

### Our Mission

*Our Lord commissioned His people to make disciples of all nations. Arctic Mission Adventure has been designed to help implement that discipling, especially of Alaska native peoples of Northern and Northwestern Alaska.*

## GREETINGS FROM BETHEL, ALASKA!

Doug & Lowana Blair, AMA Volunteers



AMA Volunteer Doug Blair

My wife, Lowana, and I finally arrived in Bethel, Alaska on September 17, 2009, after making our decision to serve the Lord with Arctic Mission Adventure at the Southcentral camp meeting in August of 2008. We had made several trips to Bethel so the culture shock was minimized. All of our personal items had to be shipped either by airplane or

barge, because you cannot drive to Bethel. Either way, shipping is very expensive; as an example it cost us approximately \$2,300.00 to ship our Dodge van from Anchorage to Bethel on the barge. We sold or gave away most of our furniture that we determined we could live without and drastically downsized our 25 year accumulation. Our Dodge van was shipped fully loaded, along with a lift van, which is a wooden crate 48" wide x 84" long x 84" high on the barge. Since the barge would take 2-3 weeks to arrive in Bethel (depending on the weather), we also shipped 12 boxes via air freight full of essential items such as bedding, clothes, a few pots and pans for cooking and my computer which is used for my part time consulting business.



The Bethel Adventist Church at Work

Since we have been in Bethel, the Lord has blessed this mission. We have started a Wednesday night Bible Study/Prayer Meeting with an average of eight attending. On Saturday, we started a movie night. We show Christian movies and provide snacks; mostly children have been attending anywhere between 12 to 28.

There was a Community Health Fair here in Bethel the 1st week of October. We set up a booth and conducted Health Age questionnaires. We also had several healthy diet display items at the booth. Lowana is a professional massage therapist; she brought her massage chair and gave free 10 minute chair massages. Needless to say, her area was very popular! We made many personal contacts with community members and we let them know that we were part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



The Community Health Fair

Lowana and her friend from Anchorage, Joanie Tobuk, started going door to door distributing invitations for the Discover Bible Study and the Native New Day Bible Study. They have done a wonderful job: to date they have placed an invitation on the doors of 2/3 of the homes in Bethel. We are also in the process of getting an internet Bible Study course set up through The Voice of Prophecy.



Lowana Blair & Joanie Tobuk

Another exciting project is the low power FM radio transmitter to broadcast Christian programming, but I cannot figure out how to put it together. Pastor Wendell Downs and Gavin and Judy Thompson from Dillingham will fly over to help this electronically-challenged Bible Worker get the FM radio on the airwaves as soon as weather permits flying their small airplane to Bethel.

We are in the planning stage of doing an evangelistic series, ShareHim, here in Bethel and we are exploring the opportunities for evangelism in neighboring villages as well.

## TOGIK, ALASKA

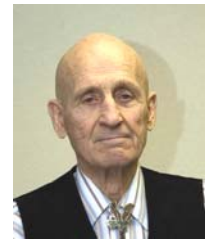
Dan Rothoff, AMA Volunteer

It has been a busy summer along with making major changes and adjustments in my life. But the fact is I have now been on the deck here in Togiak for a full year, having already started my second year. The older we get time moves with greater speed, though everything else slows down, or so it seems.

First let me bring you up to date on the circumstances concerning the airplane. I went to Idaho last May to get it and bring it to Togiak, but complications developed. Needless to say, the plane is still in the Lower 48; will let you know as things develop. You know that last September we dedicated the airplane to the Lord in a ceremony at the Garden Valley Airport, so it is really in His hands. The plane belongs to Him. I hope you will keep this matter in your prayers.

For the most part, I dismantled the old church on my own during July and August. It stood in front of the new church as did the old parsonage. They are both gone now and the new church is pleasantly visible from the street. I have acquired video-editing capability for my computer, but need some help to train me on how to use it, and the fact is that this kind of help is not very easily available.

Eleven volunteers, as far away as Illinois and Tennessee, came and spent more than three weeks finishing the exterior of the church. It is a stucco finish and two coats had to be troweled on; it was really a big job. The volunteers were really



wonderful people, good Christians, hard workers and always with a good attitude. I would still like to see a new entrance constructed and we also have considerable work to finish the inside such as painting, floor covering, installation of cabinets in the fellowship hall and other items.

I finished a 24 series of Bible studies on DVD by Shawn Boonstra and I have now taken the personal responsibility to present lessons on the Sanctuary which I started three weeks ago. It is disappointing that folks here do not have more interest in spiritual concerns and be more willing to study the Bible. The study of the Sanctuary is very interesting and I have some study helps that add considerable interest. Please pray that God will impress on the people the desire to learn more about Jesus and His soon coming. Also that He will give me far more ability than I now have to accomplish what needs to be done here in this very different culture.

