

SOWERS INTERNATIONAL

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2003

WHAT'S NEW THIS EDITION

GWYNN'S ARTICLE

MIRACLE IN MONGOLIA
MEET LIN

BYRON SHORE
MISSIONARY TO BRAZIL

STM SUMMARY
BRAZIL TEAM 2002

PHILIPPINES/THAILAND
UPDATE

SHORT TERM MISSIONS
FOR 2003

TAKE JESUS TO CHINA.

**SUMMER TEAMS NOW FORMING
TEACH CONVERSATIONAL
ENGLISH IN SCHOOLS.**



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God Brings Home A Sower

On January 13th our brother Bill Curtis went home to be with the Lord. He was 47. He left behind his wife Kathy, four great children and a vast array of family, friends, coworkers and fellow crusaders in the task of world evangelization.

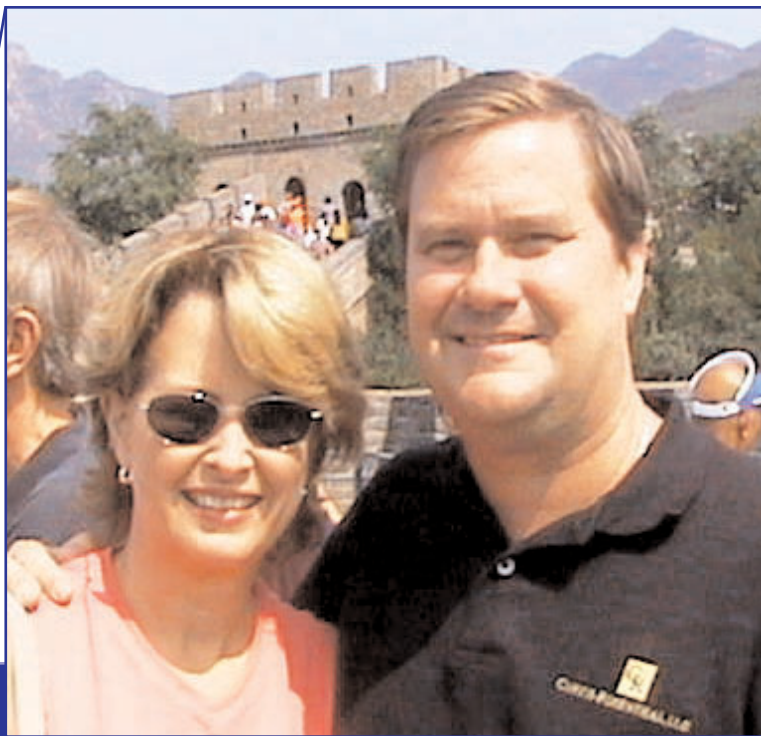
Bill was a great soldier in the army of God, a leader in his church having served as elder for many years in the area of finance & properties and missions. He was also president and founding father of Sowers. In 1993 while I was on staff at Rolling Hills Covenant Church and was having difficulty figuring out how to do some new and creative things in the area of missions which no local church could do, Bill had the idea of starting a non-profit organization that could. That was the beginning of Sowers International. Bill became our first and only president.

Over the years I have come to know and love this unique brother. I was always amazed at his love for the Lord and his passion to see the gospel go to ends of the earth. I traveled overseas with him to visit several of our fields, worked with him on difficult issues, cried out to him in difficult times and Bill always came through with wisdom beyond his years, a calming no panic character and his patented

"Hey, God will work it out!" attitude.

In life Bill has left us with a phenomenal legacy of creativity and trusting God, his life was as meaningful as any I have ever known of any length... and in death we saw 10-15 people accept Christ at his memorial service! We also created a memorial fund in his name that will go to the homeless girls of Colombia and have a long term project in China that will carry on his vision to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

He will be missed, but we will keep his vision alive!



