

# Action!



Teaching the Word.  
Reaching the World!

Volume 72, Number 1

January 2008

## Open D O O R S



By John Reese

This writing follows soon after the Caribbean Lectureship at Lone Oak, Paducah. The theme was “Open Doors” based on Colossians 4.

*Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our Message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should (Colossians 4:2-4).*

Reports of open doors were prolific. Yet they were just a regional glimpse, and a microcosm of how God is working worldwide. His manifold wisdom and grace always astonish us!

My talks emphasized the unchanging nature of God. His passion for reaching the lost blazes now as intensely as when He paid for them in blood. Jesus is as seri-

ous about the Great Commission today as the day He first spoke it. He is the same yesterday, today and forever!

Just as God prepared the first century world for the Gospel to spread rapidly, so He prepares the twenty-first century world. Alexander the Great thought he was spreading Greek culture for Macedonian glory. In fact, he was God’s tool for a common language to serve Christianity and the New Testament. Romans thought they were building infrastructure to control an empire. In fact, they were literally “paving the way” to speed the Gospel to the world. In the same way, God is preparing our world now. It is no coincidence that the “information explosion” parallels the “population explosion.” We can communicate more rapidly with more

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How open doors look in Papua (see p. 4)

# Open Door for “The Open Bible” Television Program Targets US Hispanics

By Rex Morgan

Are you interested in reaching the growing Hispanic population in your area? God continues to open doors of opportunity to make it easier. Recently a new door opened up for the Spanish-language evangelistic television program “Con La Biblia Abierta” (“With the Bible Open”), which will now be seen every Monday night on Dish Network. “Con La Biblia Abierta” is produced by Christian Productions International. It has a growing international audience in 23 countries every Thursday afternoon. It has also been on the air in several U.S. cities.

Now, God has paved the way for the program to reach across our 50 United States on a single network. Almavision is a television network based in Miami, Fla., that is included in all packages offered by the Dish Network on channel 9413.

As the program’s producer, I shared news of this breakthrough with our friends at World Bible School. Soon we came up with an agreement to place a toll-free 800 number in the programs to involve WBS as the program’s follow-through method. Each program offers a free Bible correspondence course to its viewers. With this in mind, WBS will be working to recruit Spanish-speaking WBS teachers in the U.S. to nurture contacts that come to us from the television broadcasts.

This television program has enjoyed great success in helping to reach the lost



Dawn at WBS’ Abilene breakfast pictures this issue’s emphasis on bright beginnings.

and strengthen churches of Christ. It is a Bible teaching program, with host Efrain Valverde A., which reaches out to Hispanics and speaks to their spiritual and family needs.

The Sycamore church of Christ in Cookeville, Ten. has decided to sponsor the weekly telecasts. This congregation is well known for launching “One Nation Under God” and also has about 100 active WBS teachers with students in several parts of the world.

The new television broadcast will start January 7, 2008, at 8:00 P.M. Eastern Time, 7:00 P.M. Central Time, nationwide. It will continue each Monday night at the same time on Dish Network channel 9413. If you know of Spanish speakers in your area, please tell them about the



Dish Network contract signing; Juan Carlos Cabrera of Almavision with Efrain Valverde and Rex Morgan

program. If they haven’t seen the program but you would like them enrolled in WBS, have them call our toll free number: 1-800-310-7680. Thank you for your prayers for this new evangelistic effort!

*Editor’s Note:*  
While visiting

with Rex, he told us about WBS’ impact within his own family. Look for that amazing story, entitled “Not Too Late for a New Beginning,” in the next **Action!**

Ensure that you never miss an inspiring issue — subscribe right now to **Action!** by contacting us (see ways on page 3). The toll-free number 1-800-311-2006 is easiest. Simply request your regular copy, giving us your name and postal address.

There is no formal charge and your generosity is always welcomed.



## OPEN DOORS from page 1

people than ever before. God is opening unprecedented doors *because He remains passionately focused on His Great Commission.*

The questions are: How passionate are we? How much do we share the Father’s heart for His lost children? How focused are we on the Great Commission? Have we the courage to step by faith through the openings God makes?

Many are entering divine doorways. This issue of **Action!** introduces several new launches. We publish these stories for the networking information that

may serve your outreach. More importantly, we want to infect every reader with the affirmative, adventurous spirit of Christ and His mission.

The accompanying photo depicts the open door we personally experience in Muslim Africa. It symbolizes that God unlocks opportunity in places and ways we might never expect.

