value thus reducing the tax liability. We are told that other ministries are experiencing similar challenges.

Two months ago, AWA and Adventist Frontier Missions organized an expedition to research what is likely the most primitive people group on the island of Mindoro. Watch for a report in the Summer issue of Flight Log!

## Peru

Amalia Marin reports: Inbound to the airbase, approximately 20 minutes north, the engine in the Lake amphibian began to run rough. Alberto descended, landed safely in the water at Yarinacocha and taxied up the ramp. Upon inspection the next morning, Beto found the source of the problem - a broken crankshaft!

A Cessna 182 and the Lake amphibian provide logistical support for evangelistic efforts and medical evacuations. Much emphasis lies in entering the northern jungle around Iquitos. This year and next have been designated as crucial years for IMPACTO RIO NAPO 2004 and IMPACTO RIO AMAZONAS 2005.

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, "Elias" left Paoyan early in the morning to set his fishing net in a small channel near the village an hour's canoe trip from the airbase at Yarinacocha. Paddling alone in his small dug-out, he deftly entered the shallow water when he hit something. Loosing his balance, he fell into the water coming into the range of a submerged alligator, which nearly severed part of his hand! The terrified man scrambled out of the water and realized he needed emergency medical help fast. Although Beto was up to his elbows in work, he immediately prepared the Cessna for an emergency evacuation flight. Ninety minutes later, the man was in the emergency room, being treated for his wounds at the Amazon Hospital in Yarinacocha.



# CAMPMEETING

## Western Alaska Campmeeting Series 2004

by Jim Kincaid

On Friday, February 27, AWA's Cessna 206 (N8287Q), launched on a northwestern IFR course headed for the historic gold-mining town of Nome. On board were Alaska Conference Executive Secretary/AWA-AK project manager Jim Kincaid, Conference Treasurer Harold Dixon, and pilot Jonathan Kincaid. The four-hour flight was the first leg of what has become an annual event eagerly anticipated by guest speakers and villagers alike.

### Nome, Gambell, Savoonga

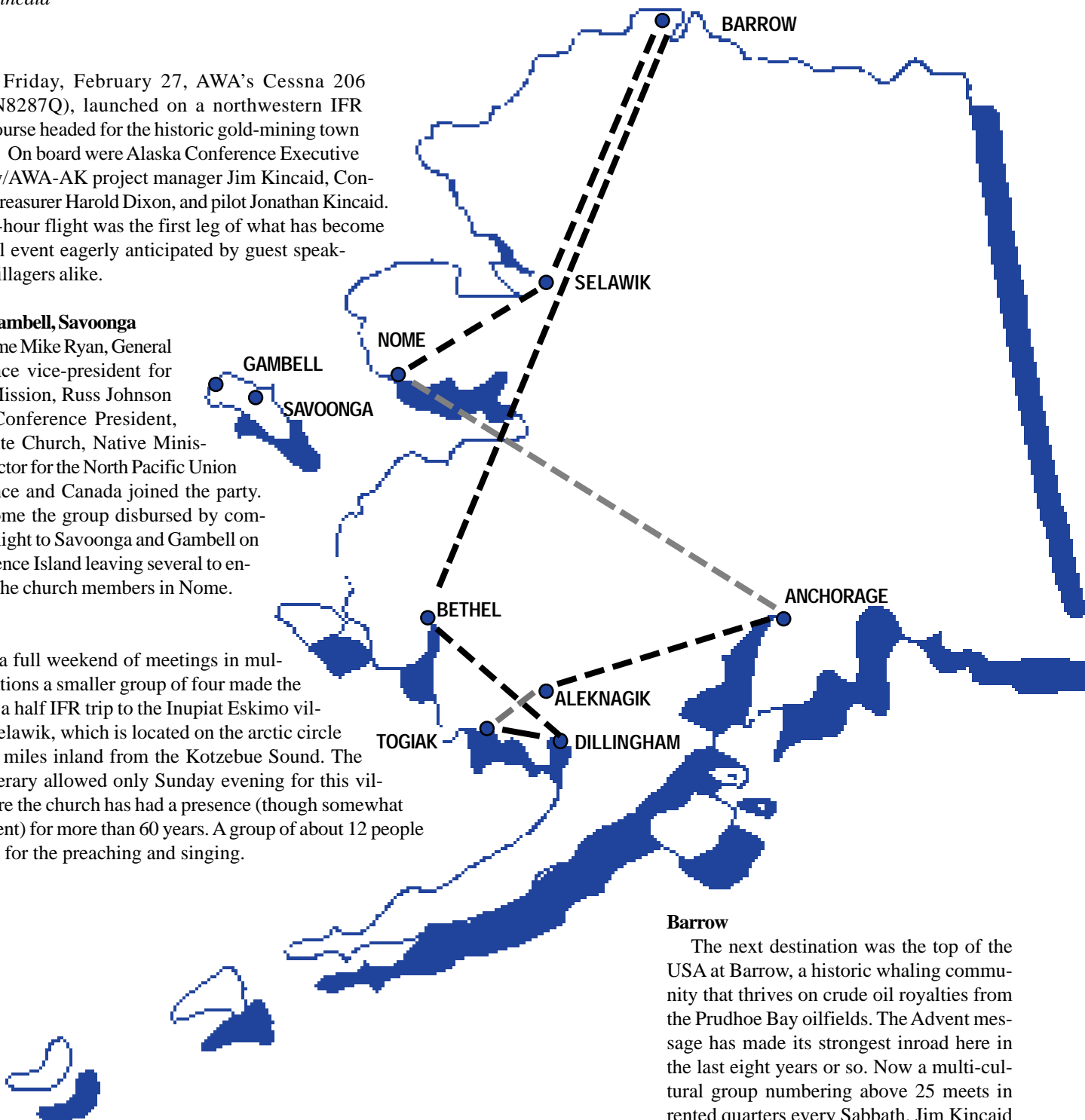
In Nome Mike Ryan, General Conference vice-president for Global Mission, Russ Johnson Alaska Conference President, and Monte Church, Native Ministries Director for the North Pacific Union Conference and Canada joined the party. From Nome the group disbursed by commercial flight to Savoonga and Gambell on St. Lawrence Island leaving several to encourage the church members in Nome.