**Bill with his wife Kathy at the
Great Wall in China.**

Miracle

Lin was a beautiful 15 year old girl living with her parents in Inner Mongolia, then she began to get sick. Her parents did everything possible to get her help. It turned out that she had a liver disease and it was progressing rapidly. The medical resources were very limited in their small town so they decided to send her to Beijing for treatment. Their neighbors were Christians and were part of a small underground church, so they had been praying for Lin and her family, especially the day she left for Beijing. She would stay with an aunt & uncle as they sought help for her.

She left for the big city, alone on the bus, sick and scared...

Her uncle got her into a government hospital where she was treated, but the treatment was very expensive, about 5,000 Yuan (US\$625) a treatment, especially considering that her father made 800 Yuan a month! They had exhausted their resources.

But Lin was not as alone as she thought. A young woman who lived next door to the aunt & uncle was a Christian and heard about Lin. She offered to go and pray for her in the hospital and they reluctantly said ok. The young woman was a part of one of our underground churches in Beijing, and she called pastor Dong to go with her to the hospital. They went and prayed. Pastor Dong was so moved by the young girl that he went back to his group and they took an offering for her. It was 5,000 Yuan! Good for another month!

When pastor Dong gave her the money, he also shared the gospel with her and she became a believer!!! Pastor Dong told her to pray!

In talking to the hospital officials pastor Dong found out that there was the option of a liver transplant, Lin's only possible cure, but it was very expensive, about 700,000 Yuan, over US\$80,000!!! When pastor Dong talked to Lin about this they all knew it was impossible... but pastor Dong told her to pray!!! And the Beijing church prayed, and the church in Inner Mongolia prayed.

A week later the hospital official came

to pastor Dong and said that they had never done a liver transplant in that hospital but they were ready and able, and that



because it would be the first, they would do it for FREE!!!

Hearing this, her parents back in Inner Mongolia saw the hand of the Lord and became believers with their neighbor!!!

Then the official came back to pastor Dong and says that there is a problem... Lin has an extremely rare blood type, only one in a gazillion people have that type and it seems impossible to find a liver in time... Pastor Dong told them to pray!

The next week the official came and said to them it's amazing, but they have found a matching liver!!!

While waiting at the hospital with the aunt & uncle during the operation, pastor Dong shares the gospel with them and they become believers!!!

The operation was a success! Lin is fine... the picture here appeared in the Beijing newspaper celebrating the first liver transplant at that hospital. Lin and all of her family are now believers! Pastor Dong and the churches are celebrating new life!

What is the object of this story? Just ask pastor Dong and he will tell you: Pray!

She left for the **BIG CITY**,
alone on the bus, sick
and scared...



Byron with his daughter, Simcha

Byron SHORE

Sowers Missionary - Brazil

Marking a Mile Stone

June of this year marked an important milestone. It was five years ago that I came as a missionary to live in Brazil. Through these five years, we have seen so many wonderful opportunities. Many lives have been touched through our being here and through your prayer and support. One of the most joyful things for me is to receive groups from other countries.

New Challenges

In the year 2003, Sheyla and I see new challenges for us to meet. We really covet your daily prayers and financial participation as an active agent on our behalf now and into the coming new year.

In the city of Belo Horizonte the population is 3.5 million. In this vast city, there are only two hospitals equipped to handle HIV patients. I have been asked to initiate and develop a Chaplaincy program in one of these hospitals.



God recently provided Byron this van to be able to bus the visiting groups to the various ministry locations.



Sheyla with their daughter, Raquel at her graduation from high school.

It has been a great joy for Sheyla and I to share and help other missionaries who are here in their efforts. Elias dos Santos, a brother who has purchased some land in Peru close to the borders of Ecuador, Bolivia, and Brazil wishes to begin developing a missionary training center and river-boat ministry for the locals. Leandro Gama whom we have supported through missions training school now equipped to go and spread the word. Richard and Immaculada will be developing a community center in one of the many slums in Belo.

Sheyla and I also have adopted (spiritually) Raquel, who at the age of 15 came to live with us. Now 18, she will be graduating high school and will begin preparations for college entrance exams. Her future never looked so bright! She has demonstrated responsibility leading Bible studies and is a good example for the other children to follow. We love you and appreciate what each of you have meant to us.

