

I Will Lift Up My Eyes

Written and compiled by Evelyn Wagner
with Ann Reed

ELECTRONIC EDITION

Better Life Television
PO Box 766, Grants Pass, OR 97528
www.BetterLifeTV.tv

PRINT EDITION

R & E Press Publishing Company
Rogue River, OR 97537

ELECTRONIC EDITION

Published with permission July 2005
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I WILL LIFT UP MY EYES
© 1999 by
Evelyn Wagner

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Published by R & E Press Publishing Company
36505 Ditch Creek Road
Rogue River, OR 97537

Photograph for book cover from George C Villasenor
Printed in the United States of America
Library of Congress Catalog Number: 99-96218
ISBN: 0-9651001-2-X

This book is dedicated to
the faithful prayer warriors,
encouragers, and doers.

Thank you for
being there
to keep this
dream alive.

We are unable to begin
to thank
each person,
each supporter,
but God knows
the roll call—each one.

A special thanks
to all of you
who helped make
this book possible.
Thank you for the chapters
that were written.
A big thank you
to those who spent
hours reading the manuscript,
giving advice,
and making corrections.
We could not have
done it without you.
God bless you all.

THE DIVINE STRATEGY

As the cosmic conflict between the forces of light and darkness intensifies, the Holy Spirit moves upon dedicated men and women to implement methods best suited to their response to Christ's parting imperative: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15

God designs that the astonishing increase in knowledge and technology, identifying this age as "the time of the end," be utilized in nurturing comprehension of His character and understanding of His plan for man's rehabilitation.

Because fallen men and women are free moral agents the goal of winning their love and loyalty would seem impossible of attainment, so beguiling are Satan's pervasive powers of degradation and deceit. He is enraged because he knows that he has but a short time, but his mental powers remain undiminished. No diabolical tactic is neglected.

In gaining access to individual hearts and minds, the divine strategy also calls for wise planning and effective modalities. As in wars between nations, victory is linked to how instruments of conflict, both old and new, are utilized.

To God's remnant people Christ has commanded that the gospel be carried to the world...."to every kindred, tribe, and nation!" Their weapon, likened to a "two edged sword" is the Word of God. Made flesh in His only begotten Son, it is reflected in the lives and efforts of His disciples.

Applied strategically, His word “will not return to Him void.” Today, in this “end-time” age, the witness of preachers, healers and individuals is enhanced through both printing and electronic communications technologies. But none of these instruments will be effective if not utilized! We rejoice to burgeoning world-encompassing publishing, radio and television ministries. Curiously, or perhaps significantly, these tools have been envisioned and implemented largely through voluntary, unofficial initiatives.

A notable example of such Christian volunteerism occurred when a handful of creative Adventists focused their vision and compassion on city and country dwellers in Southern Oregon. Their dream; television transmitters carrying Christ’s message to anyone hungering for truth. The conception and development of a broadcast network now reaching hundreds of thousands with round-the-clock programming of Christian faith and philosophy must surely be viewed as providential!

As a participant during the ministry’s formative years, I am moved to attest to the quiet but persistent efforts of humble men and women whose prophetically-guided motivation is love for Christ and a compulsion to share with others the beauty, truth, and of His plan for man’s redemption.

Oliver Jacques

Better Life Television is a non profit corporation registered in the state of Oregon. It is authorized by the Internal Revenue Service as a non profit corporation (IRS 501-C3 #93-1011913). All donations are fully tax deductible.

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MISSION STATEMENT

It shall be the purpose of Better Life Television, Inc., to:

- 1.Enable the people of our community to become aware of and experience the reality of God's redeeming love and to respond to God in a personal commitment of faith.
- 2.Enhance the lives of people of all ages enabling them to grow as persons; mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually, that they might experience a better and happier way of life.
- 3.Strengthen family ties, enrich marriages, improve childhood, and bring healing to broken relationships.
- 4.Help people to follow a more healthful lifestyle and enjoy a higher quality of life.
- 5.Bring citizens to a sense of caring, mutuality, and concern for our community and our environment.
- 6.Help people to be informed and instructed in Bible knowledge and its relationship to history.
- 7.Enrich the lives of community members through a knowledge of uplifting arts, music, Christian drama, nature, and science.
- 8.Nurture a sense of Christian community through our *programming.*

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AN EVENING WALK TOGETHER

Evelyn and her husband, Delmer, walked along the wooded trail. The evening shadows were growing long, and the birds were twittering to the setting sun high up in the fir tops. Dry twigs snapped under foot, and the smell of the peeling Laurel bark added spiciness to the breeze. As they moved along the trail which followed the creek, Delmer pointed out that there was a new tinge of yellow on some of the Maple leaves. The red hues of the Vine Maple reminded Delmer and Evelyn that the long summer days would soon be coming to an end.

Just ahead stood a familiar fir with limbs reaching toward the trail. In spite of the warm evening Evelyn shivered as she remembered that a few years ago she had been here alone on an evening just like this. She had gone for a walk a wee bit later in the evening

and as she had walked near this tree she looked up to see two green eyes boring through her. A cougar crouched above her head! Her memory recalled the details of the long tail swinging back and forth, back and forth! It was as if she were there again; when the autumn colors began to melt into darkness. She had clicked the beams of her high-powered flashlight on the magnificent animal and kept them there as she slowly backed down the trail, until she felt safe enough to turn and make a dash for the house!

Evelyn snapped back to reality. She loved autumn in their forest backyard, some forty acres large near beautiful Rogue River, Oregon. Tonight was perfect and Delmer was walking by her side. The evening breeze seemed to hold its breath. The air was sweet as she breathed deeply. She was surrounded by sleepy sounds like the tiny bees' wings humming and Ditch Creek gurgling over rocks as it slowly made its way to the big Pacific Ocean. Evelyn mused that the creek is just a soft murmur compared to the spring when the rush of water bounding from rock to rock makes a muffled roar. In the middle of soaking up this wonderful peaceful moment she heard Delmer announce:

“I think we should get a satellite dish.”

“What on earth for?” Evelyn gasped. “We are so busy that neither of us has time to watch television. And really, is there anything on TV worth taking our time?”

“Weeeell,” Delmer drawled out the sound and looked off to the sky line where the dark trees were silhouetted against the horizon. “That’s the point. If

we got a satellite we could get hundreds of programs. Surely there would be a good one to watch sometimes with so many programs to choose from.”

They continued walking, and both fell silent with their own separate thoughts. When Delmer used his very long ‘weeeell,’ Evelyn knew he was beginning to think up some new project. Delmer was like that—throwing full energy into the business he had developed that now kept him globe trotting. Yet he liked to be home, too, tinkering with the generator he installed down at the creek or setting up some project in the shop.

They were nearing the house now, and Evelyn dared not break the inner thoughts her husband was sharing.

“Look, we have a clearing right at the edge of the garden here. It is not near the high trees and this would make a very good place to put the dish.” He was back with her now, sharing what he thought would be ideal for the equipment he already envisioned in place.

“I see,” Evelyn murmured with every emotion sinking, sinking like the sun, letting all the beautiful colors for a little while slowly fade away.

Why would Delmer wish to spend more money on something that they didn't spend time watching anyway?

A NEW DREAM

Delmer pulled open the patio door, switched on the light, and went over to his desk to show Evelyn some papers.

“Here are some estimates I picked up when I was in Grants Pass. We could easily install a dish doing much of the footings and wiring ourselves.

“Wowee! You really have been thinking about this project haven’t you? How come you didn’t say anything about it before?”

“Well, it just sort of jelled in the last few days. When I went to pick up some parts, I saw this place that sells satellite equipment. It just seems to be what needs to be done. I can’t explain it much different than that.”

Delmer and Evelyn used to have a black and white television set in their early years, but they put it

away because they believed TV stole time away from homework or music lessons. After both of their children were in college, Delmer purchased a good color set to place in their family room. But he was disappointed with the poor reception at their mountain home. Also the few channels carried terrible scenes of crime, war, and domestic violence. Religious programs were confusing because of man's theories and traditions that were touted while true Bible study did not come through.

Evelyn had a saying, 'Delmer does things in a big way!' Now that he had a television set, he resolved to find some good programs. Maybe a satellite dish would be the answer.

And so it happened that within the next few weeks, before the cold winter rains set in, the big round dish was in place. Delmer learned to turn the great disk this way and that. The reception was good, but the shows; were a disappointment. Even the newsreels were more graphic and just as bad!

Delmer and Evelyn were visiting friends. As they sat in the living room, the friend switched from one program to another on his satellite system.

"I have been watching a religious program your church is showing," the friend announced as he continued to move through the channels.

"I didn't know we had one," answered Delmer looking pleased.

"Yes, it is called Three Angels Broadcasting or 3ABN," the friend answered. "You know there are very few good programs even on satellite."

“I know,” Delmer answered. “There aren’t as many good things on it as I had expected. Where do you pick up 3ABN?”

That evening Delmer played with his satellite dish, reading the instructions, and learning as much as he could. Finally he was able to locate the spot where the satellite could pick up the program from Three Angels Broadcasting Network, from Thompsonville, Illinois, that was shown for a few hours a day.

Lift up the trumpet. Loud let it ring. Jesus is coming again. Delmer and Evelyn were thrilled as they sat and watched program after program.

Now their time was not their own. Overnight the television screen took control as they watched it, recorded it, and gave the recordings to friends and relatives. The new satellite dish hardly moved its face, but continued to stare at the same spot in the Eastern sky. Evelyn continually bought blank video tapes, and the recorder was kept busy filling them. The appreciation Delmer and Evelyn received from family and friends for the beautifully inspiring programs that could change lives, kept them going as they circulated the tapes from one person to another.

“Everyone should be getting these programs,” Delmer kept telling Evelyn. “We need to get a station here and pick up Three Angels Broadcasting to send to everyone in this valley. No, what we really need, is to get the church leadership involved and have stations all over North America. We could do it!! It isn’t that hard.”

SHOULD WE?

“How can we get in contact with all of our colleges and universities?” Delmer asked. “They need to be making programs to be aired on television. Think of the wonderful music that should be made available. Hospitals need to be speaking to their communities, educating the people and letting them know what is available. I need to let the church leaders of every conference in North America know of the possibility of every community having their own television stations.”

Delmer borrowed the new *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook 1987* from Charles Betz and started dictating letters that Evelyn sent out to every Seventh-day Adventist college and university in North America. They could now have a low power television station of their own. It was not that expensive. Think of the potential for students taking communication courses to be able to learn how to operate a television station!!

What a challenge for music students to share their talents on television.

Letters poured out of the computer to all Seventh-day Adventist operated hospitals in the United States. Delmer pointed out the potential of advertisement, the benefits of sharing health tips to the community, and the possibility of exchanging music and other programs with our colleges and universities.

Every Seventh-day Adventist Conference in North America received a letter, stressing the possibility that this might be the time God had opened for our message to go to all the communities in the United States, with programs from our schools, hospitals, and Three Angels Broadcasting Network.

The few letters that staggered back were good at pointing out every negative thing available—real and imaginary. Some friends were mildly supportive, others thought it was an impossible dream. And others^{3/4}well^{3/4}Evelyn asked Delmer to please not talk about the TV so much to their friends, or maybe they soon would not have any friends left!

Asking Delmer not to talk about Christian TV was like asking the birds not to sing. *Could it be the people at the Oregon Church Conference Office were beginning to dread to answer their telephones because so many calls were coming from Delmer?* Evelyn wondered.

“The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has changed the ruling. It is now possible for our church to have a television station in almost any community,” Delmer said over and over. “Other church denominations are getting their own stations.

Why aren't we? Something must be done. Only once a year does FCC have an open window when a person can apply for a television frequency. All studies must be made by a qualified engineer to find out if there is a TV channel available before the window opens.”

In spite of little encouragement Delmer had a study made to see which channels were available in the Rogue River Valley. He applied for construction permits with the Federal Communications Commission for a channel in Grants Pass and one in Rogue River. Delmer lost the one in Grants Pass to someone else who had applied for it—a chance one always has to take. Next he changed Channel 65 from Rogue River to Grants Pass and applied for another one for Rogue River. As each day passed he became more excited about the possibilities available.

Applying for a television permit is costly and time consuming. Applications needed to be filled out completely and correctly with information that takes hours to secure. One little mistake would throw the whole application out. It seemed like a slow learning process to Evelyn as she typed out one application form after another. There were deadlines to meet and overnight letters to be rushed to the post office thirteen miles away.

Delmer quickly learned about television stations, antennas, and towers from the engineer of a local television station who had space to rent and equipment to sell. They went to the mountains together, and Delmer learned what kind of equipment

was needed to set up a television station and how to do it.

Evelyn faithfully attacked her job of writing letters to anyone and everyone Delmer thought would be interested. With a persistent determination to be optimistic and supportive she sat before the computer for hours. The telephone bills and postage stamps took more and more dollars to keep abreast of the mountain of paperwork.

Why do I feel this way? Evelyn wondered. I feel as if I am being rejected whenever someone rejects the idea of a new Christian television station. It is God's work—not ours, but there seems to be so few people who are interested.

"I'll give as much money as Joe* gives to start a new television station," Peter,* a close friend of the family for many years, told Evelyn.

"Really?"

How could he? Joe was much better fixed financially than Peter.

"That's because," Peter flashed his charming smile, "I know Joe isn't going to give any."

The knife in Evelyn's heart would not go away. Peter's words kept churning through her mind, and that evening dinner was salted with her tears.

Were they doing the right thing? How did Delmer know God wanted these Christian television stations in the Rogue Valley?

**Names have been changed*

CONCERNS!

Delmer sat at a desk located near the corner of the family room. He didn't notice the shelves filled with books surrounding him or the grandfather clock chiming out the hour, but was deeply engrossed in the project facing him at the moment. He held a telephone to his ear with one hand and busily worked a calculator with the other. Finally, he pushed his chair back and straightened his legs.

"We made it," he beamed. His blue eyes smiled with genuine happiness as he removed his brown jacket and laid it across the back of the cream colored couch nearby.

Evelyn looked at her creative husband and giggled. There never seemed to be a dull moment around this household! It had been this way since their courting days. Always there seemed to be one more dream, one more goal, and one more project to

accomplish. She finished arranging the dishes in the cupboard and turned to rinse the soap from the sink.