No doubt, the biggest concern that I have are the social problems so evident among these native people. Alcohol, drugs and tobacco are everywhere, but even more troubling are the heart wrenching problems within the marriages and families. My own emotions are overwhelmed as I am brought face-to-face again and again with the varied circumstances and issues that need to be dealt with. I am not trained nor qualified to deal with marriage counseling, but the underlying

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## SELAWIK, ALASKA

Warren & Verity Downs, AMA Volunteers

Having been in Selawik for nearly four years, we are seeing a lot of changes such as a new clinic, new board streets and cell phones. We are also making some changes as well. Warren just finished building a new boardwalk in front of our house for which our neighbors are glad. We grew our first garden here and had much lettuce and kale to share. It was such a joy to see our neighbor stuff her mouth as soon as I gave her some. We are also excited that Selawik is now a drop-off point for Full Circle Farm (a farm that delivers to Alaska). Now we no longer need to coordinate delivery from Kotzebue. We hope to get people more interested in fruits and vegetables with better and cheaper access. Ultimately, we would like to see more gardens and a community green house.



*"New" Boardwalks made from discarded wood*

Things are changing here, yet the biggest change is in me. Selawik has become my home. (Even our tiny place feels

homey, not crowded anymore.) Though I know there are things I still don't know, I feel much more like a member of the community. I have developed deep friendships. I feel hurt when someone dies because I know the family, if not that person. I feel sorry when water systems break because I know what it means to daily life. I feel joy in finding a good berry picking site because I know I can get all I need to last until next summer. I worry about caribou not coming by Selawik because I know people will go hungry without the meat. I am a part of Selawik and the people here are all so special to me.

We no longer have some of the traditional missionary activities like children's Sabbath School and our attempt to do Pathfinders didn't pan out. I still would love to see these things here in Selawik and feel at times as though I am shirking my duty. But then I remember that I am still learning the culture and I am here to see the people take on the job and not to do it for them. Instead I have decided to teach my girls to reach out here in Selawik and how to get out of their shells. So I have begun to take one girl at a time out visiting elders in the village and to bless them with songs and prayer and perhaps Bible reading. I am just beginning to venture out with the girls, so please pray for us in this area.

I am most excited about how the low power radio (LPFM) project is going. Warren now has the software working to download and rebroadcast programming. Fritz Plier has designed a case to hold the computer, transmitter and cables necessary for a LPFM radio appliance. This last week was especially exciting as Thearon Staddon joined the team to see that everything is working before they are sent to villages since Warren as well as Gavin Thompson are unable to be in Anchorage/Vasilla where the kits are being assembled. Thearon is also able to get and check out supplies we need that are more readily available. We are all so glad to have him on board.

Church attendance has become very small, but we have bonded to the most solid members. We are still praying that in God's time, we can work out the misunderstandings that have arisen with others. A few months ago we were surprised to have a teacher couple show up for church one Sabbath. (We have not gotten to know the teachers because we wanted to keep our focus on the



natives.) They are true seekers and we are excited to have them. Warren sensed a new dynamic with their coming that encouraged him to try again in get others to help in leading out. Last week we were so blessed to have our first native led Sabbath School. I am very hopeful that we are seeing the first buds of Native leadership here in Selawik.

However, we have seen some difficulty in understanding the lesson or the Bible. I am very excited about the Native New Day Bible lessons and Native New Health. It seems to me that the next step is discipleship materials and Sabbath School lessons for adults as well as children aimed at Native Americans. I am praying to see families here in Selawik who are training their families to follow God after them. I see the middle-aged and elders who are deeply spiritual and even are leaders in the church, but I do not see a knowledge of how to pass on one's love for God amid strong negative influences. I know this lack is nearly as strong in my own culture, but our forms of godliness hide it too well. We also have plenty of discipleship materials. I am praying for the right native leadership to be found so that lasting Sabbath school and discipleship materials can be published. If our current AMA volunteers need extensive AFM style cross-cultural training to achieve this, then I pray that God will pave the way for us to do that. It is time for the power of God to go mightily throughout Alaska as well as all Native America.

*Verity Downs*

## TOGIAC, ALASKA CONT

cause to most of these problems has a spiritual connection and God has called me here to deal with these spiritual concerns. I spend long periods communicating with Him and begging that He provide wisdom and ability to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying and then to speak words of counsel and encouragement that will have a positive effect on those involved. There is much to be done here, so keep me in your prayers and thoughts.

There is a real need here as there is in so many mission areas around the world. I ask that you support me with your prayers and in any other way God impresses you to become involved. Hopefully you will find it in your heart to support a mission program somewhere and/or become involved personally as a missionary, so the whole world will soon hear of Jesus and He will come. I know that Alaska is not the only

field that needs help, but there is much to be done here. So begin to think of becoming personally involved whether as a volunteer on a short term basis or full time. There are many opportunities that can be put into operation such as Vacation Bible Schools, work programs, Branch Sabbath Schools and public meetings. All this is in addition to helping support the financial demands of those who are already on the ground.

