



From Cradle to Grave

Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the friends, even though they are strangers to you;...we ought to support such people so that we may become co-workers with the truth. 3 John 5, 8

Dedicated to Providing Services for Missionaries & Their Families

Winter 2010

We have been discussing what Missionary Member Care involves and why it is needed in our past couple of newsletters. In this edition we take a look at the third of six stages of a missionary's career.

Stage Three: Entry into the Country and First Term of Service

Now that funds have been raised and the missionary is ready to leave, there are the details of getting a passport and visa, scheduling a departure date and obtaining airline tickets, saying good-bye to friends and family, then traveling to a country about which the new missionary may know very little. Landing in that country, the missionary is hopefully met by experienced missionaries who will help with the transition into the work. Finding appropriate housing, learning about the culture, often trying to learn a new language, being advised on cultural expectations and principles having to do with health, safety, shopping, transportation and a myriad of unexpected details can be quite daunting for the new missionary. The first term can be both an exciting time and a discouraging time of feeling like a child having to learn all the important facets of living in this new world. At times it is difficult to find the right mentor and guide for this transition time, and it is during this first term that missionaries often begin wondering, "Why am I here? Did I make a mistake? Am I cut out for this type of work, and did God really call me?" It is a time of trying to develop new friendships, of adjusting to culture shock, of fighting off new and often exotic diseases, a time of joys, sorrow, pressures and either confirmation and affirmation or loneliness, discouragement and depression. Often it is a combination of all of the above, often leaving the new missionary with a sense of confusion, a riot of mixed feelings and putting a lot of pressure on him/her and any accompanying family members. It is also during this first time that missionaries are astonished and dismayed to see old and, at times, negative habits and patterns emerge that had previously been overcome. The first term is definitely a time of significant challenges, hopefully accompanied by joys and affirmations and comfort which help carry them through the trying times.

The fourth stage will be discussed in the fall newsletter.

-Dr. Dave Wickstrom on Missionary Member Care: From Cradle to Grave—part 2, stage 3

Please join us in praise for God's provision. It became apparent shortly after our last newsletter that MRC had significantly been affected financially by the current economic situation. At the annual board meeting in September, MRC's accountant encouraged the board to leave the 2009-2010 budget the same, to press on, continue to look to the Lord and walk by faith. Several days later, our office received a phone call from NE Presbyterian church. They were having a banquet to celebrate God's provision in becoming completely debt free for their 30th year celebration. In addition, they had raised funds above and beyond that bank note to help several ministries-around the world, in the US and locally, including MRC.

Our lesson-in spite of the economy, God is faithful! The Lord's perfect timing was just as significant as the amount of the check. We give thanks to our Lord, may He be glorified in this! Plus, we thank NE Presbyterian for being an instrument used by the Lord to encourage us in our ministry. This gives us hope as we continue to look to the Lord



Hello, I am Melody Weaver and I will be filling the role of MK/TCK Re-entry Retreat Director this year. We have two retreats scheduled, one hosted by Columbia International University (CIU) in July and one at Bethel Christian Camp in August (see dates below). It is exciting to watch the details come together in anticipation of meeting and getting to know the kids who will attend this year! We are currently focused on gathering teams of dedicated staff and getting the word out to families like you who may be interested in the retreats.

The struggle of being a college-aged third-culture kid (TCK) and transitioning to the US is something I am particularly familiar with. My parents raised me and my five siblings on the mission field in the Philippines. I was eighteen when I returned to attend university at CIU. At times it was overwhelming to face the task of adjusting to the fast-paced American youth culture on top of saying goodbye to my family (for over a year) and the normal stresses of entering college. One major thing that got me through that first year was some older TCK friends who had been where I was—and survived!

That's where the retreats come in. Our staff is made up entirely of TCKs who know what it's like to feel confused or out of place and can share what did and didn't work for us. We are genuinely interested in each TCK's unique story. Please encourage TCK's you know to join us in July or August for an unforgettable week of fun, processing, growing, and building relationships that can last a lifetime.



We filled 14 tables at our **annual banquet** with a **combined 1461 years of missionary service represented** with 60+ years served in Japan, 54 years in Iran/Turkey, 50 years in Indonesia and 45 years in Costa Rica! We also had a **combined 163 years of Adult Third Culture Kids (ATCKs)***.

*ATCKs are those who have grown up in countries and cultures outside that of their parents.

—from Third Culture Kids by David Pollock



PRAISE REPORTS:

- * year end gifts we received
- * increase in available housing for missionaries in the area

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- * transitioning of office space to the new wing
- * staff for MK/TCK Re-entry Retreats
- * health of MRC staff and families
- * vehicles to loan to missionaries—please contact our office for more information

Ongoing Events

Weekly Women's Bible Study

Mondays 9:30 am—noon

Upcoming Events

**MK Re-entry Retreat 1
MK Re-entry Retreat 2**

**July 18-27, 2010
August 8-17, 2010**

Note: If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by email, please let us know.

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