“We made what this time?” she questioned wiping her hands on a nearby towel, walking across the open space, and sinking down, down into the soft old couch that never knew when to stop sinking. She reached out and straightened the jacket that begged to be hung in the closet.

“I earned enough free air miles so you can go to New York with me. Now I will call the travel agent and schedule our flight.”

“But we can’t go until the reports are back from the television engineers,” argued Evelyn. “What good will it do to go to New York if there is no air space available to put up a TV station anyway?”

“Oh, if God wants the Seventh-day Adventist Van Center in New York to have a low power television station, there will be a way,” came Delmer’s matter-of-fact response as he picked up the phone and began dialing the number. When Delmer decided something needed to be done, he did not waste much time before going into the project with the energy of a dive bomber.

“Trinity Broadcasting Company is getting about twenty new low-power television stations in the next year or so,” Delmer had told Evelyn. “Our church is just sleeping! I think God wants us to be the head and not the tail!”

Weeks before Evelyn had watched as the clouds poured buckets of rain on the lush landscape. The water made little streams across the green lawn and down the driveway before it plunged over the bank

tumbling to the restless creek below. She clicked on the word processor and began to write to her long-time friend, Juanita Kretschmar, director of the evangelistic van center in New York. Evelyn concluded the message by saying, *I am sorry not to be able to send any donation for the work there at this time. Delmer is so excited about getting good Christian programming on TV here in Grants Pass, and that is where our money is going.*

Gathering a few pieces of literature that Delmer had written and assembled about the possibility of getting television stations, Evelyn put them in an envelope and attached a stamp.

I know Juanita will understand, Evelyn told herself as she sealed the envelope. *I just wish there could be more money to cover the many projects that so desperately need all the support they can get.*

Evelyn bowed her head, *Oh, God,* she pleaded, *please do not let us make a mistake. We only want to serve You, and there are so many needy projects. This TV project seems so big.*

INTO THE STORM

New York. New York. Here we come! Evelyn almost burst with excitement as she and Delmer planned and packed for the big trip. Merlin Kretschmar, president of the Greater New York Conference for Seventh-day Adventists, and his wife, Juanita, director for the E-Van-gelism Center, were visionary people. They had been praying for a radio or TV station for years. When they received Evelyn's letter, they asked Delmer to see what possibilities there were in getting air space in New York. They already had a TV studio and many programs. What an opportunity!

Rain beat against the windows, as the car nosed its way behind headlights trying to pierce the morning darkness on the way to the Medford, Oregon, airport. Evelyn's thoughts jumped around like grasshoppers. *Why hadn't they gotten a report back from the study that had been made about the availability of having*

some air space in New York? Delmer had called Washington, DC, repeatedly and always received the same answer, “We will be getting a report to you in a few days.”

“I feel silly going to New York to see about setting up a TV station, when we do not even know if there is air space,” Evelyn confided, while Delmer pulled the gray Oldsmobile to a stop in front of the busy little airport.

“Don’t worry,” answered Delmer while unloading the one blue suitcase and hang-up bag. “Those reports don’t always find everything. Even if they think there is no available space, what of it? If God wants a special TV station in New York there will be one.”

“Oh, I know,” answered Evelyn, and Delmer left to park the car. She pulled her heavy coat around her and quickly strode to the end of the line at the ticket counter where Delmer had set the luggage.

“Hum, this is a bit complicated,” the ticket agent muttered pushing a few keys on the computer and passing the tickets back to Evelyn. “You just wait here while I help these other passengers. Someone will be here soon to assist you.”

Evelyn waited as passengers came and went.

“Your plane is being delayed,”

Finally a ticket agent came over to Delmer. He spoke quietly. “There is a storm raging in San Francisco! Everything is being delayed. However, by relocating your flight, we can get you into the Newark Airport tonight by nine thirty.”

Oh, no, not the Newark Airport!

“No. We absolutely cannot do that,” Delmer quickly answered.

“We cannot go to the Newark Airport,” Delmer repeated. “We are supposed to go to the Kennedy Airport.”

“Well,” answered the agent. He turned to his computer and tapped the keys. “In that case we can reroute you through Minnesota and will get you into the Kennedy Airport at eleven thirty tomorrow morning.”

“We will take the flight to the Newark Airport,” Delmer quickly answered. Then he turned to Evelyn and said, “Call Juanita and let her know where and when we will be getting there.”

“No way,” shuddered Evelyn. “You let her know that we will arrive at the **one** airport she emphasized for us **not** to come to!”

Evelyn claimed a couple of empty seats in the crowded waiting room and watched the storm while Delmer went to call Juanita. The wind sounded ominous as it whipped soaking, wet, tree tops back and forth. Delmer looked confident and happy walking back to the row of crowded chairs next to the wall where Evelyn waited.

“It will be okay to go to New Jersey,” he said. “We have no other choice.”

The clock ticked away the minutes, half hours, and hours. *How long would they...*

“Flight Number 618 now loading for San Francisco,” came over the loud speaker. Delmer and Evelyn picked up their things and joined the line of passengers ready to climb the steps up into the

plane. They found their assigned places a little behind the big wings, and Evelyn slipped into the seat next to the window. Her heart was pounding as she watched the storm, remembering another plane ride through a storm, when even the steward was sweating it out!

“Where is your faith?” Delmer asked, with a mischievous smile and eyes twinkling. He placed their carryon luggage in the compartment above their heads and settled into a seat beside Evelyn.

“Getting into an airplane and heading into a raging storm has never been high on my priority list.” Evelyn whispered.

6

FLYING HIGH

The plane lifted into the air and the landscape transformed into miniature buildings with tiny vehicles moving along on the ribbon-like roads below. The plane rose above the dark clouds. The mountains were beautiful with their toppings of sugar-white snow. After changing planes in San Francisco, again they were in the air. The hours flew by as they soared above the fluffy, white clouds. Evelyn laid her head back on the seat and slept.

“I am so sorry you had to come so far and so late at night,” Evelyn apologized to Juanita when they met at the airport.

“No problem,” Juanita answered. “That is no problem, but I must tell you I really do have some bad news.”

The loaded car inched its way through the heavy traffic while Juanita shared the news with Delmer and Evelyn. “Sacks-Freeman Associates called and said

there is no air space available. I knew you couldn't get the money back from the airlines for your tickets, so I thought you might as well use them. I wanted you to see how things have changed since you were here last, anyway."

It was wonderful being in New York again. Evelyn felt glad Juanita had not told them what Sacks-Freeman had said. Delmer made plans about what he should do while the car slowly moved along in the bumper-to-bumper traffic. He would go to Washington, DC. He would see more people. He would check more data. His unstoppable enthusiasm was still there!

Don't people ever sleep around here? It was close to midnight, but the six-lane highway looked as if it were a solid line of cars as far as one could see. At last Marilyn, the driver, turned from the main freeway and started down the road leading to the elegant, old, Colonial styled mansion used as the E-Van-gelism Center headquarters.

"I hope you can get a good rest," Juanita said as the luggage was taken from the trunk of the car. She slid into the drivers seat to return to her home about six miles away.

Delmer carried the baggage up the wide, winding stairway, and Marilyn showed Delmer and Evelyn to their room on the second floor before she left for her room on the third floor.

Delightful anticipation filled Evelyn the next morning when Juanita asked if she would like to go out on one of the vans. Delmer set himself up in an

office where he could make phone calls and work on the details for a TV frequency.

The crisp morning made Evelyn shiver, and her breath hung in the air like little clouds of smoke. She, Jeff, and Lorie climbed into the big van and again bowed their heads while Lorie asked God for special guidance and protection for the day. Jeff then checked to see if the boxes of literature, books, and a few Bibles were securely stored in place before they slowly made their way with the traffic toward the great metropolitan area.

Evelyn sat by the window watching the crowded houses pressed together and the tall buildings reaching for the sky. The roaring motors and honking cars tried to drown out her thoughts. *Was that screaming sound a police car or an ambulance?* Jeff and Lorie seemed to take it all in stride. This was a different world from her mountain home in Oregon.

I wonder what I am supposed to do? Evelyn mused when the van stopped, and the people began lining up outside at the curb of a busy sidewalk.

TO WALK ON HOLY GROUND

Before Jeff opened the door to welcome the people in, he, Lorie, and Evelyn bowed their heads while another prayer ascended, asking God's special presence to be with them that day.

Evelyn handed out beautiful, new *Signs of the Times* magazines amid the Christmas rush. Some individuals shook their heads refusing the gift, but most seemed very glad to get the magazines. After about a half an hour, Evelyn went back into the van out of the icy air that was nipping at her toes and fingers.

Michael, a minister who lives in the area, came into the van bundled up in a heavy coat, cap, and gloves.

"If we only had our own radio station, we could reach so many more people, and the work could go much faster," he told Evelyn.

Lorie looked up from the application she was helping someone fill out. “That is why Mrs. Wagner and her husband are here,” she told Pastor Michael. “They are trying to get a television station started for the Van Center.”

Pastor Michael’s eyes sparkled with anticipation! “We need to meet the people in their own homes via the television where there would not be the peer pressure, and they would not be threatened by outside influences!” he exclaimed. He then looked at his watch and said, “I had better get to passing out this literature.”

Two and a half hours later Pastor Michael came into the waiting room, sat down, and said, “They are all gone. I knew it would not take long to give out that stack of *Signs of the Times* magazines.”

Gone? How many had he given away? Evelyn wondered. *There were a lot of magazines in that two or three foot stack.* Evelyn had only given away about thirty *or was it twenty?* It had seemed like a lot at the time.

Bright lights challenged the darkness trying to cover the city. They must head home. The late hour reminded Jeff that he would be driving in rush-hour traffic.

By the time the van pulled up to the parking lot in front of the big brick building, others were on their way to prayer meeting. Delmer had finished his work for the day, so he and Evelyn headed toward the worship room.

Pastor Merlin Kretschmar invited each person to read three or four verses from the scriptures taken

from First and Second Chronicles and also from the first chapter in First Kings. The reading flowed around the room as the story of Solomon's life unfolded before them. Solomon stopped obeying God, and the Bible told the sad story of disobedience. We can only imagine what the difference would have been if Solomon had continued to humbly obey his God.

"My, what a prayer meeting!" exclaimed Evelyn when they reached their room. "That was so simple and yet so powerful. Do you get the feeling with so much prayer going on around here that we are walking on Holy ground?"

"Yes; everything seems to be run on prayer around here," Delmer answered.

"I think that is the reason God is performing miracles. I suppose Merlin needed to give a prayer meeting like that. He doesn't want anyone to take any credit to himself. You know, I was reading in *Evangelism* somewhere—let me see where I marked it." Evelyn picked up the book that lay on a table by the bed. "Oh, yes, here it is on page 333. *The Lord would do great things for the workers, but their hearts are not humble. Should the Lord work in them they would become lifted up, filled with self-esteem and would demerit their brothers.*"

Evelyn knew her favorite Ellen White book continued to be whichever one she was reading at the time. She switched off the light. It had been a long day. She could not even imagine what the next day would bring.

CHALLENGES!

Shafts of light shot higher and higher in the Eastern sky while Charles, a talented and faithful worker at the Van Center, scraped ice from the windshield. The cold was cruel, but the car felt warm and comfortable inside.

“Try to work it into the schedule so we can see the Capitol of the United States,” Evelyn suggested while they sped down the road towards Washington, DC. “It is something I have wanted to see all of my life.”

Delmer and Evelyn tried to see all the things of interest that Charles pointed out, before the spot had passed behind them and disappeared in the distance.

Charles and Delmer visited the offices of many of the people Delmer had already talked to on the telephone while still in Oregon. Evelyn stayed in the car petitioning God for His guidance.

Darkness was closing in by the time Delmer finally found the place for his last appointment.

Charles and Evelyn used the waiting time to dash through a downpour of water to a fast-food restaurant to get something to ease the hunger pains. The rain was coming in sheets and the curb drains were sluggish; the sides of the pavements were turning into raging little creeks.

The rain poured through the darkness soaking Delmer's clothes as he raced back to the car. Evelyn and Charles were barely back from their dash. Evelyn noticed Delmer shielded piles of computer printouts under his coat. The verdict: no air space available that would not interfere with another station.

The engine started and Charles queried,
"Where to now?"

Evelyn thought wistfully of the United States Capitol she had dreamed of seeing on this trip. But she realized she was in no mood to travel twelve extra miles through this weather and traffic just to see a building. In this rain she might not even be able to see anything when they got there.

"We better head back to New York." Delmer answered.

HOME AGAIN TO REALITY

The Eastern light tried to break the darkness that icy morning as the car crawled through the heavy traffic to the Kennedy airport.

Good-bye's had been said, and then someone announced, "When you get back to those beautiful hills of Oregon, it will seem just like heaven after being in this cement jungle."

Oh, no. This seemed like heaven. How could anyone get closer to heaven on earth than walking in the footsteps of Jesus?

Evelyn laid her head back on the seat and closed her eyes as the giant plane headed its nose toward the Western skies. They had spent only one short week in New York City, but it had given her the inspiration and courage to forget herself and encourage her husband as he struggled to get the new television station started. She wished she had not said, "Why don't we spend more time working for

a television station in New York City where there is so much support instead of working so hard for one in Oregon? People are so excited about it here, but at home it seems that no one cares.”

Delmer said nothing, but his face spoke volumes. *He needs more support, Evelyn decided, and I have been shown **again** that nothing is too big for God.*

Delmer and Evelyn and the van ministry had to wait ten years for that precious air space in New York City to be awarded to the Conference.

Month after month Delmer hurried and scurried, throwing his energy into the project. He had applied for some more stations, and now he anxiously waited to see the outcome.

Information must be run as a public notice in the paper for three days when a license is applied for. This is to give anyone who isn't happy with the idea a chance to make trouble!

When Evelyn's computer printed out the little announcement about the application for a Medford station, she had no idea of the outcome from that message. An energetic reporter saw an article in the making and called Delmer. Delmer answered his questions giving needed information and again buried himself in his work too busy to even mention the little incident.

Bill, who read the article in the *Medford Tribune* called the paper to see how he could get in touch with Delmer Wagner. When the telephone rang Delmer found himself talking to a man who seemed very excited about what he had read in the paper.

