

“The greatest ride;”

Missionary editor serves the Lord through Christian journalism.

By Kenneth D. MacHarg

Miami, FL (LAMNS)—In an age marked by frequent criticism of journalism as not being sympathetic to the ministry of the evangelical church, Christian journalist Susan Looie stands out as one whose ministry is to write about what the Lord is doing.

“I can look back at my journey towards Christ and see many ways the Lord used people and circumstances to draw me to Himself,” she reflects. “Because of a positive experience at Urbana and a great InterVarsity staff worker, I caught the missions bug and decided to get my masters in missions. It has been the greatest ride!”

Susan, who was born in Belmond, Iowa but raised in Windfall, Indiana, didn’t start out as one dedicated to missionary service, though she felt an early interest in spiritual matters. “I grew up in a Roman Catholic family and was always interested in spiritual things,” she says.

“I became a Christian because of the persistence of a couple of Christian girls in my dorm who continually invited me to Bible studies and the ministry of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship,” she explains. Susan attended Ball State University in Indiana, majoring in journalism. Later, she received a masters in intercultural studies with an emphasis in Teaching English as a Second Language at Wheaton College.

From there she started her international sojourn. “I served for a little over a year in Salamanca, Spain, working with university students, leading Bible studies, hosting coffee houses, staffing book tables on campus and teaching English.”

Later, Susan moved to Mexico City where she served for three years with LAM’s Spearhead program, a missionary training experience for those between 18 and 30. She moved up through the Spearhead ranks, eventually serving as a Team Leader for those who were new to the program.

Moving to Miami, she assumed the daunting task of editing LAM’s award-winning magazine, *Latin America Evangelist*. “It was intimidating to take the magazine over,” Susan remembers. “I am only the eighth editor in eighty years and it had been under the direction of John Maust, (a well-known missionary journalist).”

“I was also excited,” she says. “John was a good mentor and had confidence in me which gave me confidence in myself.”

Susan set out to maintain the long-respected integrity of the magazine by assuring that it was not just a “blow your own horn” publicity piece for the Latin America Mission, but was an instrument “to show what God is doing in the Latin world and the Latin church.”

“I have moved toward developing themed issues,” she says, pointing to recent issues that have focused on spiritual warfare, street children and women’s issues in missions.

When not in front of her computer, Susan is busy as a wife to Patrick and mother to ten-month-old Caleb. Patrick, who hails from Trinidad, serves with the mission as the manager of the headquarters building in Miami Springs.

The couple is also involved in a street ministry to those who are drawn to the lights and action of the South Beach area of Miami Beach. Working through their church, Calvary Chapel, the Loobies spend many Friday evenings in sidewalk restaurants talking to the models, homosexuals and dropouts who frequent the trendy area. “At first I thought that some of the people on the street were strange with their rings and tattoos and weird hair styles,” Susan remembers. “But later, I found that many of them were just troubled and needed to talk.”

She and Patrick mainly talk with those on the streets, hearing their stories of parental rejection, homelessness, frustration, addictions and anxiety. “We often have to confront them and ask them what they are doing with their lives.” Susan says that the couple has seen a number of people make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ through their ministry.

Back at the computer, Susan works to make words tell the story. “I love being a part of helping others fulfill the Great Commission by communicating what is happening with the church in the Latin world,” Susan explains. “I pray that I can help people to pray, give and go through the inspiring stories in the magazine.”

Striving to maintain the long integrity and ministry of the magazine, Susan was pleased to receive a note from one of LAM’s former presidents about a recent issue. It said, “I started to make a list of all the articles I especially enjoyed, thinking I might drop a note to each one in appreciation of their work, but the task soon got beyond me. I really believe it’s one of the best issues we’ve ever put out!”

For Susan, her continuing journey as a missionary has truly been a great ride.

The Latin America Mission works in partnership with churches and Christian agencies throughout Latin America and supports missionaries and projects in many Latin countries as well as in Spain. LAM is seeking to place new missionaries throughout the region. The U.S. headquarters can be reached at Latin America Mission, Box 52-7900, Miami, FL 33152, by e-mail at info@lam.org, or by calling 1-800-275-8410. The mission’s web site may be found at <http://www.lam.org>. LAM’s Canadian office is at 3075 Ridgeway Drive, Unit 14, Mississauga, ON L5L 5M6.

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