If you would like to support the work here in Togiak, donations can be made to the Alaska Conference, 6100 O'Malley Rd., Anchorage, AK, 99507 Be sure to note that it is for the TOGIAC PROJECT. They will send you a receipt that is tax deductible.

In the meantime please keep Togiak in your thoughts and prayers and in other ways that you may choose to help.

God Bless,  
*Dan*

## GREETINGS FROM BETHEL, ALASKA! CONT

As a primary goal, this community desperately needs a rescue mission for men. The women have their own shelter, but the men who are homeless have nowhere to go to get out of the cold or find a hot meal. With the temperature dropping to -40F in the winter, the rescue mission is not a luxury, but a necessity. We cannot effectively share the Gospel with people who are hungry and freezing. I estimate it would take approximately \$800,000 to build a rescue mission

here on the Bethel church property that would serve approximately 18 to 24 men per night.

Please pray for the Bethel Arctic Mission. The needs in this region of Alaska are staggering, but our God is a God of miracles. Your prayers and financial support would truly be appreciated.

Blessings,  
*Doug and Lowana Blair*

## Arctic Mission Adventure

Alaska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists  
6100 O'Malley Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

*Sharing the Light till the Lights Go Out!*

## HELLO FROM SAVOONGA!

Bill & Elouise Hawkes, AMA Volunteers

Our church is active and growing; we voted six people into membership, two transfers and four baptisms from an evangelistic series by Pastor Mel Matthews. We had a church business meeting and the members want to get water and plumbing in the church as soon as possible. They made plans to do the expansion for another class room. That will give us three class rooms or the option of having one large room for our fellowship meals. I estimate that this expansion project will run about \$7,000.00 for building materials for the addition, and that's not counting shipping or labor. Some of the members will donate their labor, but how do we get the funds to purchase the materials and get them shipped? I know that I have some folks that are sending a few more dollars to help out, but I doubt that there will be \$7,000.00.

I got enough carpet at the dump that someone had thrown out to carpet the class room and the foyer which will help keep it warmer. Most of the carpet was still on the cardboard tube. I put it in on Sunday with the help of a neighbor who is always looking for work. While I am away for my surgery, I plan to stay in touch with the building committee chairman on the progress and will order supplies to be shipped by barge next summer.



## RADIO OUTREACH UPDATE

Judi Thompson, Dillingham



Praise the Lord, three new stations have been installed, in Chignik Lake, Gambell, and Peterson Point, giving us a total of nine LPFM stations on air! We also have requests from Akiak, Anchor Point, Barrow, Craig, Delta Junction, Homer, Kachemak Selo, Kenai, Koliganek, Nanwalek, Nikolaevsk, Nome, Port Graham, Rasdolna, Savoonga, Seldovia, Valdez and Vosnesenko to install radio stations. At Palmer Camp Meeting, about 100 people offered to be prayer partners for villages; I'm still working on getting information organized, but certainly have not forgotten any of you!

A portable MP3 recorder has been purchased for recording local content, and this is in use almost daily. Progress is being made on developing a unit that is mailable, however there are still technical challenges to be overcome. In the meantime, the Lord continues to provide donated second-hand computers for the project, and we praise Him for that! Here is a message from a listener in Lake Aleknagik:

*"I wanted to let you know how much I'm enjoying the station! But the truly neat news is from my neighbor Kathy. She was skeptical when I called and gave her the frequency on Sunday, but today she called and said that she LOVED it and had called all her friends in the village. She's listening continually all day long and is so happy!! Thanks for your dedication!"*

So, in summary, here's what you can do :)

- Continue to be interested and receive and share our newsletter;
- Let us know of others who wish to receive the newsletter;
- Join the prayer campaign for a village in Alaska.
- If you know someone who lives in one of these villages who may be willing to host a radio station in their home, let us know.
- If you feel impressed to contribute financially, take it to the Lord and let Him be your guide. Contributions can be made to the Alaska Conference or Dillingham SDA Church earmarked for Village Radios.

## AMA TARGET VILLAGES

The AMA initiative encompasses seven villages in Alaska: Ambler, Bethel, Gambell, Savoonga, Selawik, Shungnak and Togiak. God has led individuals to serve in the communities of Bethel, Savoonga, Selawik and Togiak, but there is so much more work to be done!

With over 175 remote villages throughout Alaska, the need is great. Wouldn't it be a blessing to have an AMA volunteer and radio station in every village!

To learn about AMA volunteer opportunities, visit [www.alaskaconference.org](http://www.alaskaconference.org). For information on village life, visit [http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/commdb/CF\\_BLOCK.htm](http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/commdb/CF_BLOCK.htm)