### Selawik

After a full weekend of meetings in multiple locations a smaller group of four made the hour and a half IFR trip to the Inupiat Eskimo village of Selawik, which is located on the arctic circle about 50 miles inland from the Kotzebue Sound. The tight itinerary allowed only Sunday evening for this village where the church has had a presence (though somewhat intermittent) for more than 60 years. A group of about 12 people came out for the preaching and singing.

### Barrow

The next destination was the top of the USA at Barrow, a historic whaling community that thrives on crude oil royalties from the Prudhoe Bay oilfields. The Advent message has made its strongest inroad here in the last eight years or so. Now a multi-cultural group numbering above 25 meets in rented quarters every Sabbath. Jim Kincaid pastors the group utilizing email and telephone communication with semi-quarterly visits. Fortunately, the temperature of 31 degrees below zero we encountered upon arrival moderated to a mere 5 below in time for our departure.



ALASKA PROJECT				
10%	33%	50%	70%	90%
\$22,284 Still Needed				
AWA Alaska Aircraft N2019G \$45,000				





Some of Alaska's beautiful terrain during the summer season.



Togiak in the summer. How would you like to be this close to the ocean?

AWA's Cessna 206 in Alaska.



The Barrow Group



## Bethel

On Wednesday trusty N8287Q flew into cold clear skies southbound to warmer climes at Bethel, 742 miles away. We arrived in Bethel amidst mixed rain and snow at 31 degrees just in time for supper and a meeting immediately after. Another vibrant multi-cultural group of some 30 people greeted us. We were challenged with an invitation to plan an evangelistic meeting in the village of Chevak where we have never ministered before. There seems to be a spiritual awakening among the native people of Alaska accompanied by a certain sense of dissatisfaction with regard to the current state of religion and church in the local setting.

## Dillingham, Aleknagik, Togiak

The final weekend of this annual pilgrimage to north and western Alaska began on Friday evening the 5<sup>th</sup> of March. Villagers from Aleknagik drove the 20-mile road to Dillingham to join the locals in festive worship. On Sabbath afternoon the traveling preachers, pilots, and musicians made their way to Togiak where a group of Missouri Pathfinders has ministered for the last two years. A core group of local people has carried on semi-weekly ministry there for several years now and the results are gratifying. The 60 year-old church building, badly in need of replacement, was filled to the brim with visitors, speakers and children freely joining in the singing, preaching and sharing.

## Anchorage

Home again - nine days, 2,675 miles and a number of meetings with believers later. It's great to meet the hungry people, sleep on floors, eat survival food, see the beautiful winter scenery and be home again! Praise God for another safe on-time winter trip in a well-equipped airplane! **Thank you to everyone who makes this ministry a reality!** 🙏



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IRRELEVANT?

"I fear that Christian education is in danger of becoming irrelevant."

The statement, coming from a denominational administrator, grabbed my attention like few words have in recent months.

While, in the absolute sense, true Christian education is always relevant, as we discussed the state of the body of Christ in North America, it became painfully clear that things were amiss. As the spiritual tone softens and the cares of this world take up an increasingly larger percentage of time and energies of God's people, the foundation for building, launching and sustaining overseas missionary operations erodes proportionally.

The fundamental practical argument for Christian education is the primacy of Christian missions.

If the body of Christ loses interest in cross-cultural missions, the sacrifice, dedication and wholehearted commitment to the cause ebb away. The outward focused service paradigm is lost and with it goes the perceived need for well-trained, spiritually called cross-cultural missionaries equipped with the tools to present a contextualized gospel.

Soon the energies of the educational system are focused on training the best and brightest to serve corporate America. Parents realize they can send their children to public institutions for that type of education at a fraction of the price. The school, once founded for training people to fulfill God's purposes, is fully engaged in earthly kingdom building. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world."

This coming summer at the Faith on Fire International Pathfinder Camporee, AWA is committed to provide an environment that exposes hundreds of young people to the genuine needs, challenges and opportunities in missionary aviation. Lord willing, some of those youth will have the courage to swim against the current of materialism to make life choices that will inevitably clash with parents, a sleeping church and popular culture to fulfill Matthew 28:18-20.

Maybe, just maybe, this will be the generation to take the task seriously, and in the process, create a demand for Christian education that prepares them for service!

If not, I too am afraid, that Christian education has become irrelevant.

Sincerely,

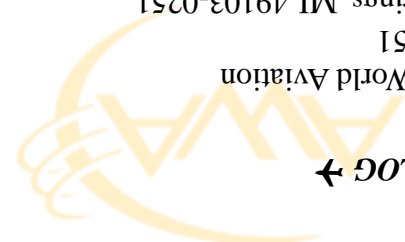
Don Starlin  
President



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