“We are having company this evening,” Delmer announced hanging up the telephone.

Bill arrived about eight and talked until nearly midnight, with more enthusiasm and excitement for the project than everyone else, all put together. He knew of no better way to enter many of the homes in the community and to spread the good news of Jesus. He shared the fact that most people did not have the vision or knowledge of what a Christian television station could do for the community. He insisted Delmer get a time to present his project at the Gladstone Seventh-day Adventist Campmeeting the following week.

“You must let the people know of the possibilities available,” he told Delmer.

It was a great idea, but appeared to be an impossible one. All the time slots for every meeting were filled and overflowing. With so much potential waiting to be tapped and no time to speak, Delmer became discouraged.

“I have decided,” he told Evelyn, “if the church leaders do not have any interest in local television, I am not going to pursue it any further.”

GOD USED THEM

Bill's enthusiasm burned like an unquenchable fire! He determined to get through to the leaders of the church the importance of Delmer letting the people at the Gladstone Campmeeting know of the opportunity before them. He did not stop with one "no", or two, or three. He had a goal, to see that Delmer could have a few minutes to speak and did not stop until that goal was realized. Or could it be God who decided the time had come for the people to be told about the television possibilities, and He used Bill to open the way?

Delmer received two and one half minutes during the announcement period Sabbath morning, in the large pavilion at the Gladstone Campmeeting, to tell the audience about the possibility of having Christian television.

"There is air space available for television stations," he told the congregation, "but we must act quickly. All air space will soon be taken around the

larger cities like Portland and Salem. It is a tremendous opportunity for us to reach every town and every city with the Three Angels Messages while the windows are open.”

The announcement was concise and to the point. Evelyn sitting in the back of the large meeting felt proud of Delmer for stopping after five minutes. She knew his message touched the hearts of the people.

Many who were there stopped Delmer to talk about television after the meeting. That Sabbath afternoon under the trees beside the RV camper, Delmer shared his thoughts with Pastors Roger Johnson and Edwin Schwisow along with other visionary people. Bill, also, came over and joined the group talking about the opportunities before them. Arrangements were made for Delmer to speak for ten minutes at the evening meeting in the young adults pavilion.

Two weeks after campmeeting, Bill and his family moved from Medford to Southern California. Bill's enthusiasm arrived at Delmer's low point. Now with the ball rolling, Delmer and Evelyn stood in amazement at God's leading and were reminded again Who was in charge of the project. Delmer continued working, and working, and working with untiring effort.

One Sabbath morning, Edna Mae Anderson talked with Delmer and Evelyn. Edna Mae is a vivacious, friendly, little lady who had worked for the Voice of Prophecy for many years.

“Delmer,” she said, “I heard your talk about a television station at campmeeting. Why aren't you

telling people about it here? I think it is a wonderful idea. I have been telling people, and nobody seems to know anything about it. You need to tell people. I know it can be done.”

“Excuse me?”

Edna Mae looked at Delmer and Evelyn in surprise at the look on their faces.

“Yes, I mean it,” she said. “You need to let the people know.”

“I thought I was,” Delmer answered quietly.

“W-e-l-l” Edna Mae spoke slowly. Then she brightened. “I know what we will do. Next Sabbath I’m Sabbath School superintendent. I want you and Evelyn to have the mission emphasis. You can tell everyone about the new television project at that time. Everyone needs to hear about this.”

Edna Mae was like a sparkling, refreshing wave that just keeps going. Delmer was delighted! He and Evelyn had just returned from the Broadcasters Convention at the Media Center in Thousands Oaks, California. He had talked with Dan Matthews, Danny and Linda Shelton, LaVern Tucker, and many others. Delmer shared his excitement with the congregation that Sabbath morning.

After church, many people asked Delmer about the new TV station. *What is our position here?* Evelyn worried. *This will take a lot of money. I wonder what the pastor thinks.* Without telling Delmer, she made an appointment with Pastor Steve Poenitz. She shared what Delmer seemed compelled to do, and the pastor listened attentively through the interview.

“Our church has nearly fifty outreach programs,” Pastor Poenitz said, “I can hardly take on any more.”

“I am not asking you to help,” Evelyn answered. “I wouldn’t expect that.” Her appointment was over, and she stood to leave.

“Evelyn!” Pastor Poenitz stopped her. “Why did you come in for an appointment?”

“Well-I,” Evelyn hesitated.

“Was it to see if I approved of this project and to get my blessing?”

“Yes, that was really why I came.”

“You certainly have my support,” he answered. “I think it is an outstanding way to reach the community.”

That was all Evelyn wanted to know. It would be okay with the leadership for them to keep pressing forward. As she walked toward the open door, Pastor Heisler hurried in. Pastor Poenitz turned to Pastor Heisler, “Would you like to spend time working with the Wagners on the television project?”

A big smile spread across Pastor Heisler’s face. “Yes, yes, I surely would!”

GOD'S WORKERS

When Pastor Heisler Heisler threw his heart, soul, and energy along with his talents into the television project, it sprouted wings and began to fly.

Better Life Television (BLTV), a nonprofit corporation, became a reality. It just needed to get the transmitters up and start broadcasting. Board members were chosen from each Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Rogue Valley. Pastor Heisler Heisler became the new president. Dick Surroz, a CPA and founding treasurer of Better Life Television, generously shared his time and knowledge. Many others also gave time and talents to the soon-to-be broadcasting television station.

Charles Betz, a retired minister, and his lovely wife Harriet, were Delmer and Evelyn's neighbors and close friends. Pastor Betz put together the Mission Statement with help from other members of the board. It was wonderful having the Betz family close by with their consulting abilities and helpful advice.

Pastor Betz kept busy writing Sabbath School programs for the Primary Department in the Far East, and Harriet was busy getting all of this information into the computer. They traveled to the Far-East, England, and North America and gave Sabbath School Seminars. Pastor Betz wrote articles and books. But he and Harriet never were too busy for Delmer and Evelyn or Better Life Television. How blessed to have them near at this point in the program development.

The next thing needed was money. Asking for money—oh, how Evelyn hated it. Not that she asked for any. No way. But she still felt she was in the middle of it.

God picked people with various experiences fitted for the challenges confronting Better Life Television. He opened doors and broke down walls that might easily have aborted the project.

Among those supporting the project were Oliver and Fredonia Jacques. Their backgrounds included pastoral evangelism, mission service, administration posts in university, hospitals, and the House of Representatives. In these positions Oliver dealt with many world-renown people, including five U.S. Presidents.

A firm advocate of volunteerism, Oliver held leading positions in many community and national organizations. He was chairman of five American Red cross chapters; the last being the chapter for San Bernardino county in California. His experience was useful in promoting and developing Better Life Television.

Fredonia, an artist, musician, author, and mother of four is recognized as a founder of the profession of hospital patient representatives. Her books on the subject are used in hospitals throughout the nation and overseas. Before leaving Grants Pass, she wrote a book on the childhood experiences of Ellen White, who was Oliver's great grandmother. This book, with pictures she painted, became a part of a series of children's programs produced by Better Life Television.

The Jacques were a marvelous help to the struggling, new television station. It must have been only God's timing that they should be in Grants Pass during those several years.

Each station cost thousands of dollars, and people sacrificed as God impressed their hearts. The station in Rogue River was a small one. It would cost only twelve thousand dollars. Only? Where would twelve thousand dollars come from? The congregation was struggling to pay for their new church building and had no money sitting in their budget waiting to be used for a new television station.

A MIRACLE

The James E. Miller Peace Memorial, (JEMM) was a nonprofit corporation that was being dissolved in another state. Dave and Ann Miller Reed wanted the funds to be transferred to Better Life Television.

Letters went back and forth to the Secretary of State in Minnesota with questions and answers. Should the money leave the state? Is that what the founder of the corporation, Ann's father, would want? Finally the JEMM board members decided that Better Life Television would receive eight thousand dollars.

That eight thousand dollars would go to help pay for the new transmitter on Tin Pan Peak behind the Rogue River Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The next Sabbath Delmer took twenty minutes telling the congregation at the Rogue River Church about Better Life Television. If they could raise four thousand dollars, there would be a television station for the people in Rogue River.

Delmer had already climbed the four thousand feet up Tin Pan Peak behind the church many times. He had found a good site for the transmitter. The construction permits were in his hands. He had received permission from the Bureau of Land Management to put the equipment up there and transmit to the area.

The church of Rogue River accepted the challenge to raise four thousand dollars knowing that the other eight thousand dollars would be taken care of.

Praise God! Miracles were happening, and then—Monday came. Evelyn, on her way to town, picked up the mail. In her hand lay a letter from the Secretary of State of Minnesota. She ripped open the long envelope. Could it be the money needed to order the equipment for the station? No check. Only a letter. The letter should have been edged in black. *I must tell you that it has been voted that none of the money from the corporation will be going out of the state.* Evelyn laid the letter down.

How could this be happening? Why? Oh, why, God? If we were going to get this letter, why couldn't it have come before Delmer gave that talk at the Rogue River Church?

Evelyn drove down the road tears blinding her eyes. Then thoughts began jumping into her mind³/₄ thoughts foreign to her thinking, thoughts so strong that she pulled the car to the side of the road and began writing. She continued writing as new ideas crowded in.

When Evelyn got home she went to the computer and composed a letter. A letter written to the Secretary of State from the daughter of the deceased parents, Hanes and Margarete Miller. Delmer and Evelyn took the letter to Ann.

“Could you claim this letter?” Evelyn asked.

“Yes, I certainly can. That is definitely the way I feel,” Ann answered. “I’ll be glad to sign and send the letter.”

Time hung heavy as prayer ascended to God day after day and week after week. Would another miracle happen? Finally the long-awaited letter came from the Minnesota Secretary of State. Evelyn trembled as she slowly, slowly pulled the letter out of the envelope.

DANGEROUS WORK

Evelyn sat in the car and looked at the letter. It was as beautiful as if it had been written in gold. "After reconsideration," it said, "it had been decided that they could send the money out of state. Better Life Television would receive eight thousand dollars."

So many people had been praying for this outcome; although many of the people at the Rogue River Church never knew the trauma going on behind the scenes. They did know the trauma going on trying to get the four thousand feet of wire buried straight up the mountain. Many volunteers came to help with the slow and dangerous work. The dune buggy, with tracks, could climb part of the hill with a couple guys on the hood to hold it down. When the brakes went out, Jerry Bighaus, the driver of the dune buggy, felt he would rather get his thrills another way.

Evelyn called around hoping to find some mules or something to help haul things up the steep mountainside, but manpower seemed the best.

Manpower or boy power—the Pathfinders were terrific. What energy! They loved the excitement.

Bill Woodhead, a fourteen-year hot air balloon operator had graciously volunteered to lift the precious television equipment to the top of the mountain. On the appointed day Evelyn and Delmer were at the church before daybreak. Evelyn had brought lots of food for anyone needing it. She knew it would be a long day.

Soon the volunteers began arriving in cars and pickups. Men started hiking up the 4,000 foot mountain and lined up along the side of it to hold the fifty to seventy foot ropes as the equipment was raised into the air. Hopefully the men holding the ropes could guide the hot air balloon to the right spot on top of Tin Pan Peak.

Then Bill Woodhead arrived with the huge hot air balloon. He laid out the massive seventy foot ‘envelope.’ Then he started the fire to raise the balloon, while people stood around taking pictures.

Oh, no! The wind started blowing—blowing the wrong way! Delmer needed more CB’s so Evelyn jumped into the pickup and headed out to get some.

Going down Main Street in Rogue River, Evelyn noticed people walking along looking up at the sky. Others were pulling over in cars. Then she saw the hot air balloon heading in the direction of Grants Pass. The massive box of BLTV equipment kept swinging back and forth held by long ropes dangling from the huge hot air balloon. Where was it going? How could they stop it?

By the time Evelyn got back to the church, the equipment had settled down onto a parking lot in town, and men with pickups were retrieving it. A helicopter would be coming. The equipment would get another air ride!

When the men on the mountain saw the balloon going off course, they sat down to wait. They trusted the men below them to come up with a plan, for they did not want to climb that mountain again! After an hour or so they heard the whine of helicopter blades skimming through the air to the hopeful volunteers at the Rogue River Church parking lot.

The pilot had to remove seats to accommodate men who were unable to climb the mountain. Lloyd Smith, a retired electrician, was desperately needed at the top. The equipment was heavy! Could the helicopter lift it? The steel plated little building going to the top had been built by Ray Haney. It was heavy. Dave Reed had built a special crate to hold the antenna. Jim Bourdeau had made the steel brackets. Many others had helped. Every ounce of weight had to be carefully calculated. The weight could not exceed the specific pounds allowed by the pilot. When his balloon had been taken off course by the wind, Bill Woodhead offered to pay part of the helicopter fee.

Everyone almost held their breath as the helicopter's motor roared. Slowly, ever so slowly, the load began to move as the helicopter struggled to lift it into the air. Every eye was watching as the equipment went higher and higher! They watched it make a circle and settle down on top of the mountain.

So many hopes and dreams and prayers accompanied that precious cargo! There would be a second trip for the helicopter when the high powered transmitter needed to go up.

Just before darkness covered the trail, Delmer, Pastor Heisler, and the other volunteers who stayed on top of the mountain to assemble and finish putting the equipment in place came back down the steep mountain side. Part of the time they walked. Part of the time they slid. Sometimes they fell, but they all made it back safely.

*Part 2 of this book
will be shared with
other authors telling
their experiences with
Better Life Television.
The chapters with no
author mentioned is a
continuation of
Evelyn Wagner's story.*

***A DREAM LIVES ON
THE MEMORIAL THE MILLER
REED STORY***

By Ann Miller Reed

When tragedy strikes over and over where do you turn but to the Lord? And that is what Dave and Ann Reed did after Ann's birth family were all taken in death in various ways and various tragedies. Dad and Mom, brothers, sister—four precious siblings struck down in early life, and loving parents whom tragedy seemed to stalk. Now they were gone and thoughts turned to happy and sad memories and how to bring good out of it all.

My parents, Hans and Margarete Miller, had been Humanitarians—helping others in any way they could. Dad had polio for forty four years, but he had done many outstanding things in his lifetime. Family, religion and politics seemed to fill his life. He wrote books, had a radio talk show in Phoenix, Arizona, and had been involved in public office to help others. He built homes from his wheelchair with my brother Jim

and me! I was one year old when he was stricken with polio.