Pray, as Paul and the Colossians did, for more open doors to advance the saving Message. Pray especially for the *boldness* to go through the doors that God is opening right now.





# Gateway to New Communities

By Kit Lawson

**T**iming is a critical element in many of life's endeavors. In comedy, theater, music, sports, financial investments — you name it — it's all about timing.

But timing is most critical when it comes to our spiritual lives.

Just as comedic timing is about the collision of a great audience and a great delivery at a precise point, eternity is impacted when the receptive heart collides with the conveyance of the love of Christ.

God used perfect timing when He became one of us. Was mankind not in need for thousands of years before He sent Jesus? Yes, but "at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."

In the last dozen years, the Internet has evolved to be more than a data store of information. It has matured into a unique social "eco-system" Today's Internet provides a new



Kit showing new technology

world where many people remove their masks and become genuine. This fosters real relationships and establishes authentic communities at unprecedented speed.

People have always longed to be a part of something bigger than themselves. And they find "big" on the Net. The late American author Kurt Vonnegut said, "Every one of us is genetically, chemically and socially programmed to be a part of an extended family or community. We are desperately unhappy when we are not." In search of happiness, connections are created every minute in online support groups and

social networking sites. Facebook, for example, signs up 150,000 new users each day. The Internet allows us to expand our world to the size of the globe and condense it to relationships in small groups of like-minded people.

The rise of popular social sites like Facebook underscores the need people feel to connect. Blogs, images and videos are posted online in nearly real-time. They help to build relationships in unconventional ways and enhance existing relationships.

World Bible School continues its commitment to reach into the lives of those who are searching for a relationship with their Creator.

We are dedicated to utilizing every resource available to meet them daily in the new world and to minister to them online. In 2008, WBS Internet has exciting new approaches that are timed to bring a collision of the Creator and the creation. To learn more, visit [worldbibleschool.net/newworld](http://worldbibleschool.net/newworld).



## Above & Beyond

by Kevin Rhodes

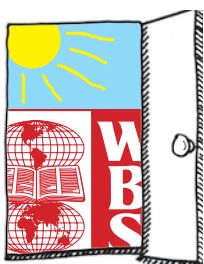
### Open doors—galore!

**T**hey're everywhere. New areas of opportunity, new venues for evangelism, new peoples eager to learn of Jesus, new technologies and new media to share the Gospel. It's amazing the doors of opportunity that God is opening for His people!

We here at World Bible School have been reviewing the open doors at our disposal. It's exciting stuff.

And then, you get to the *budgeting part*. Yikes — so much to do, so many resources needed! In fact, we've completed our budgeting process for 2008. As we consider the great things that God has called us to do, we also — as good stewards — count the costs for doing them. What projects will take Jesus to the most people? Which will do so most cost-effectively? Which will break new ground for future fruit — even if there are early investment costs? Which efforts and which use of funds will God most likely be pleased with and bless with rich returns?

As with all worthy ministries in the Kingdom, fund raising is a critical component of what we do at WBS. For your role in that, we thank you with all of our hearts. As God provides open doors, He provides *you* and your generous gifts to usher us through those open doors.



# Action!

EDITOR John Reese

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# Mission Doors Op

## Ecuadorian Missionary to Papua

By Cesar Basantes

I am Cesar Basantes, a missionary trained at Sunset's school of preaching in Quito, Ecuador. In 2003, I came to work with David Buskirk as a teacher at the Bible School in Waropen, Papua, Indonesia. David introduced me to the WBS courses in the Indonesian language. I was very thankful that there was a program like this. I asked for some of the courses that I could distribute in Manokwari, the city where I work and live. The first person to take the course was my wife, Tini Lontaan, who at the time was my fiancée. After she studied the courses, she was baptized. From that beginning, we promoted the courses to everyone we met.

Through these WBS courses, 13 people have been baptized already. While they are studying the courses, we always visit them in their houses to discuss the Bible and to help in their progress.

Currently we have students in various places, including the city of Manokwari with its neighboring villages Wariori and Aransbari, the city of Sorong, Tomohon (in North Sulawesi) and Posi-Posi Rao (in the Moluccas). We currently have 96 students.

I have experienced many things in the WBS ministry. Thankfully, younger people are more open to study the Word through these courses. Sometimes the work is hard. Let me share two experiences.

First, one day a WBS student and I went to deliver an Introduction Lesson to his friend at a Dutch Seminary. We asked for permission to meet with the friend. We were discussing how to study the WBS course, when suddenly the Seminary's director came. He called me to his office and asked me what my purpose was at the school. After hearing my explanation, he became very upset. He threw us out and forbade the students there to take our courses. We left with a heavy heart, very sad that people would prevent us from helping others learn more of God's Word.

