

**1. INTERRUPTED ITINERARY:** Early Sabbath morning (May 15), while in Mauritius, I received word my mother had been hospitalized with severe chest pains. Given possibility she might undergo major surgical procedures, I shortened my African itinerary by five days and flew home, postponing a visit to Gabon and Cameroun, which has already been rescheduled in connection with a future trip. On arriving home, after 43 hours of travel, we received the report that an angiogram shows no coronary blockage. Additional tests are underway to determine the cause of the episode.

Meeting with our members and leaders during this two-week trip to Burundi, Kenya and the Indian Ocean was inspiring though a bit tiring, given 47 hours seated in airplanes, 14 speaking appointments and some significant jet-lag.

A major block of time this week will be dedicated to video-taping the eight, 1993 Week of Prayer sermons, so they can be dubbed into five world languages.

**2. TWENTY CHAPELS FUNDED:** In the May 10 edition (of FTP) I reported there were 20 congregations in Burundi that had secured land and raised the walls for their chapels but did not have the US\$2,000 necessary to buy roofing material. Since that time 10 have already been funded. On completion we will receive pictures of the chapels to be forwarded to donors.

**3. A GIANT STEPS ASIDE:** Last Sunday, a dear friend and fellow-leader, Elder Charles Dudley, turned over the leadership of the South Central Conference to the former conference secretary, Elder Joseph McCoy. During Elder Dudley's 31-year tenure, conference membership grew from 4,354 to 23,311! Elder Dudley and his wife, Etta Mae, touched the lives of countless Adventist workers and lay members, both within and far beyond the borders of the conference. He has been a source of wisdom and a symbol of stability, and his contribution is incalculable.

**4. MIDDLE EAST COLLEGE** has just received a license to establish a medium-wave radio station

with which to broadcast from its Beirut campus to Lebanon, Cyprus, Syria, and Turkey. AWR has been operating in rented facilities, but no longer. A few weeks ago AWR purchased a building in Cyprus that will serve as a recording/programming studio for the many languages of the region.

**5. OPERATION BEARHUG** describes the sister-union relationship between the North Pacific Union and Russian Union begun soon after the last General Conference Session. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been donated by Northwest Adventists to foster this relationship and hundreds have become personally involved in projects in Russia sponsored by their local conferences. The reflex influence of blessings, that Ellen White predicted would result from a focus on foreign missions, is evident in the northwest.

OPERATION BEARHUG sent food shipments to many cities throughout Russia, provided training programs for Sabbath School, youth, and other local church leaders, conducted women's ministries seminars, and is sponsoring English language schools in Magadan and St. Petersburg. A four-hundred seat church building, sponsored by Upper Columbia Conference, will open in Magadan in July.

The twenty evangelistic campaigns, sponsored during 1991 and 1992 in various cities throughout Russia by the local conferences in the Northwest, resulted in over 3,500 baptisms. Another 15 evangelistic campaigns are planned during 1993 including the one by Bruce Johnston, NPUC president, currently under way in St. Petersburg.

To assist in assimilating the thousands of new people joining the Adventist church throughout Russia, a training program for pastors and lay leaders has been developed by OPERATION BEARHUG'S Church Leadership Development Institute (CLDI), directed by Dr. Erich Baumgartner. CLDI is also working with the pastors in Moscow to prepare leadership teams for the eight new congregations expected to be organized as a result of Mark Finley's summer Moscow campaign.

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