Mom was a registered nurse working as supervisor for several hospitals, nursing homes, and state hospitals. Several times she had to save Dad's life. When four of their children were taken in death, they knew that to survive they had to again reach out to others to endure their own grief.

One way to accomplish this was to establish the James Miller Peace Memorial, (JEMM). It was named after my older brother who drowned at the age of twenty. The others had died at very early ages, but Jim and I, surviving, had grown up together. I was eighteen when he was taken from us. The Memorial was established on six hundred forty acres of land we owned in Minnesota. It was to have been my birthright. A lot of groups were able to use the facilities and enjoy the beautiful river, the tall green pines, and the beautiful birch trees^{3/4}my favorite place in all the world to go to hold tightly to God's hands. Jim and I had grown up there in an old log cabin, taking care of my Dad who was in a wheelchair. Mom worked many miles away to keep us in food and necessities. God was so good and kept us safe through Minnesota blizzards, hazards of the river, and threat of wild animals. Mom had to hitchhike back and forth every weekend never knowing if she would find her little family alive or dead.

The groups that went up to the JEMM were in need of healing physically or spiritually. But now it had become difficult to keep it going. After Dad died Dave and I moved out of state to Oregon. Our three

daughters, Julie, Brenda, and Dianne, married and moved away. At this distance it became difficult to continue working with the JEMM Board of Directors. Since the corporation had been established as a non-profit corporation, it would have to be dissolved with the state of Minnesota and THAT would prove to be a formidable task for all of us!!!

But we serve a big God, and He was there through many legal battles—and we seemed to have our battleground!

Out here in Oregon we knew Delmer Wagner was trying to advance Better Life Television. We felt it would continue some of my dad's work if we could get the money from the JEMM and help the Rogue River Seventh-day Adventist Church realize their goal of beaming God's love to the Rogue Valley. Although this land was my birthright as the remaining sole survivor of my birth family, I knew fighting for the Christian television was God's work.

As the procedures were started in several legal areas, JEMM Board Members and relatives were thinking of their own favorite churches and organizations that could benefit from the money and land! Some of these included programs and organizations that my folks would have shuddered to have known where the funds might go!! Our family had endured much hardship and grief to accomplish this memorial dedicated to our loved ones. Some wished the funds would go to Abortionist's parades, churches not of my parent's Lutheran faith or our Seventh-day Adventist beliefs.

It was hard to go against these people whom I had relied on to help me after my folk's deaths. But God stood faithful with the girls, Dave, and me. The Minnesota Attorney General was set against what we felt was God's direct leading. Sometimes it was like living my parent's deaths all over again. Promises were made and then withdrawn. A lot of tears were shed. A lot of prayers were said. We experienced a lot of anguish over decisions—on just what was or was not right.

In the final analysis, the monies were divided four ways. And yes, many dollars went for things we could not condone, but praise the Lord, Better Life Television received one fourth of it.

Our family believes we will see in Heaven some very precious loved ones—Mom and Dad, Jim and three little ones who were all struck down in life's tragedies—and new faces that have been led to heaven through money given to honor the celebration of their lives. *Thank You Lord Jesus for letting our family be a part of your awesome love.*

My dad and I had a favorite little motto.

“I sought my soul,
But my soul...I could not see
I sought my God...
But my God eluded me.
I sought my brother...
And I found all three.”

This is what Better Life Television is all about—seeking a brother.

BRINGING GOD'S LOVE TO THE ROGUE VALLEY

By Ann Reed

Television!! The very thing we tell our kids to quit watching? Wow!! What an awesome God to make use of the very thing we thought had completely gone to the devil!

This was to be a ride we would not soon forget— inching up the mountain side in Delmer's car. Fortunately Evelyn and I were in the back seat where we could ONLY look to the side and not over the front hood! I didn't know but that just blue skies and air were there at times. Dave and Delmer were undaunted, though, getting out to move the boulders that were too big to crawl over with a car! That day the car may have been Evelyn's, and she did not exactly want the muffler and underside missing—oh well—we gals just grabbed each other's hands and tried to keep our eyes focused inside the car. At that

height, the sight of trees and road shoulders right beside the car would have been a good indicator we still had dirt UNDER us. This was a typical trip to spot a potential place to raise a tower.

Some of the trips the men took were with Jack Ivy in his plane. When they would go over and buzz our house, I knew they were still safe. On other trips it was hiking up mountains—about straight up it seemed to them! But this was a mission to bring TV—God’s TV—to the Rogue Valley. Delmer’s dream and the Board of Director’s mission was going to become a reality on one more mountain. This certainly was not like raising a tower back in the Midwest in a cornfield. Mountains go UP!! Every piece of equipment from cables to electric wire, to cement, steel plated buildings, huge antennas, water, whatever—it had only one way to go—UP.

At the Rogue River Church’s tower, the mountain was Tin Pan Peak. The men tried every idea from low slung caterpillar dune buggy type machines to a hot air balloon. They ended up with a helicopter and just plain hiking. The worst of the hike was in coming down the steep grade. The cables needed to be buried deep—4,000 feet of it. That was a task for pick, ax, and shovel, sweat, and a lot of faith. But these men all had a vision of TV antennas all over the valley in Southern Oregon.

And that vision has now become a reality with towers from Coos Bay to Klamath Falls! From Grants Pass to Roseburg! From Merlin, Cave Junction, Medford and Ashland—ten in all beaming the love of

Jesus from these mountains to homes with precious souls—right from the very throne of God!

The people who have responded, men and women, girls and boys—these dear ones have found a medium that brings God’s message of love, peace, forgiveness, and news of a soon coming King and Savior. That message is beamed right into their homes and into their hearts. A place where sometimes no one else is permitted to come.

We keep our prayer warriors busy! Led by Louise Teague who faithfully answers her telephone, “Hello, this is Louise for Better Life Television. May I help you?”

There have been some frightening experiences on these mountain tops. Pastor Heisler Heisler and Jim Doss have had their times of swinging from a one hundred foot tower with the tower swaying and the rains and snow threatening. Sometimes even a safety line does not seem adequate. But the angels are near and a lot of prayer is ascending by faithful wives and the prayer chain.

When the transmitter went out on Tin Pan Peak and Pastor Heisler had to climb the mountain alone, he was so exhausted and thirsty he started drinking water from the five gallon pail left up there. Then he looked into the pail. At the bottom lay a dead rat! Ann later worked that into one of her interviews with Pastor Heisler and Anita; Anita learned about it for the first time on the air!

There have been several fire storms raging over our towers. Lightening storms have hit, but no one has been injured. It surely keeps us praying! One fire

storm raged across Tin Pan Peak as Dave Reed raced to shut down the power. The fire commander was sending men up on caterpillar tractors to make fire lines and we didn't want any fireman electrocuted.

We had heard the pilot of the air tankers words on the police scanner. "The TV tower is engulfed!!" They had dumped a load of bright orange flame retardant right on top of the building. Yes, the caterpillar tractor had cut the cables trying to make the fire break. But the tower was safe as well as the very expensive equipment housed in the building. There was a ring of ashes surrounding the tower. Flames were put out we believe by angels protecting BLTV. Later, a fireman told me. "You people keep praying, and we will keep fighting the fires." Now that's a powerful force!

When the cable was being laid going up Tin Pan Peak, one of the older men, Lloyd Smith, headed down to check the electrical power in it. Later Dave Reed came upon Lloyd. His water was gone, and he was weak. But Dave's water was shared, and Lloyd was helped down the mountain. This is what BLTV is all about—sharing the water of life and giving an extra helping hand.

When Dave and Delmer climbed up Tin Pan Peak to fix the transmitter, I needed to be near my television set in order to check the TV signal. We all had CB's. I had a battery on my kitchen counter rigged up. I could watch the men across the valley from our home up the canyon. Our deck was a good observation base. So armed with binoculars to watch them scale the mountain side I was in contact most of

the time. We also had Richard Trautwein, an electrical engineer, standing by on the phone for more technical advice. When they needed a signal check, I would turn on our TV, then call by CB up to the men. In turn I would talk to Richard on the phone and relay back up to them any advice he had. I wondered what the truck drivers on I-5 thought hearing that conversation!

As we work in the studio to produce quality programming that is also uplifting, we are challenged to meet everyone's needs. We receive programming, not only from 3ABN, but also Loma Linda University Church, Dan Matthews with Faith for Today's Lifestyle Magazine, and Doug Batchlor's church sermons. We go into the community and record the Grants Pass City Council's meetings. This has given us an excellent relationship with the mayor. The council members are quick to recognize us when they see us at other events.

As studio coordinator, I've had a chance to work closely with some really great volunteers. When we do a program, it requires not only our good production manager, Dennis Kamberg, but several camera operators, and a floor director. We do a variety program, *Better Life Today*. We interview people that have had an experience that we want to share with our viewers.

Some of us ladies felt a real urgency to reach out to other ladies who may be needing a word of encouragement! The program *Time Out* has touched many lives. We have shared many stories of lives changed, touched, and healed. The community

program involving history, *Josephine Journals*, hosted by Bernie Martin Beck, leads many into our studio to share their memories.

This is a ministry that will touch lives. Although we do not meet many of our viewers, we know that God cares for each, and we want to do programming that uplifts our Jesus. As people read our Mission Statement, they know that we depend on prayers, encouragement, and love gifts to keep producing and transmitting God's love to the Rogue Valley.

A PART OF THE ACTION

Pastor Edwin Schwisow, editor of the *Gleaner*, arranged for a special weekend of meetings in Yakima, Washington. Many people from the Adventist Media Center and those interested in broadcasting were invited to come. Delmer looked forward to the seminars he would give on the procedures to follow in order to set up a local television station.

“I really want you to come along, too,” Delmer told Evelyn. “It will be especially enjoyable. The church members are opening up their homes, and we will be staying with the Pierces. I have their address right here.”

“Delmer, if I go, couldn’t we stay in a motel this time? I am so tired. I would just like to crash.”

“No, of course not. All arrangements have been made, and it will cost quite a bit just to drive. We can’t afford to stay in a motel when we don’t have to.”

The fatigue that tried to become a part of Evelyn's life almost engulfed her as the battle in her heart, only she knew about, raged. However, after all the pieces were put together, the feeling that she should be happy with the plans that were already made finally won the victory. Peace again settled in the war zone, and she determined to enjoy every minute of the weekend that lay ahead of her.

Immediately after arriving at the Pierce's, Evelyn felt at home. These older people had been missionaries for years. The wonderful stories just poured from their past. *What an amazing couple.* It seemed as if she had known them all of her life.

Rachel Pierce told Evelyn that Pastor La Vern Tucker, Pastor Jim Brockett with his wife, and also Al McDowell and his wife would be staying with them, too. Delmer and Evelyn had been the first to arrive, and Evelyn continued helping in the kitchen as Mrs. Pierce went to answer the telephone.

Mrs. Pierce seemed a bit troubled when she returned to the kitchen. "I told them at the hospital that I would rather not work tonight," she said; "however, there is an emergency there and I am needed. I am sure you can take over with dinner. We will be eating downstairs in the recreation room. There will be a lot of us so we need that space."

She showed Evelyn where the dishes were kept, and then she was gone. Dr. Warren D. Pierce and Delmer set up the long table downstairs, and the other guests began arriving. Of course in the mission field whoever happened to be available filled in and did

what needed to be done, and these people were true missionaries.

Beginning the descent of the long flight of stairs with a large bowl of boiling hot vegetables in her hands Evelyn felt her heel catch on something. Trying to release it she lost her balance. Everything happened so quickly! She felt herself begin to fall!

“God, help me!” Evelyn’s heart cried out. She could almost feel the hot contents of the large bowl burning her flesh.

Immediately Evelyn sensed a steadying grip or power on her right shoulder. She made her way down the stairs to the last step and set the steaming food on the long table. *Thank You, God. Thank You for saving me from a disaster.* Evelyn sat with bowed head marveling at what had just happened. She then put the last touches on dinner and called everyone to come eat. The meal turned into more fun than a picnic with everyone sharing experiences and getting acquainted.

Al McDowell and Delmer went for a long walk. Al had so much to share with Delmer now that the radio station at Boise, Idaho, that he had worked so hard to get started was a success. It had been over a year since their last walk together at Thousand Oaks, California, during the Broadcaster’s Convention. The walk Al’s wife and Evelyn took turned out to be quite a bit shorter, but then the fellows had not stopped to wash the dishes either. *And to think she had wanted to stay in a motel!*

Breakfast the next morning seemed even more enjoyable than the meal the night before. Everyone

appeared to be rested after a good night's sleep. Evelyn sat spellbound listening to La Vern Tucker tell of experiences in the Philippines—stories that would never be told in *The Quiet Hour Echoes*.

Pastor Tucker spoke for church. What a powerful message. During the afternoon meeting Pastor Tucker said, "I have a man here on the platform with me that lives television. He eats it, talks it, and sleeps it. If he talked in his sleep, I am sure it would be about television." He smiled at Delmer, and Delmer knew what Pastor Tucker had said was the truth.

That evening after the regular meeting had come to a close, waiting for Delmer's seminar to finish, Evelyn visited with Pastor Tucker. He needed to catch an early morning flight back to California.

"You don't need to wait," Evelyn told him. "Get a key for the house and drive our car home. We'll come with the Pierces."

While Pastor Tucker got a key from Warren, Evelyn reached into her purse for her set of keys. *Where are they? I know they are here.* Again she went through every compartment in her purse, and there were many. Pastor Tucker continued waiting as Evelyn looked through her purse again, and again.

"They are here. I know they are here," Evelyn repeated.

"Don't worry about it," Pastor Tucker tried to make Evelyn feel better. "There is a place here at the back of the church where I can get a little rest."

Where, oh where could those keys be? Evelyn opened her purse again. There they were! The whole

big ring of them were right there where they were supposed to be all the time!!

Evelyn tightly grasped her keys and quickly went to find Pastor Tucker. As she searched the corridor she found him busily talking with some people who seemed to be in a desperate need to talk to him. Evelyn did not interrupt. The meetings were over, and they all waited for Pastor Tucker until his conversation came to an end. The people thanked Pastor Tucker over and over again for his help. *Hmm. Did an angel hide my keys so Pastor Tucker could minister to those people?* Evelyn felt a wave of awe.