Secondly, sister Fenny and I went on my motorcycle to Aransbari to visit WBS students. We had to cross two rivers with strong currents and no bridges. Heavy rains the night before made them flood. I was afraid to cross, but sister Fenny encouraged me to continue. Suddenly, three others came on motorcycles and crossed the river. Seeing that, I also tried to cross. But in the middle, my motorcycle stuck, and the current was too strong for me. The three men came back and helped.

Later, we arrived safely at Aransbari and visited the WBS students in each of their houses. Then we returned by the same route. At the worst river, people were carrying motorcycles across for a fee of five dollars. Six men carried each motorcycle. Sister Fenny, however, lost her footing and the current carried her away. Thankfully, there was a huge rock that she could hang on to that saved her.

These experiences will not stop us promoting this program. Rather, these experiences give us encouragement to be more diligent. We are confident that, if we work for the good and the name of the Lord, He

will not leave us.

*Editor's note: Cesar's national language is Spanish. He wrote this article in his second language, Bahasa Indonesia. His fellow-missionary to Indonesia, David Buskirk, translated it into English for you. At the end of the report, Cesar mentioned that supplies of the WBS courses in Indonesian are running low. To help with the next printing, please contact WBS.*



## Strengthening Africa's Families

By Janet Allison

Families with healthy relationships are the foundation of a healthy community. For this reason, after 34 years of church and school missions, my husband Fielden and I turned to a full time mobile marriage and family ministry called AIMF (African Institute for Marriage and Family). We travel all over East, Central and Southern Africa, with an occasional visit to West Africa and the islands off East Africa.

We have developed a four pronged approach. We visit and work with a community to teach marriage enrichment. We strongly encourage both husbands and wives to attend in order to facilitate change in the relationship. We use charts, drama, handouts, videos, role playing, informative lectures and discussion questions to generate solutions to problems. Topics include communication skills, caring for AIDS victims, handling finances and parenting skills. Having spent over three decades in East Africa, we have adapted our teaching to make it culturally relevant.



Cesar Basantes and family



Fielden and Janet





# ening



A second focus is teaching a week long block course at a graduate level Bible school. This includes the methods mentioned as well as two projects, a research paper and case studies on counseling experience, and tests to evaluate understanding and practical use.



**Janet Allison sharing WBS in Dar es Salaam**

The third prong is a training workshop using the above methods. We take three to ten couples and spend an intense four to six days with them, going through a workbook and worksheets. During this workshop, couples are given assignments to work on together, as well as many group assignments.

The fourth aspect of our ministry involves counseling missionaries, mission teams and others as needed. We also offer counseling courses, adapted to the local situation, which might include trauma therapy, abuse therapy, handling marital infidelity, stress related problems, AIDS ministry and other topics. My Masters Degree is in Marriage and Family Therapy. My husband's is in Biblical and Related Subjects. However, what makes us more qualified is years of personal ministering in these areas on African soil.

We have written two books on the subject: *An Exciting Marriage: An Answer For AIDS* and *Happy Homes and Huts*. We have also developed a 14 lesson video series entitled *Marriage for a Lifetime*, with its workbook. Since January 2007 World Radio has helped us broadcast a weekly 30 minute

radio program all across Africa from East to West. Our presentations about marriage and family also offer World Bible School courses. Our summer interns do street evangelism by handing out tracts and WBS Introduction Lessons. WBS students and others can learn how to acquire materials by writing to GNPI, PO Box 636 Village Market, Nairobi, Kenya 06621, or email to [gmpi-africa@ngpi.org](mailto:gmpi-africa@ngpi.org) or [aimf@gmail.com](mailto:aimf@gmail.com).



## New Beginning for French World Outreach

By Doyle Kee

During the fall of 2007 a transfer of Jerrel Rowden's literature ministry, French World Outreach, from Cedar Hill, Tex., was made to the facilities of the Crieve Hall church of Christ in Nashville. This new beginning has been made possible by their willingness to oversee this new work and to provide about 1,700 square feet of space in their multi-purpose building.

This transition became a necessity with Jerrel's failing health. The Rowdens initiated this ministry in Reims, France, continued many years in Quebec City, Canada, and then moved it to Texas. Jerrel worked with Tex Williams, John Reese and others to publish the first four courses of World Bible School's new Master Series.