BRAZIL

Short Term Mission

Team 2002

MANIA

by Katie Sears - Missions Coordinator
Sowers International

In August, a team of 8 from California traveled to Belo Horizonte to partner with Sowers missionary Byron Shore in the ministries he is involved with. We had two weeks, packed with visiting and assisting in various ministries that Byron works with there.

On our first day, to get a sense of the region, we took a trip to the historic city of Ouro Preto, a charming town filled with 300 year-old churches, cobblestone streets, and red tile roof buildings. In one church that we visited, we met the caretaker and the director of the church. When they found out that we were missionaries, they gave us a personal tour of their church, telling us the history of the building and the many religious artifacts in it. As we talked to the two men more, we found out that there had been tragedy on the church grounds not too long ago. The director was now afraid to come to work! We were able to pray for the two men and pray for the church. We then did a prayer walk around the church. The church sits on the side of a hill and we pray that Jesus' light will shine bright from it. As was the summer missions theme, Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world, a city on a hill cannot be hidden." In this case, the church will be a light to people everywhere of Jesus' love and grace.

We stayed with amazing host families while we were there, who taught us about Brazilian hospitality, Brazilian food, and how God is at work in Belo Horizonte. Byron displayed what an encouragement he is to the local people and the ministries that God is starting in Belo. We worked at a variety of ministries, both Christian and secular: an AIDS hospital, a center for children with cancer, a ministry to street kids, a nursery school, an elementary school, and a new ministry with children in the slums. This ministry with the children in the slums (called "favelas" in Brazil) was particularly interesting since we were able to take part in the "kick-off" event. The children who live in the local favela were invited to join us for a day of crafts and games. After the day was over, we took a walk through their neighborhood. These kids live in what is essentially squatter settlements, where the houses are barely habitable, and the local drug lords control their lives. There is little hope, and the dream of this new ministry is to give the people hope. Please pray for Richard and Imaculada, who have begun this essential ministry.

One of the team members, Ann Von Chance, is now the newest Sowers International Missionary in Brazil! She stayed behind in Brazil when the rest of the team returned home in order to discern God's direction for her future ministry there. She is now in Porto Velho preparing for a training program that will get to the indigenous people of the Amazon region of Brazil. Pray for her as she seeks God's direction for her ministry.



The Team



The children made their own vacation bible school t-shirts



Brett working with children in the favela (slums).

PHILIPPINES & THAILAND Update

written by Romeo Niere - Director of South East Asia Ministries
The Sowers International

Thailand

It's a great blessing and encouragement to see how the Lord used the team in Thailand to build His kingdom. The team has done some incredible things within their respective responsibilities, a testament of their strong relationship with the community. They have been able to build and win the trust and confidence of the people through the following activities:

Teaching English at the Clubhouse

Annamer and Ninette are working with children and high school students, while Roslen Sipat, the team leader, visits professionals. Last December, the team held a Christmas gathering for their students. For many Muslims and Thai Buddhists, this was their first time to attend such a celebration. During the gathering, Roslen gave a message why Christmas is celebrated, sharing who the Lord Jesus Christ is, and why he is our Savior. A Thai businessman translated the message to people who attended.

The classes in the clubhouse started in the first week of January 2003. Eight Muslim girls, all high school students, have been learning to speak English everyday. Young children are also learning English in the clubhouse. Fifteen professionals are enrolled to learn English; some of them are doctors, nurses, accountants, pharmacists and entrepreneurs. Everyone is excited at the clubhouse. The chief executive officer of the local province has visited the clubhouse and has offered to extend any help that the clubhouse needs.

Schools

Roslen worked as a volunteer English teacher at a local high school. He was able to win the trust of the former head of the English department, who convinced the school director to write an endorsement asking the Thai Immigration to give six-months visas to the team. On my last trip, I visited several schools to meet with their English departments. I informed them of the summer mission trip of American teachers, and many of the teachers were excited. The head of the English department at an exclusive school for Muslim girls came to the clubhouse requesting American teachers to come over and help teach English. I gladly responded that they would be visited and helped.