What a day!! What a God!! God's presence had seemed to just fill the place. *Thank You, thank You, God,* Evelyn breathed as Delmer slowly drove the car through the darkness back to the Pierces' home. *And to think that I wanted to stay in a motel!*

GOING FORWARD

Pastor Roger Johnson, a busy man who had started many radio stations, spent time on the phone with Delmer. Soon Blue Mountain Television Station in College Place, Washington, became a reality. Blue Mountain Television grew fast under Pastor Johnson's leadership. It aired 3ABN, had many wonderful local programs, and soon had a full-time manager running the studio.

The Adventist Broadcasters Association Convention, one which Pastor Heisler, Delmer, and Evelyn would never forget, was again held at the Media Center in Thousand Oaks, California.

"How are you going to get an audience?" one man at the convention asked Delmer as he sat across the breakfast table from him. Before that meal finished, Delmer felt convinced that there needed to be a TV studio in Grants Pass where local programs could be produced and aired. The community needed

to see some local programs. The cable companies would also be more responsive to put on the programs if part of them were local community programs.

Many hours were spent by volunteers at meetings trying to outline the community's needs. What would be the best way for Better Life Television to share God's love to the Rogue Valley? People from all of the Southern Oregon Seventh-day Adventist Churches needed to be involved.

Jessie Cone, principal of the Grants Pass Junior Academy, arranged it so Better Life Television could have one of the rooms to finish and use for a studio in the beautiful, new building being built for the Academy. This room could be used by BLTV until the school needed the space and BLTV could get another place of their own.

Months before while talking with Pastor Heisler, Evelyn had mentioned, "After all of this work I think we need to celebrate after we go on the air." She was thinking of taking a day off or going out to eat.

"Oh, we will. We will," Pastor Heisler had answered.

The celebration far exceeded anything Evelyn could have dreamed. Who was the one in charge of this wonderful celebration? Was it Fred Ramsey or Ann Reed? Evelyn knew they were working together along with a host of other people.

Mary Nations, with many helpers, served an abundant supply of beautifully prepared delicious food.

Fred, never one to do anything half way, arranged for 3ABN to be represented. Lonnie Allen came with his cameras, and Mae Chung came to interview the staff members and also people who had come into the church through Better Life Television.

The Grants Pass mayor came to speak and also cut the ribbon with Delmer and Evelyn. Professor James Hannum arrived from Walla Walla College to teach a class on video recording. He taught how to zoom in to make the pictures appear closer. He showed how to pan across the audience. Along with many other things, people learned to not give too much head room in any picture.

The auditorium at the school was packed with very little standing space available. Evelyn looked over the sea of heads from the front of the room. The joy in Evelyn's heart felt so great that it was hard to keep it from spilling out her eyes and down her cheeks as she thought, *These are the people supporting Better Life Television!*

After all the speeches and ceremony as folks were leaving one pastor said to Evelyn, "Doesn't it seem good to have the station on the air? You folks have worked so hard. Now it is done, and you can rest." Evelyn smiled. *If he only knew—the work had just begun!*

THE STARTING TRIALS OF BLTV

By Louise Teague

It was back in July, 1990, when I became involved with Better Life Television, our Christian television station in Grants Pass, Oregon. The new Seventh-day Adventist school was in the process of being built at that time. Our studio had a room at the end of the hallway on the right side where we were broadcasting programming originating from 3ABN out of Illinois.

I lived very close to the studio so was asked if I would answer the incoming calls for Better Life Television. I agreed to do so. My number also became the telephone number for Better Life Television. My TV at home picked up the feed from the station going up to Mt. Baldy from where the transmitter sent it out over the valley. At that time the

studio did not have a television set to view the programs, so we used my TV at home.

We had a satellite dish on the roof of the new school building above the station. One day I was asked if I would be interested in turning on our BLTV station at nine o'clock in the morning and turning it off at nine in the evening each day. That was the twelve hours a day 3ABN was broadcasting in the early days of their ministry. Again I agreed to help, for I was very happy to have this opportunity.

Just before nine in the morning I went to the school, unlocked the door, and turned off the alarm system. School was still being held in the old school building down on Seventh Street. I felt a bit fearful going into that large, empty structure. It became easy to imagine all sorts of things with every little sound echoing so loudly. Usually no one was inside of the building.

The long hallway was very dimly lit, and it seemed that every sound reverberated through the building. Sometimes I asked myself, "Do I have to go down that hall?" Then I would think again and say, "Yes, people are depending on me, and if this program doesn't come on, the phone will ring off the hook."

Then I proceeded down the hall to our studio door and unlocked it. I would go through the directions of turning on the station, then go home to see if it came on my TV. If it did not, I would trot back to the school to see what happened. Sometimes 3ABN would be having trouble, so I would go home and wait until the problem was fixed. Then I would go

back to the studio again to go through the whole procedure of getting our station on the air. By this time the phone would be ringing. People were asking, “What happened to our station that it didn’t come on?”

In the summertime I walked over to the school in the morning, but at nine o’clock in the evening, especially in the winter that was different. I drove over. I walked softly down the hall as if that would make any difference. One night I went in, not thinking anyone was in the building. When I started to leave to go home, I opened the door into the hall—when **wow**—the burglar alarm split the silence! I was almost glued to the spot. Then I started running as fast as I could down that hall to turn off the alarm before every policemen converged on the spot. Someone in the building had not seen me come in and they had turned on the alarm system before leaving.

Another time my car would not run. It was nearly nine o’clock at night. I took my trusty flashlight and started walking up the street to the school. Soon I could hear footsteps coming behind me. I walked faster. I turned on the street going to the school building and those footsteps were still coming!! My heart was in my mouth by then, so I said a little prayer for God’s help. At the last house before the school building the footsteps stopped. Whoever it happened to be must have turned into that house. I did not dare turn around to see as I felt too frightened. When I came out to go home later, I carefully watched to see that no one was following me. How happy I was when I got into the safety of my own house! Usually I am not afraid of the dark, but when footsteps stay right

behind me and are keeping in step with me, and no one else is around, I do get alarmed. That makes the chills go up and down my spine!

One day it snowed a little, and snow got inside of the satellite dish. When I went to turn on the station there was no picture. I called the man in charge and told him what happened. He started to ask the other stations in the area what to do. They told him that if snow gets inside of the dish, it would short out. Now we had to find a way to get the snow out of the dish. Someone decided to get a ladder, turn on the water full force, and flush the snow out of the dish. You know, it worked, and so did the program when it was turned on.

Then we put on the Ken Cox tapes. Now this entailed more knowledge of how to put the tapes on the air and then turn the tapes off in between programs without disrupting the main program out of Illinois. Finally with a few trials and errors we got it so it would fit in between the other programs that were on. I put on the videos and then turned them off at the desired time each day.

We finally went to twenty-four hours a day of regular programming. That was a welcome relief! I had been happy to help and felt a person had to be really dedicated to be there at those hours. God worked it out for me very well.

As the days and months went by, we were receiving more equipment and more volunteers worked at the station. We needed more room so we moved our studio to the church grounds, where it stands today.

We had two Share-A-Thons with Dan Matthews, host of *Life Style Magazine* and an Appreciation Week where I organized people to answer the telephone calls coming into the studio.

Later I volunteered to work in the office labeling and color coding the tapes on file. I was happy to help in any way I could. God really blessed our station here in Grants Pass, and I still answer the phone, "This is Louise, for Better Life Television. May I help you?"

We have had some new members come into our church by watching our Christian station. It is so rewarding working for the Lord in His business of saving souls for His kingdom.

Answering the telephone is very rewarding also. One day during the fire season, there was a raging fire in the Illinois Valley area, south of Grants Pass. One man called and said the fire was coming close to the trailer park and was threatening the town near him. He could not get in touch with anyone there in his area. Could I help him get a fire marshal or someone in charge of the fires to help him out? I contacted a person in my city that could help.

Another call for prayer came in for some boys who were lost in the Greyback Mountain area. One of my contacts gave me information about a man who could help Search and Rescue locate the area the boys were in. They were found, and this was a blessing for all.

Another call came in at two o'clock in the morning for prayer. The girl was hysterical and wanted prayer immediately. I prayed for her, and she seemed to

calm down some. I told her if she wanted a pastor to come see her to let me know, but she wasn't sure at that time. We have heard and seen God's healing hands.

Answering the calls for our BLTV station was interesting and challenging—most of the time! I had many calls from people asking for someone to come and hook up their televisions so they could get our programs on Better Life Television. I would take their names, addresses, and phone numbers to pass on to the people in charge of hookups. We had many calls from people wanting to watch our programs during our evangelistic meetings. One was put on by Ken Cox and the other by Doug Batchelor.

Once I got a real irate call from a man who had heard something he did not like from one of the evangelists. I was really getting told off. This was the time I needed to be able to give a soft answer and not hurt any feelings. After he finished talking, I mentioned to him that it would be good for him to talk to the source of this message. He agreed. I gave him a number to call, and he seemed happy saying he would do it.

It is very hard not to take offense, but one has to help so there are no hard feelings among our viewers. I certainly have learned patience and love. These people need to express their ideas. We all do. I just listen and express love to the viewers who call in.

BETTER LIFE TELEVISION GOES TO MEDFORD OREGON

By Bob Heisler

After getting our initial station in Grants Pass, Oregon, on the air in July of 1990 we began to look for funds to build a transmitter in Medford. Channel 62 had been granted to us by the Federal Communications Commission.

The chief engineer of KOB! Television Broadcasting gave us encouragement. He offered to let us use the commercial tower of KOB! on Blackwell Hill and recommended equipment to be purchased.

It was in December of 1990 that Delmer and Bob Heisler began visiting homes in Medford. They visited anyone they thought might be interested in developing a TV station. Several small donations were given as well as three or four donations of \$1000.00 each. One of the visits was to Merlin Fjarli, a dedicated layman, who was in the warehouse construction business. After explaining that \$60,000 dollars was still needed for the project, Merlin said, "Order the equipment. The Lord will provide the

funds." Bob looked at Delmer in amazement as Delmer said to Merlin, "I beg your pardon. What did we just hear you say?" Merlin just smiled and said, "The Lord will provide the funds, so just go ahead and order the equipment." Delmer and Bob looked at each other in astonishment.

It was beginning to snow outside, and the weather was turning cold. "We had better get back to Grants Pass while we can," Bob said as they got into his car. "Delmer, let's order the equipment. God will provide." There was just time enough to return home before the snow storm closed the roads. Delmer made no delay in ordering the transmitter equipment. The Lord did provide the funds for the equipment and payment was made when the equipment arrived.

About a month later, in January, the Medford transmitter equipment was in place on Blackwell Hill, north of Medford and ready to begin broadcasting.

A special ceremony was held in the Medford Seventh-day Adventist Church. A large screen TV was placed on the platform. At the predetermined moment, Channel 62 came to life, with special programming from Three Angels Broadcast, giving a warm welcome to the Medford valley for becoming a part of the 3ABN family.

Don Jacobson, president of the Oregon conference, was there to congratulate and encourage. He told a story during his talk that was in a way prophetic of the future of Better Life Television. He said, "Better Life Television is like a huge freight train. It took a big engine with a lot of energy to get it rolling. As you can see, it is now moving and gaining speed.

With all of the momentum this train is generating, I believe it will be close to impossible to stop!"

Two years later an offer was made on another hilltop near Medford. KOBI bought channel 62 and an all transistorized 1000 watt transmitter was located on St. Johns peak to cover Medford and another smaller transmitter was located on Mt. Bluie where it beams into Ashland. These solid state transmitters have proven to be much more economical to operate.

We began thinking of Merlin, Murphy, Williams, and Cave Junction. A broadcast permit was applied for Mt Bluie, which is one of the highest mountains in the area. We also wanted to get on cable in Grants Pass. Delmer and Bob Heisler worked hard to install the transmitter and antenna on Mt. Bluie. Numerous trips had to be made to the transmitter site, as there was a problem with matching the antenna to the transmitter.

The antenna is almost 100 feet from the ground which is 4000 feet above the valley floor. The antenna is four feet out from the tower, attached by a metal brace. The coaxial connector on the antenna had to be replaced as it was faulty. That meant that Bob had to crawl four feet out on the metal brace to remove the connector and install a new one.

It was a cold December day. The wind was blowing. The sky was covered with clouds about 100 feet above the tower. The clouds were moving at a fast pace as the storm winds blew them on their way. The wind was blowing through the tower and the guy lines made a howling sound. It felt as if the tower was swaying back and forth about fifteen feet in a slow

twisting motion to Bob as he climbed up the cross bracing of the tower.

"Is this a good day to be doing this?" Bob wondered as he climbed. Upon reaching the 100 foot level, Bob rested for a moment before venturing out on the four-foot brace to remove the connector. With a sea of angry clouds above, swaying back and forth on the tower 100 feet from the ground, Bob was hesitant to venture out on the antenna brace. Neither the angry clouds above or the 4000 foot view of the Rogue Valley below was an attractive sight.

Bob paused for a moment to pray. "Lord, I know You calmed the sea of Galilee one night, and You do have power over the wind and the waves. It's scary up here. I'm not asking You to do it but it sure would be nice if You would make the wind quit blowing while I am out on that brace. This is a mission for Your kingdom, and I want Your will to be done. Amen." Bob methodically checked his safety harness and then slowly made his way out onto the metal brace. It took about a half hour to peel away the protective plastic tape from the connector, remove and replace the connector, and then re-tape it to make it waterproof.

As Bob turned from the antenna and reached for the tower, the thought came to his mind. "I have been out here on this metal brace for a half an hour and I haven't noticed the tower swaying once. Could it be that I was concentrating so much on the connector that I did not notice the tower swaying in the wind? Or did God actually stop the wind while I was working? Who cares," thought Bob, "my prayer was answered."

GROWING EXPANDING BURSTING AT THE SEAMS!

Ann Reed, new studio coordinator, made everything blossom and grow. Soon local programs were going over the air with the help of Dave Reed, head cameraman, and his many assistants.

The Pathfinders needed more room. Community Services needed more room, and Better Life Television definitely needed a place to go. They had also outgrown the one class room they had been using at the school for the past two years.