The new director of the printing ministry of French World Outreach is Barry Baggott. He and his family spent 15 years in the Ivory Coast. He has



**Barry Baggott family**

long published a teaching bulletin "Chemin de Vérité" (The Way of Truth). Over the last month Baggott and his staff have sent out 19 shipments, totaling over 17,700 pieces of literature, to 12 different countries. Another 10,500 pieces were sent the previous month from the literature center in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Asked about his impressions and hopes for this new outreach, Baggott replied, "We have long had a severe shortage of French-speaking missionaries, and only one person out of 44,000 in the French-speaking world is a New Testament Christian. Nevertheless, the growth of the church in French-speaking countries over the past 20 years has been extremely encouraging — from around 85 to over 550 congregations. Good printed materials have been a major factor in that progress and will continue to be a valuable tool for evangelism. The steady increase in the number of French-speaking congregations also means an increasing demand for materials. I am very excited to be a part of providing this needed literature."

As part of the French materials, WBS courses are used in a major way. Ray Exum of Crystal Lake,



**Ray and Jessica Exum**

Ill., plans to begin working full-time with French WBS in January 2008, not only in teaching his many students around the world, but also in facilitating the activity of other French WBS teachers. He takes up this effort with the full recommendation of Jerry Davidson of Florence, Ala., who recently retired from his work with French WBS. For more information about this new French WBS ministry, contact Barry Baggott at [fwo.ceb@gmail.com](mailto:fwo.ceb@gmail.com) or Ray Exum at [rjexum@hotmail.com](mailto:rjexum@hotmail.com).



# Tips

## Open Doors for New Generations

By John Reese

We owe a great debt to the older generations that started World Bible School. Many of them belong to the renowned age-group that Tom Brokaw called “the Greatest Generation.” They matured during the Great Depression and World War II. Fiery experiences forged in them qualities of endurance, drive and sacrifice that went on to build much of modern America.

WBS also benefits from their strong sense of mission. Sociologists label their generation variously as the Civics or the Heroes or the GI Generation. They are indeed heroes, indefatigable soldiers of the cross. They put in countless hours of selfless service, long after others have retired to leisurely life-styles. We thank God for their dedication and for the countless lives they touch.

That generation is gradually going to their ultimate victory parade. However, their passing raises valid concerns. Who will continue in their place? Why did thriving WBS programs that reached thousands decline and die? Usually the most evident factor was that age took its natural toll on the founders.

Obviously, everyone could see it coming.


Yet little was done to prepare for transitions. Were the leaders too busy to ensure that thousands more would benefit from the Gospel? Were they afraid to intrude in realms owned by their seniors? Perhaps those venerable founders failed to plan ahead. Did they not want to face their own mortality? Did they jealously guard the source of so much satisfaction for their declining years? Or, did they try to transition, but found no one willing to volunteer? Is the next generation too self-absorbed to care about outreach?

Hard realities deserve hard questions and concrete solutions because they affect all evangelism, not just WBS. These matters relate to the great principles of Deuteronomy and 2 Timothy. Moses and Paul knew their personal doors were closing. They deliberately opened the doors for future believers. They mentored Joshua and Timothy respectively. WBS coordinator, who is your Joshua in training? WBS teacher, who is your Timothy? Who will multiply your own effect and perpetuate it far into the future?

Where the WBS baton has dropped, the good news is that it can be retrieved. After all, our race is a marathon, not a sprint. WBS programs are relatively easy to revive. Since the



**A fine example of passing the baton: Ron Pottberg visited the Johnson St. church in Greenville. When he saw the struggles of aging WBS coordinator Marguerite Pitcock, he encouraged her to train a new coordinator. Marguerite says that God gave her the best — Belinda Wilbanks who is effectively carrying the program forward.**

founders were indeed heroes, most members view WBS favorably. Where programs ran out of students, WBS can supply new student names (you may have to get in line and be open to new nations). Where coordinators moved on, leaders must be proactive in recruiting and equipping new coordinators. We are here to help you every step of the way, from visits that motivate, to workshops that show how, to cost appraisals, to answers as questions arise. We are all about *open doors* to souls who ask us to teach them the Bible. 

## Doors to Better Communication


By Fred Heath

As you know, communication is difficult to accomplish effectively on an ongoing basis whether in the business world, a local church, or World Bible School.



**Fred Heath**

will be responsible for working with a group of churches in their geographic area. They will help to communicate new ideas (best practices) and new initiatives (such as the business reply envelopes for Zimbabwe). They will also seek feedback from local churches and teachers on items that should be brought to the attention of WBS staff and board.