A Christmas gathering.



Roslen Sipat (right of the picture) teaching English with professionals.

Language and Contact Work

The team spends their time every morning, for five days a week, to learn Thai. They have a very good Thai Muslim teacher. In the afternoon, the team is required by the language instructor to go out to public places and practice Thai. This allows the members to build contact within the community.

Orphanage

Roslen and I went to an orphanage run by the Thai government. It was an orphanage for 44 Muslims and 55 Thai Buddhists boys. The director and his assistants requested if I could bring Americans to visit and help the orphans, to which I responded positively.



Lunch at the clubhouse with some local friends who are helping us.

I thank God for these opportunities to serve Him. Will you continue to uphold the Thailand Team in your prayers? Pray that the Lord will give wisdom, strength, courage, guidance, and protection for the team. Pray that their lives will be a light and that the life of Christ will be manifested in each of the members. Pray that in God's time and through the working power of the Holy Spirit, God will touch and open the minds and hearts of the Muslims and Thai Buddhists to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Pray that they too will have an intimate relationship with Him.

Philippines

Teen Worship

Led by two of our faithful staff in a near by Muslim Village, there are 50 Muslim teens who are faithful in worshipping God every Saturday morning. They worship from nine in the morning to noon. These teens, ages from nine to fifteen, are growing in their faith and spiritual understanding of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are growing in the knowledge of the word, memorizing Biblical verses and singing. These kids are excited bringing Bibles to their homes to meditate. Some of them have started sharing the Lord Jesus Christ to their friends.

Discipleship of Muslim Young People

Philip Pabalate, the director, has started a discipleship program with 16 Muslims, whose ages range from 18 to 25. They meet once a week, and their utmost goal is to be trained to become leaders in their own villages. They want to be living witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ.

March will be the closing month of our Muslim Learning Center. There are 25 students in kindergarten II who will be graduating and 45 students in kindergarten I who will be moving to the next level. Pray that Philip and Jo Pabalate together with the CRC staff will be used effectively by God to guide and lead these young people. Pray that the young people will grow to be strong spiritual leaders of their communities.

Thank you for all your prayers and financial support in the harvest field.

In His kingdom,

Romeo & Lorna Niere

MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES 2003

Mainland China #1 July 3-23, 2003 \$3000

This mission trip begins in Taipei, Taiwan with an English camp for high school kids. Then you will travel to Mainland China with Taiwanese believers where you'll teach English for 2 weeks. Debrief will be in Taiwan. Join us for this amazing opportunity to work with people who have limited access to the gospel!

Mainland China #2 August 1-15, 2003 \$2600

This team is led by Gwynn & Pooka Lewis and we will go to teach English in a school near Shanghai China. We will also visit an orphanage. The debrief will be in Hong Kong.

Mainland China #3 October 9-22, 2003 \$2600

Rock babies for Jesus! This team travels into China, where you will minister to the abandoned babies of a Chinese orphanage. You'll be rocking, feeding, bathing, singing to and praying for the little ones who everyone except God and his people have forgotten. You'll meet with local house church members, and have the opportunity to speak in classrooms of a local university.

Thailand July 24 - Aug 7, 2003 \$2400

Teach basic conversational English at an Islamic High School. This is a rewarding opportunity to work with Muslim youth! Now, more than ever, they need to know the love of Jesus Christ!

Philippines / Thailand July 3-20, 2003 \$2500

This trip begins working with a local church in La Carlota City on the Island of Negros in the Philippines. We will do some children's work as well as minister at the local university. We then head to Thailand where we will join a team of Filipino missionaries reaching Muslims and Thai Buddhists through the teaching of English.

Guatemala, Central America July 11-25, 2003 \$2200

This year's emphasis will be focused upon children's ministry in various cities throughout Guatemala. We will be working with the local church that has partnered with Sowers International in ministry. Mercy ministry and the love of Jesus brings life and light unto children that only know darkness.

Brazil, South America August 1-15, 2003 \$2250

Minister alongside an American missionary and get involved in various children's ministries in the city of Belo Horizonte.

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