Plans were drawn up and then accepted by the Planning Commission to make a new ministry building on the large church property. One end would have storage space for the Pathfinders. On the other end there would be the same amount of room for the Community Services Department. In the middle Better Life Television would have their studio with a

nice waiting room, a large room behind for the filming, and a control room to the side. There would be an open stairway, made by Olen Nations to go up to the loft where literature and other things would be kept.

When construction time arrived, the mayor of Grants Pass helped move the first shovel of dirt for the foundation. Volunteers made this project a possibility. One volunteer, Orland Davis, although over ninety years old, climbed the tall ladders to the twenty foot ceiling. It did not seem to be a challenge as he continued working on all of the electrical wiring for the whole building.

When John McFeeters and his volunteer crew were raising this structure, many hands were needed. You could find Mary Nations carrying cement blocks, Dave Reed setting the heavy iron ceiling grid to hold spot lights, painting the building, and fire proofing the huge curtains. Win Koszescha wholeheartedly shared his painting expertise.

Angels were close protecting the people the devil was trying to harm. An unattended van, sitting in front of the church door, began rolling down the incline straight to the new BLTV building. Picking up speed it crashed through the wall into the soon-to-be-finished front office. John and his crew had just finished lunch in that very room and gone to their various jobs before the van crashed through. What Divine protection! Now cement posts stand at the bottom of the hill as a barricade to future accidents.

As the support from viewers increased, Better Life Television was able to hire Jim Doss as

production manager. This was a great boost for the struggling new station.

Robert Mitchell, Evelyn's brother, had a dream of getting Better Life Television started in his home town of Klamath Falls. He worked with the pastor and a church business meeting was scheduled. Delmer was invited to go to Klamath Falls to present the wonderful possibilities of the Klamath Falls Seventh-day Adventist Church having their own Christian television station.

The chairs in the room were nearly filled by the time Delmer and Evelyn arrived. Delmer gave his presentation and then the people began asking questions.

The telephone rang and the pastor had to leave because one of the members of his congregation had been rushed to the hospital.

Evelyn felt that many of the people who stayed after the meeting were afraid to even think of raising so much money. The pastor's wife slipped a check into Delmer's hand. "It is for your gas," she informed him. "Thank you for coming. This church cannot afford the station now, but we do appreciate your coming over."

Wow! They do appreciate our coming! Of all of the places we have gone this is the only time anyone has offered to pay for our gas.

But that was not the end. Money started coming into the Klamath Falls Seventh-day Adventist Church marked "For the New Television Station." The first check was a big one and a total surprise. More checks kept coming saying the same thing—"For the

New Television Station.” It seemed that no one knew who had written the little notice in the Klamath Falls newspaper that those who wished to give a Memorial gift for this well known citizen of the town, should send their check to the Klamath Falls Seventh-day Adventist Church for the new television station.

Trinity Broadcasting put their station up for sale asking about a third of the going price. Robert Mitchell put his little portable television in the car and drove all around the country to see how far the signal reached. The signal was reaching out very well. By now people were convinced that God truly wanted Better Life Television to send the news of Christ’s soon coming to the many inhabitants of the Klamath Falls area. Committees were formed and sacrifices were made. Better Life Television became a reality in another Southern Oregon town.

The pastor’s wife confided to Evelyn, “It wasn’t nearly as hard as I had expected.”

All over Southern Oregon people sacrificed money and hours and hours of time. It felt like a wonderful, close family working with so many dedicated people.

Jean Cline helped people get their TV’s hooked up to Better Life Television in the Medford area. Merlin Fjarli was a major contributor to Better Life Television. Others learned of the needs and helped in Medford and in different areas that Evelyn did not even know about.

In the Grants Pass area Ed and Rita McMullen worked with those who wanted to have their televisions fixed so they could watch Better Life

Television. Al McManus and Ray Haney joined Ed in this endeavor. Ben Snell and Harold Hartley worked in the Merlin area. They also spent a lot of time helping in the studio at the Grants Pass school.

Because of the many mountains around the area, the TV signal was not available everywhere. It follows the line of sight, although it does curve over or around the mountain tops to some extent. The signal can not get through a lot of trees or insulation in the house. For this reason the antennas were usually set up on the roofs of the houses, but not always. The installers would take the little portable TV that was tuned to BLTV and walk around to see where the signal came in the best. If possible they set up the antenna to pick up the signal in the best spot. Sometimes the signal came in so weak they needed to put on a booster device so the program would come in nice and clear. This was expensive, but BLTV bought boosters in quantities and got a discount. People were sold the equipment at cost, but the installers never charged for their hours of time, gallons of gas, or the wear and tear on their vehicles.

Richard Trautwein, treasurer for the Rogue River Seventh-day Adventist Church, accepted the big responsibility of also being the treasurer for BLTV when Dick Surroz felt he should no longer be treasurer, do to many added responsibilities.

All volunteers gave tirelessly of their time and talents never expecting anything in return—only the ultimate return—seeing people in the kingdom because of their love and labor.

When new stations were started, Delmer would drive around the countryside with a little TV by his side checking to see where a signal was coming in. After one of these experiences Evelyn insisted on doing the driving.

“You may be a better driver,” she teased, “but I’m the safer driver because I am watching the road.”

God continued to bless as lives were changed because of watching Better Life Television.

GOD'S LEADING

by Rita McMullen

When my husband received a call from Ann Reed, volunteer BLTV manager, in 1993 asking him to be the coordinator of the Better Life Television “hookups” he was honored and also very reluctant. Ed, a shy person by nature, was relatively new in the Seventh-day Adventist faith and hadn't gotten to know many people. With a little persuasion he decided to accept the position and his life has not been the same since.

After training with Delmer Wagner, Ed set out on his own, usually with an assistant, to respond to the many calls for assistance in viewing Better Life Television, often spending many hours trying to get the best picture possible.

Soon Ed and Al McManus became a team and usually when one is on the job the other is there too. The idea was for Ed's efforts to be a blessing to those he was helping. His efforts have been, as he has

been able to help dozens, maybe hundreds of viewers receive a picture. But, the blessing has been twofold for Ed, as he and Al have become good friends and he has made friends with almost all of the people he has met, going to their homes to hook up their television sets to receive Better Life Television.

Ed and Al have had many wonderful experiences getting to know the people and often having prayer with them. They have been excited when they see a baptism at church and remember that person requesting a BLTV hookup.

Now their work has slowed a little as God has blessed the Grants Pass area with Better Life Television being on cable. They still keep busy doing hookups for those who do not have cable and they also maintain the existing installations.

HOW BETTER LIFE TELEVISION HAS AFFECTED MY LIFE

By Tatiana Resetnikov

Soon after becoming a Christian I decided to move to Oregon. I did not know where, but I knew God was going to guide me to the right place—the place that was perfect for Him and for me.

My live-in boyfriend and I drove from Colorado to Oregon. We explored Klamath Falls and the Medford area and eventually arrived in Coos Bay. We fell in love with Coos Bay. It had everything that I wanted, and we soon found an apartment.

I had always believed in God even though I had never in my own mind had a desire to go to church. I always knew that God was calling me, and I was denying Him. I was very much aware of that. When I opened the Bible the rare times that I did, it was fascinating trying to understand what was being said.

I believed that even if there was not a God, the Bible surely was a good handbook on how to be nice to people and have people be nice to you. Also it was interesting and exciting to know that God loved me, that He wanted me to love other people and to understand His will.

I had always been fascinated with the Bible. Now I found myself spending every moment that I could reading it. I spent a lot of time studying, and very quickly the Lord led me to the truth of the Sabbath. I began worshipping on the Sabbath. I would devote the entire day to studying the Bible. It was the most educational time of my life—studying the Bible and the truths of the Bible. The Sabbath was a fascinating study. I kept studying about the Sabbath and was excited about learning the truth.

There seemed to be so many truths that I desired to know that interested me. The book of Revelation confused me. I wanted to know and understand the Mark of the Beast and a lot of other things. A program about the New World Order had frightened me so much that I prayed the Lord to forgive me for denying Him for so long and wasting so much time. I knew that the end was coming and Jesus was coming back. Although I had become a Christian, my boyfriend had not. He was very paranoid and scared about the New World Order. I also felt frightened at the time.

We moved to a duplex and lived there for a few months while I worked very hard hours. My boy friend knew that I was fascinated with things like the Mark of the Beast, and I think he was very curious himself.

He usually stayed up all night watching TV and reading.

One morning he woke me up at six or seven o'clock. He came in and said, "I just watched the most incredible show! It was all about the Mark of the Beast." He began trying to explain to me what it was. "You do this and you do that, and you add it all up and it comes out to 666. I just can't remember, but it was so fascinating."

Even though I was exhausted, I jumped out of my bed. I felt so excited that somebody was talking about 666 on television of all places. It was unbelievable. I was dying to watch it and said, "Well, what channel is it on?" He said, "I don't know." He had been flipping through the channels and just found it.

When we had first moved, we had had a television that had an incredible amount of channels. My boy friend had programmed all of the channels in so when we hit the little arrow button on the remote control it would only flip to the channels that were available.

Well, apparently he had been up so late at night, he began to even explore in the channels that he had already investigated, where there had been only static coming through. Now, lo and behold, he got Better Life Television that may have not been broadcasting when we first moved. It was not there when he had programmed the TV three months or so earlier. However, this night he was flipping through the channels and Better Life Television was broadcasting.

My boy friend did not know which channel or the name of the program that he had been watching. I

believe it was a Saturday morning that he had seen the program. He could not remember when it was. He thought it was sometime between four and six o'clock in the morning. I woke up at four o'clock in the morning the next Saturday and sat in front of the TV flipping channels waiting for some program—something like what he described. He said that it may have something to do with digging and history or something like that. Finally *Digging Up The Past* came on. It was a repeat show. I got to see the whole program. I was just elated. I was so excited. At that point I was hooked. Better Life Television was on every moment. When I woke up it was on. When I came home from work I turned it on. If I was in-between a job I turned it on before I had to go to my next job. If I was making dinner we had it on.

We were in the perfect location with a great picture. There was nothing in the way between our home and the transmitter. We were able to get Better Life Television much better than a lot of the people in town.

Doug Batchelor began his Revelation series shortly after our discovery, which was just what we needed. We were so fascinated and really enjoyed the truth that he was teaching. I just can't describe how happy I was to see the truth being broadcast on TV. It took me a long time to realize it was a Seventh-day Adventist channel. I thought it was TBN where they have different religions broadcasting at various times. I just thought, "Wow this is really great—a Christian channel that I like without the flair." They had cooking shows, and they had music. I loved the

music. I think my favorite programs were probably *Doug Batchelor, Digging Up the Past*, and I really enjoyed *Revival Time Ministries*.

About three months later I noticed that every time Rick Odle came on and did his show he would say why he was a Seventh-day Adventist. I thought, "How fascinating. What is a Seventh-day Adventist?" I looked it up, and the dictionary mentioned Saturday. I thought, "Wow, I know about Saturday. I know the seventh day is Saturday. It is the Sabbath." Then I looked up Adventist, and it said, *Believing in the return of Jesus Christ*. I thought, "That is rather interesting. These people believe in the Sabbath and the soon return of Jesus Christ. That's me." I had been praying that if God wanted to lead me to a church He would show me where to go. Looking up that name in the dictionary was rather exciting.

***HOW BETTER LIFE
TELEVISION HAS
AFFECTED MY LIFE***
Continued

By Tatiana Resetnikov

I had decided that Danny and Linda must be the owners of Three Angels Broadcasting. I realized that they were Seventh-day Adventists. When I realized that, I knew that the whole channel and the people on it were Seventh-day Adventists.

I thought, “Okay, I know that everyone on this channel believes the things that I believe. They know the truths that are in the Bible. They believe that people really die when they die and wait in their graves for Jesus to awaken them when He comes back again. They know all of these things that the Bible teaches. I need to find out where the Seventh-day Adventist Church is.”

Just down our street, the very street that we have to drive down to get to our home, is a Seventh-day

Adventist Church. I can't tell you how many times I have passed the Seventh-day Adventist Church without ever really looking at the sign. I looked at it but there was no connection to the church. I exclaimed, "Oh, Lord, you really led me to the perfect place to live." We could get Better Life Television and the church was so close!

At the time I did not have a car, but walked wherever I went. I decided to go and investigate the church. The walk was beautiful but when I tried to open the church door it was locked. Pastor Gayle Schoepflin came out and greeted me inviting me to come to church the next Sabbath.

I thought, "Wow this is a church right at the end of my street. These people go to church on Sabbath. They go to church on Saturday." It seemed so new and unreal to me. I had thought that I was probably one of the only people that celebrated the Sabbath.

The next Sabbath I was really praising the Lord when I walked in. I remember that it seemed so thrilling for God to have led me there through Better Life Television. I came in and explained my story to the first people I saw. I said, "You know the Lord led me here. This is so great. I have been watching the television channel. They are all Seventh-day Adventists, and here I am."

Kip Gumm said, "Praise the Lord!" I could see the joy on his face, and it made me so happy that someone else could be as excited as I was. He and his family have become good friends and a blessing in my life.

I did not know right away that Better Life Television provided 3ABN and I had been sending my donations there. I remember the pastor mentioning Better Life Television a few times, but was not getting the connection that Better Life Television provided the programs.

Slowly over time I began to understand that Better Life Television provided the programs in our area. When it went off the air, I remember it being announced in church. At the time I had really been going through some—well I am not sure what I was going through, but I was not involved in church as I had been before. So when it was announced that Better Life Television was off the air, it just struck my heart and made me really sad.

My ex-boyfriend and I had separated even though he had become a Christian. The place where I had moved did not have good TV reception and I did not know that BLTV was off the air. I realized that when I received Better Life Television, it had changed my life so incredibly, and now I wondered just how many other people in town were receiving Better Life Television and having their lives blessed that we don't even know about—people who are sending their donations to 3ABN who do not even know about Better Life Television. We won't get a response from them. We do not know that they exist. It just made me sad to know that those people were without the kind of companionship that I had enjoyed when I first became a Christian. It had encouraged me and made me think that God put us here.

When the pastor mentioned that we were off the air, it upset me so much that I stood up in the balcony where I was. I raised my hand to talk about it. I told everyone how important it was that we give our support to Better Life Television because my life had been so affected, and I knew that there were other people out there who were affected as well.