What's needed? Volunteers! If you are (or have been) a coordinator at your congregation, if you have a computer with email access, and if you are interested in this ministry, please contact Fred Heath at [frheath@sudenlink.net](mailto:frheath@sudenlink.net). 

INTRODUCING from p. 8 \_\_\_\_\_

know that **Ron and Susan Pottberg** have moved to Colorado to broaden WBS' representation across the country. Ron continues to serve as WBS'



**Susan & Ron (holding grandchild Shawn) with their daughter Kristen**

Vice President for International Relations. Recent travels have included South Africa, Malawi and Philippines. Early 2008 international travels target West Africa. Early U.S. travels extend as far west as California. 



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Park Avenue Church of Christ

## Memorial & Honor Gifts

**M**emorial Gifts and Honor Gifts are ideal ways to remember a loved one's legacy or special occasions. At the same time, your gift is used to "teach the Word and reach the world." Upon receipt of your gift, an appropriate letter of acknowledgement will be sent naming the honoree and you as the thoughtful donor.

Please accept my:

**HONOR GIFT**

Birthday  Anniversary  
 Illness  Friendship Other \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORIAL GIFT**

This gift is for  Mr. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ms. \_\_\_\_\_

This gift is from:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Church (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a letter of acknowledgement to:

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ms. \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Honoree \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to my credit card.

Visa  Discover  
 MasterCard  Amex Other \_\_\_\_\_

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Name (as on card) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



Cyndi & Robin

# Introducing...



Sheryl & Tim

**W**orld Bible School is a mission team. Dedicated members of Christ build networking that aims to reach students at home and around the world. Since caring relationships are vital, we should introduce some of the newer faces and roles here at World Bible School.

**Robin Cannon** joined WBS in December 2007. He will represent WBS in the area of Memphis, Ten. Robin brings a rich missions background. He was raised in Japan and Papua New Guinea. After earning a Bachelors degree from Harding University and a Masters at the University of Memphis, he became a therapist. Then he and his wife Cyndi served as missionaries in Okinawa, Japan from 1989 to 2001. They returned to



Sandra & John

Memphis to assist Robin's father, Joe Cannon, in caring for his mother, RosaBelle. Robin was a sales manager for Holiday Inn. His love of world evangelism drew him to WBS, which in turn needs Robin's many gifts — including his Asian perspectives. Robin and Cyndi have three children: Jessica, Colt and Carly.

**Sheryl Williams** and her husband Tim hail from San Antonio, Tex. She worked previously in the advertising industry after earning a Bachelors degree from Abilene Christian University. Sheryl now brings her bright smile and many talents to WBS' Development Department. Among other duties, she prepares for Impact Sundays and coordinates events such as special seminars and WBS Dinners, which have proved very popular. The most recent examples were in Austin, Nashville, Florence, Chattanooga and Dallas.

**John Tesseyman** is a native New Yorker, with the accent to prove it. After serving in the

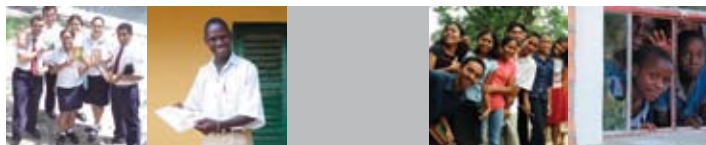
Air Force, his civilian careers included civil engineering and New York City Transit (1985 until retirement in 2003). He has served as a preacher in Alabama and Staten Island, as part of the International Mission at the World Trade Center (1978), and as an elder at the Manhattan church of Christ. He and Sandra have three children and five grandchildren. John now handles shipping and maintenance, and brings to WBS a wealth of enthusiasm and experience. He replaces **Kenny Reville** who served in that capacity for many years, after having retired from a military career. Kenny is the husband of **Linda Reville** (Publications and Orders Department), and he remains a dedicated WBS teacher and volunteer.

Speaking of transitions, you should continued on page 6



Linda & Kenny

## DON'T LET GOD DROP OUT...



...of high school. Last year, almost half a million young people started studying the Bible with WBS. Sadly, many will drop out. Help us keep them learning of Jesus—even as we enroll hundreds of thousands more. Learn about 2008's *Impact Sunday* in the March issue.



Teaching the Word. Reaching the World!  
**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to  
*Action!* World Bible School  
 P.O. Box 2169 · Cedar Park, Texas 78630

Address Service Requested