Little did I know that Rita and Ed McMullen from Grants Pass were in the congregation and heard my plea. Shortly after that Delmer and Evelyn Wagner came to Coos Bay and asked me to start helping. So far I have been helping to advertise the station and let others in the community know about Better Life Television.

Ed McMullen helped me a lot. Ed taught me how to hook up televisions and how to set up antennas. He was a wonderful teacher. I would assist by cutting the cable and doing anything else so that I could learn how to set up TV's. He was very patient. I am grateful for that. I had a lot of fun learning how to do those things even though it sometimes included climbing underneath icky dusty homes. It was still very exciting for me.

Others have been willing to help too. Fred Anderson with others have really done a great and wonderful work in this town getting people's televisions hooked up to Better Life Television. Rita and Ed McMullen have done a wonderful work, too.

In our town we have a transmitter on the top of Blossom Hill. Our transmitter picks up the signal from the satellite from 3ABN and rebroadcasts it to our neighborhood.

In order to get Better Life Television, it is important to be in the right location. The signal comes out in a straight line, so what we do is to go to different homes with a little portable TV and antenna and see where to get the signal so that we can position the antenna to get the best picture. Most of the time it is on the top of a house. Sometimes trees and other things get in the way of the signal.

I am certainly grateful that I have other people who are willing to do that. They do a lot of work to help different people get hooked up. We have put out a lot of advertisements and pamphlets. Fred and Al have really worked hard going to different people's homes and taking their own personal time to set up TV's. These people are volunteers. They do not get paid for it. They are very unselfish in giving their expertise for God so that people may receive Better Life Television.

The TV signal comes through UHF Channel 67. I think it is a wonderful thing because I could never afford a satellite. I feel like it is a true, true blessing in this town and I am very grateful for this television ministry.

Better Life Television was a doorway into the Adventist Church for me. I would not be where I am today if it were not for BLTV. I had studied different religions, and some were so confusing. I had asked God to lead me. I needed the truth. Because Better Life Television was there, I got it. I wouldn't have if Delmer had not taken the effort to care about the people who live in our community, and I feel that it is making a difference.

I am a teacher at the Seventh-day Adventist school right now. I would not trade anything for that. I would not be blessed the way that I am today in the church, with my church family and all the support, encouragement, and guidance that I have received if it were not for Better Life Television.

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN TOP!

Huge fire fighting bombers roared overhead! Helicopters dropped to the river and scooped up big buckets of water! They made their way to the hungry flames that were devouring everything in their pathway. Brave men driving the caterpillars and other fire-fighting equipment worked endlessly trying to contain the terrible destruction!

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was located at the bottom of the mountain. People working in the church were sent away by the firemen. Television Channel 67 sat at the top of the mountain.

It had been an extremely dry summer, and the fire fighters had been working overtime in many parts of Southern Oregon. We could only wait and pray as we watched the fire reach the top of the mountain, and Better Life Television Channel 67 went dead.

Evelyn answered the telephone. "From our place, it looks like the tower is surrounded by fire.

The fire has reached the top of the mountain!” Ann’s words came in strong and clear above the wild beating of Evelyn’s heart.

“Oh, no!” Evelyn cried. “I did notice the channel has gone off the air.”

Hundreds of people were praying. Would God decide to spare the church? What about Channel 67? Psalms 91 seemed very precious, and Evelyn read it over and over. Sometimes God does not choose to save our things from destruction. Would He do it this time?

Oh, dear God, no matter what happens, please some way, somehow make this bring glory to Your name. After that prayer Evelyn felt a peace that almost controlled her racing heart as she claimed promises and prayed for God’s will to be done.

The planes kept dropping large loads of fire retardant. Helicopters kept unloading their tubs of water. Men on the ground worked through the night. Finally the raging fire became only smoldering embers.

As soon as the firemen allowed, Dave Reed and Delmer climbed the mountain. They notice that the electrical cable had been cut by some equipment while the brave firefighters had fought the fire. All around the tower, brush that had been cleared and thrown into piles, was now ashes. The tower stood straight and tall surrounded by the destruction that had stopped within five or ten feet all around. Had heavenly angels been present holding back the flames?

In two years three fires threatened to destroy God's property. One of the fires had been started by someone in the tall, dry grass close to the church. A wind whipped the flames straight toward the building. The fire fighters rushed in, but in no way would have been able to save the church. Before the fire reached the church the wind made a 180 degree change. The firemen were able to contain the flames on that side of the then fast-moving fire! Not one pine needle was scorched on the church property.

The fire fighters understood a Power greater than theirs had saved the church. Dave and Ann were there. "We have a prayer chain," Ann told the tired, amazed firefighters. "We have been praying God would save His property."

Again God's name was glorified.

THIS FAR BY FAITH

by Dennis Kamberg

Ever since I was a child I have liked to draw pictures. Whether it was ink or pencil I would draw on any blank piece of paper I could find. My imagination would swell with all kinds of things to put on paper. Animals, nature scenes, cars, airplanes... I liked to create what I wanted to be a part of. I often would dream of being a police officer. Perhaps it was the TV shows I saw occasionally at the babysitters house.

It wasn't until high school that I seriously thought about what I wanted to do with my life. At one time I wanted to be a cartoonist. I tried to draw them funny but they never turned out well. I decided that wasn't for me.

I never grew up with a TV in our family until the sixth grade. When we did get one I watched too much of it. I began to take a liking to making movies and was curious to know how they were made. I wanted to create the exciting dramas Hollywood seemed to

successfully crank out on the TV. The visual effects, the action stories—all of it was exciting to me.

About my sophomore year in High School I bought an inexpensive home movie camera that used 8 millimeter film cartridges. They were expensive for my meager income. The films I made were only a few minutes long—all experimental. I did not make anything dramatic. I just wanted to see what kind of pictures the camera would take. But I was frustrated by having to send the film off for developing before I could see the results.

There was no sound and the pictures were sometimes dark and grainy. I wanted to know more and do it better. What would it take to get better equipment? After purchasing a book on professional movie making I soon learned what it took to be successful in this area.

It is a specialized field that requires a lot of money, patience and dedication. One must spend many years learning, failing and learning some more. It helps to have a natural talent. The results of my films were not too promising. The humble camera I had, lacked features I desired. I could not erase a film and use it over again. Because of this I could not imagine starting out in this field on my own. I needed more education.

My plans for college became a reality when my senior class took a trip to Walla Walla College in Washington. We were heading to an event called College Days. Prospective students from many states would come to see what different areas of education they wanted to pursue for the coming year. Many

opportunities were available to speak with professors of different academic departments. I had an interest in anything that involved the visual arts like movies or TV. Well, I did not find filmmaking classes but I did see a course of study in video production.

The Communications Department had a small studio and semi-professional equipment. After seeing a demonstration of student projects and what could be done in television production I was hooked. They offered a degree in Mass Communications with a concentration in electronic media. The equipment fascinated me and the ability to immediately create moving pictures with sound was just what I wanted. I decided this is where I wanted to be. Many of my friends were going to the same college. That made it easier.

In the back of my mind I never forgot my artistic skills. Perhaps some day I could be an artist if a course of study in Mass Communications did not work out. I trusted God to show me the way. My desire to draw never went away, even when I started my freshmen year at Walla Walla College. It was something I liked to do in my spare time—what little time I had. But I could not wait to get my hands on video equipment. As the years of my study proceeded I worked on several projects that involved shooting and editing video. Much of the equipment I was using would be the same in my future jobs although I did not know it at the time. The time did come when my college courses progressed to advanced video and audio production. I took as my minor area of study, of all things, art. I thoroughly

enjoyed it. College was an uphill climb for me but I was not going to give up. My professor, James Hannum was an inspiration to me. He helped me pursue my dream of working in TV and perfect the many skills I learned through much study and research. Six years of college brought me to graduation day in 1991. After an exciting event like that I wanted to know what jobs were available that summer. I tried finding anything in TV production. I had learned that jobs in this field are very competitive and hard to come by. To start out from college the pay is low and a person must sacrifice to work up to the better jobs and pay. This was the case in the commercial TV field. But I did have an interest in what opportunities were available in Christian television.

Near Walla Walla College, in the town of College Place was a brand new Seventh-day Adventist Television station. This viewer supported ministry went on the air about a year before my graduation. I happened to know many people involved with the station. As a result, before the summer was over, a job opened at Blue Mountain Television. The board of directors there offered me a job as production coordinator. I was excited. I could not help but see this as a providential leading of God. He knew I needed a job; with the college bills I had to pay and a place to live. What was most exciting was working with fellow Christians doing work that I found to be enjoyable. There is nothing like getting paid to have fun. But it was serious work at the same time. The Bible talks about spreading the gospel to all the world.

Many times I wondered how I would ever serve God in that way. For four years I found myself doing just that. Christian television was my future. I found the working hours to be satisfactory as well as not having to labor on the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week. I worked with people I knew and was growing spiritually closer to God. I pondered the alternative. Had I taken a job in a commercial TV station in a big city, would the same opportunities be available to me? I could not imagine it.

My last year at Blue Mountain Television came to a close. I had been working there on an internship through the Upper Columbia Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for two of my four years. Unfortunately it could not be extended. The finances were not available. I knew job hunting was to begin again. Where would I go next? Thanks to the wonderful people I work with, an opportunity came in a most interesting way.

About a year before leaving Blue Mountain Television, I had heard of a sister station in Grants Pass, Oregon, called Better Life Television. Both ministries had started about the same time. I had read in a church journal about a new studio being built at this Southern Oregon location. What an opportunity, I thought, to have a facility like that. I never thought much about it though. I was hoping to continue where I was, as long as God needed me there. I was attached to my job.

Just a few months before, during a live interview the Blue Mountain TV viewers learned that I was leaving. I was not really looking forward to it. A few

months before my internship ended I was at home for the evening in my bedroom when the phone rang. I wondered who it might be. On the other end a voice spoke in a professional tone. I had heard that voice before. It was Dan Matthews, host of the national TV show *Lifestyle Magazine*. He had been the host of Blue Mountain TV fundraisers on several occasions.

I had become acquainted with him as a friend. Why was he calling me—especially at home. I felt something important was about to take place.

"Dennis" he said, "I understand you are still looking for a job. Is that right?"

"Yes," I replied. I recalled a live interview with him explaining my position was coming to a close.

Dan continued, "I have just finished hosting a fundraiser at a TV station in Grants Pass, Oregon called Better Life TV. Have you heard about them?"

I replied that I had.

"The staff here has informed me they are needing someone to help them manage their TV studio. I know you have all the skills necessary. You do good work. Would you be interested in taking this position?"

"Yes," I replied, too dumbfounded to know what else to say. I was not expecting to get a job offer like this. Especially from someone like Dan Matthews, whom I respected highly. I had not sent out any résumés or contacted any potential employers yet. How did he know I was still looking?

He continued, "Let me hand the phone to someone standing right next to me, Pastor Heisler,

president of the Better Life TV board. He will explain to you better than I can who they are needing."

I was silent for a moment as Pastor Heisler explained the position that was open, the new studio facilities and a place to stay. I knew this was an open door.

Better Life TV was in great need for someone with professional skills. I hesitated to be a manager of the whole operation as he was hoping for but offered my skills in the technical side—production. He assured me they needed my skills in that area as well. No resume was needed, Bob assured me, after such a recommendation from Dan Matthews. I did however draw up my own job description, at the request of the Better Life TV board. They requested I come down for a job interview. They wanted me to see the studio and learn more of my skills and personal vision for a Christian TV station. This was an answer to prayer—more than I could have asked for. I could see God opening doors right before me.

In December I made a plane trip to Grants Pass for the official job interview. The board asked me many questions and I gave many answers. I felt each board member was truly dedicated to TV evangelism. I liked what I saw. Satisfied that I was the one for the job, I was accepted for the position as production manager.

On January 8, 1996, I moved to Grants Pass on a rainy winter morning. I was somewhat familiar with the area after attending third and fourth grade at the local Adventist School. Many years had gone by since I had seen this growing community. I barely

knew my way around. A map I had drawn up would help me find the home of Barbara Hutton, a retired nurse. She kindly opened her home and a spare bedroom to me for rent. This was to be home for me to stay as long as I needed. Barbara and I got along just fine. While not working at the station I would help her in the garden, with her computer, and other tasks to make her life easier. I soon felt right at home.

The Better Life TV studio located at the north end of town is right across the parking lot from the Grants Pass Seventh-day Adventist church. I found the office area and control room to be adequate for the many projects that would be produced here. The studio where the cameras and lights are set up was just big enough for the kind of programs I envisioned. God had truly provided many blessings to this ministry. A sense of great responsibility rested on my shoulders. I saw many needs for the station as well as much potential.

LEARNING TO TRUST

“Evelyn. Please come help me!”

Evelyn heard the call coming from the bedroom. She quickly dropped what she was doing and dashed in the direction of the voice.

Standing in the doorway Evelyn gasped. There stood Delmer all tied up in ropes and a strange looking harness.

“What is that and whatever are you doing?”

“I need help,” Delmer emphasized. “Please try to figure out the directions so we can get this right.”

“What is it?” Evelyn repeated.

“It is just a climbing harness.”

“You bought a climbing harness !! What in the world for?”

Before Jim Doss moved away he had used his climbing equipment to climb the towers. Pastor Heisler’s son had rock climbing equipment and knew how to climb. Pastor Heisler was also a climber.

Delmer had never climbed in his life, and here he stood hooked up in this paraphernalia.

“I have to climb the tower and then go out on the side to fix the equipment. You don’t want me to fall do you?”

“No. Of course not.”

“Then we need to know how to do this right. If it isn’t right it might come loose while I’m up there,” Delmer explained carefully.

“Oh, Delmer, can’t you get someone else to do it? You’ve never climbed before!”

“I’ve climbed these towers several times. It will just be safer with this equipment.”

“Oh.”

The towers stretched up to one hundred feet in the air where the antenna sat. If water made its way into the connectors the reception became poor. Then someone had to climb the tower and get the parts dried out or replaced. Delmer tried to make sure no water could get into the connectors. He used a special sealer to keep this from happening.

Evelyn knew Pastor Heisler had climbed the towers many times, and she along with his brave wife, Anita, felt concern for his safety. Delmer and Evelyn were blessed to be working along with this precious couple.

One morning the wind moaned around the house, and the rain poured down sideways, pounding the wet grass. The news commentator made things worse by saying the snow level would be dropping.

“I just talked to Pastor Heisler,” Delmer told Evelyn, “We must go to the mountain today and work

on the tower. If the snow gets too deep we'll never make it."

All afternoon Evelyn wondered what would happen if snow covered the road that clung to the side of the mountain. Darkness fell, and still, water poured off the eaves of the house. Quoting Psalms 91 always made Evelyn feel better. An hour passed. Then another hour crawled by.

Delmer always tries to get off the mountain before dark Evelyn told herself as the long hand of the clock went around its face again. She tried to remember that God could take care of Delmer and Pastor Heisler coming down the mountain as well as anywhere else. The short hand on the clock had migrated past ten on its way to eleven when the telephone shattered the stillness.

"I am calling to let you know Bob and Delmer are okay," Anita Heisler's sweet voice sounded relieved and happy. Coming down the mountain, something happened to Delmer's car. They just got here, but didn't stop to eat or anything. Bob is bringing Delmer straight home."

"I'll have something hot ready for them when they get here," Evelyn answered. "Thank you so much for calling!"

When Pastor Heisler and Delmer walked in, Evelyn saw that they were dripping wet. However, they insisted they were just fine while they emptied the plates set before them.

"I hit a rock that took out the oil pan from my car." Delmer informed Evelyn. "It will have to be towed in for repairs."

That night Evelyn lay in bed listening to her husband's deep regular breathing. He was safe and sound and sleeping in a warm bed. *He surely keeps my prayer life active*, she thought. The wind was still blowing. She could hear it whistling in the tree tops. It was still raining. She could hear it playfully washing the windows and doing its acrobatic exercises on its way to the moist earth. Then it made joyful little streams falling over the bank to the rising waters of the muddy creek below.

Delmer began to realize that some roads are only for four-wheel-drive vehicles. Delmer's car wasn't one even though he had been treating it as if it were for years.

Marvin Dirkson shared his time and four-wheel-drive with Better Life Television and Delmer as they climbed the mountain roads. Olen Nation's four-wheel drive had seen the top of Eight Dollar Mountain many times.

Better Life Television needed a four-wheel-drive, or was it a snowmobile? Curtis Brown felt the chill of winter chaining up his sturdy four-wheel drive and spending hours with Delmer as they shoveled the piles of snow from the road when the TV station on Eight Dollar Mountain needed help to get back on the air.

Delmer kept inviting Evelyn to go with him up the mountains, but she knew when she was well off. Evelyn's dad, Otto Mitchell, had enjoyed going out with Delmer to the mountain peaks as he looked for places to put a TV transmitter. Dad would never take the chances Delmer did as his four-wheel-drive

Bronco climbed the steep mountains looking for places to put a TV tower.

One evening Delmer came home and said, "I'm glad I took your dad's Bronco today."

"Why?"

"Well, I was going up this little road and had to go through a gate. That was no problem, but when I came back the gate had been padlocked shut. I had to make my own road down the mountain to get home."

"Oh, Delmer," Evelyn shuddered, "you sure keep your guardian angels busy. You really would have worried me if you had stayed up there all night. I never would have known where to even start looking for you."

"Really, I try to be careful," Delmer assured her.

"I know you don't want to spend the money," Evelyn spoke slowly. She had thought this over carefully, and this was one time she did not plan to take "no" for an answer. **"We are going to get a cellular telephone to be with you whenever you go to the mountain tops."**

JOSEPHINE JOURNALS

“A PLACE IN HISTORY”

By Ann Reed

When we wanted to touch the community in a more personal way, the Program Committee brainstormed ideas. Olen Nations being a long time resident here wanted to do local people, sharing their history and memories of the area. We felt this was a resource we needed for these people, especially the elderly, to tell their stories. It was important to us that these memories not just die off.

When Bernie Martin Beck was invited to join our committee, she knew her area of interest was also of the local people sharing of their lives. Bernie had grown up here in Josephine County and her love and interest for the place was evident. We all knew this was a good reporter assignment for her! And she went to work with a zeal that would turn Josephine

Journals into one of our community oriented weekly programs.

The area of Josephine and Jackson County is filled with stories of Indians and pioneers on the move Westward. The tales of gold mining days, taming the wild West and the joys and tragedies associated with the early history were especially intriguing to our viewers!

Bernie had a good ear and a keen eye for extracting details from the guests she was interviewing on her shows. She enjoyed going to their homes for the pre-interviews and seeing what memorabilia they would enjoy showing.

As the program continued week after week more interest grew. Soon the videos—some 112 of them—would be archived in the Josephine County Historical Society with a permanent home for future generations to enjoy. They could also keep alive the exciting history of by-gone years and a telling of a special hardy breed of people.

Bernie shares with us about those first interviews:

My dad, Robert Martin, who had been mayor of Grants Pass, had a good friend, Fred Dayton, who was as close as a brother. After Father's death he had said, "I will stand in his place. Just let me know how I can help" What security his kind words had given me that dark day back in 1973. Fred would have been my first interview but he, too, was gone now. I would go and talk to his dear wife Erville. She had heard his stories. He told them often and always the same. He was a stickler for detail. She could retell his stories with ease and could add her own

funny stories of being a new bride here long before I was born.

Then there was a woman of even more years—Emily Nations. Oh, how I had always wanted to hear her story. Now this was my chance to ask her, “How did you survive the depression with a nation of Nations? How did you feed them or even sleep them?”

Emily had worked hard from earliest memory. But after her mother’s death when she was only ten she helped provide for her siblings. Her dad would cut the timber and the rest was up to her to have a saleable product. This was hard work for a grown fellow, but Emily did it from the age of twelve. She married and became step mom to two before her 17th birthday. As the years went by she gave birth to a dozen more. I so looked up to this little woman. I talked to the sons, daughters, and grandchildren. They could all help tell her stories. One of the girls said, “Mom had us all convinced she really did like the neck of the chicken best.”

She logged and picked beans and hops, fixed clothes and knees, made do with little of nothing, but love and a kettle of beans and heart for her family and her God. Her show would be next. We would surround her with her kids and let them tell her story of heroism.

Show # 3 would be our local Josephine County Historical Society. It was housed in the Schmidt House. Their dad had built it in the early 90’s. Even the old barn was still standing in the back yard, just a block from our downtown. As a little girl, I remember

on an afternoon going with my Aunt 'Fifi' to visit them. Going calling was what women did on a Sabbath afternoon. We had no calling cards, wore neither gloves nor hats, but we went calling none the less. No one we knew was so formal. After all, this was Grants Pass and it was war time.

The Schmidts built this grand family home in three stages. It is said the house expanded as his grocery business prospered. Later this home was given to us, the townspeople, for a museum, furniture and all.

Now I had three shows ready to go. The program Committee wanted me to do the shows! I had no training for TV. I have never even taken a speech class. My sole qualification seemed to be that I was born in Josephine General Hospital in the summer of '38 and I was thrilled to have moved back home.

So thus began Josephine Journals and the rest is, as they say—history.

SHARING OUR BEST

By Mary Nations

Local television right here in Grants Pass! The population of this area could be reached via TV in a quiet way. People could choose their programs and use the little knob if they were not pleased. Better Life Television appealed to Olen, my husband, and me on the basis of public evangelism with a minimal effort on our part. Of course we prayed that folks would be curious enough to continue to watch. This is a low key method of reaching our community with the gospel.

Delmer Wagner and Pastor Heisler approached us to help get the idea going. With the help of our friends in the local churches and the conference we managed to reach our goal of \$50,000.00. We thought this would be all there was to the funding but since its inception, have discovered the funding is

ongoing. There is not only the need for money, but volunteer time to keep the project afloat. This has taken continued commitment on the part of many faithful folks.

It began with a studio at the SDA School. Furniture was donated, and before we knew it the project was rolling. At first we only had one used camera, and the pictures were not by any means first class. As time went on we purchased additional cameras as well as other necessities that were needed.

We soon outgrew the room at the school. This made it necessary to make other arrangements, and we are hopeful this is a permanent arrangement. The church approved our request to place our building on the church property. More fund raising was necessary, and with volunteer help, the building was put up debt free.

We reached the point where we needed a paid employee. Just how would that be possible? We continued to step out in FAITH and the Lord made it possible. The right technician was willing to come and help us even though Better Life Television offered a low salary.

Pastor Bob Heisler began the monthly news letter which included the daily schedule of 3ABN and BLTV. This is available to all members of the areas receiving BLTV and is another way of making our needs known.

All of us are thrilled as we find people coming to church and getting to know the Lord better. We are so encouraged! The Lord is so Good!

The idea of a Share-A-Thon was born to continue to raise money for equipment. For the first Share-A-Thon a goal of \$15,000.00 was set. Folks committed to monthly giving were such a big help. Dan Mathews was willing to assist in our efforts. Special programs of interest were arranged by Ann Reed, who has so generously given of her time. The programs were to be of interest to the community and not necessarily of a religious nature. The people were encouraged to call in if they were hearing our program.

Our next goal was to get on CABLE. Many letters were written, and it took several years before the cable company accepted our request. We were required to get local programming in order to make this possible. The good Lord saw us through another hurdle. How grateful we were to see this happen. Now we are reaching many more homes and having a great number responding. Our pastor states he hears from people weekly inquiring about the program and interested in attending church.

Here we are in 1999 and the board has a new vision. There is a possibility that Channel 30, a full-power station, may be available. Application has been made, and three competing entities are wanting the station as well. It is in the Lord's hands. We do not know whether it is the Lord's will for us to have this station that would reach all of Southern Oregon and some of California. This would assure us of permanent cable coverage.

Our hearts are warmed as we see folks take their stand for the Lord. Opportunities continue to come, and we pray for guidance. We pause to give thanks for God's leading. We need the continued prayers and financial support of our friends.

APPRECIATION DAYS

By Ann Reed

As the Share-A-Thons turned into Appreciation Days, I started clipping from the newspaper, articles that told what was happening in our area. I wanted to involve more of the community. I invited about forty-three organizations and individuals to tell their story.

When Dan Matthews came to be our host he was delighted to interview these interesting people and groups. He shared the joys of physically challenged kids riding a horse for therapy. We learned what a bunch of teens can do to help other teens and youth and were inspired by the many volunteers out there who care so much that they give of their time and means to reach out to others.

The community learned about us—Better Life Television! We are there for them as a resource and as a partner in their efforts to improve their lives and those of others. They learned that it is our love for others that built this station and raised the ten transmitters high on the mountains surrounding this community. Each one said they would be happy to come back and help us again!

We now have a new medical program with Beverly Steinman, physician and educator, that has given us another area of community interest.

Volunteers come to help. Iona arrived at the church office and asked if this was the church of Better Life Television. She saw our announcement saying camera operators were needed. That intrigued her! Thinking she would have six months to learn, she volunteered to help. She had a crash course when Dave Reed taught her in one afternoon. Now Iona can even run the switcher to record programs.

Pastor Arthur Griffith, the pastor for our deaf congregation, who is deaf himself, has helped us set up closed captioning with Iona doing that work to enrich the lives of those who cannot hear.

Pastor Clark and Chuck Austin have a program *Bible Answers* that brings in questions and answers to help the viewer understand Biblical principles better.

We also travel to Southern Oregon campmeeting to record and rebroadcast. In that way we can provide programming for our viewers who cannot attend campmeeting.

We film the Grants Pass Seventh-day Adventist Church service to replay the following week. The

shut-ins really treasure being a part of the worship hour once again. It also gives the community a chance to visit our local church via television in the privacy of their own homes.

Our newsletter editor, Rita McMullen, who accepted this job after Pastor Heisler's responsibilities became too great to continue, has done an excellent job keeping people informed of the activities taking place within BLTV. This includes the program schedule of both 3ABN and BLTV. Rita has worked unending hours on her computer, putting her skilled computer knowledge to work, getting the type to the printer, and then organizing crews each month to come fold, staple, and mail the newsletter.

When visitors started coming to church because of watching BLTV, we were thrilled. One dear lady came in a taxi. Others come to the church door and ask, "How can I join this church?" Pastor Marvin Clark knows where they received their Bible Studies!

We had one couple who were watching Better Life Television separately. They each watched it in separate rooms of their home not letting their spouse know they were watching these religious programs. When they started talking about religion to each other, they were both surprised and happy. It didn't take them long to look in the telephone book where they found a Seventh-day Adventist Church that needed them. They later had twelve family members join them in watching BLTV. Praise the Lord when lives are changed and people can share God's love.

It must be a very rewarding experience for those who helped us start BLTV to see what God has done.

They gave what they had at hand. Precious supporters like Bob and Becky Kruger who sold a four wheeler (quad) that allowed us to buy our first television camera—that we still use.

George and Heather Villesenor donated their fifty plus years old, antique, wooden tripod that George had made numerous films with in his many years of Hollywood film editing. Now it has been used in this ministry. We bought a baby grand piano in a restaurant lounge and hauled it down to first floor on an outside skinny stairwell with men, and ropes, and prayer!!!

We appreciate Mary Nations' hand-made crocheted afghans that we can use as grand prizes during Appreciation Days. Lately she has also gotten a crew to answer the telephones for our Appreciation Days. Marion Personius had a big job lining this up when Mary had to be gone.

What would we do without Dave McGinnis? He is the man who lives fairly close to the studio whom we call when Dennis is gone and we need technical help fast. Dave knows how to get things quickly back on the air when a problem occurs in the studio.

We had our first legacy willed to us when Evelyn's precious mother, Marjorie Mitchell, was taken from us in a car accident. Marjorie and husband, Otto, were such faithful supporters on limited social security. They also were wonderful prayer warriors. Later dear Mary Deleray left us funds so that we could purchase equipment for filming for City Council and other off set productions. It is through these wills and trusts that one can make a difference in the lives that

follow when we are gone. Also it helps on the giver's tax deductions. We are set up as a 501-C3 #93-1011913 nonprofit organization.

Because of health challenges I have resigned. A new chapter is being written, and new potential is waiting for the adventures of Better Life Television. To meet in Heaven those whom our efforts have helped will be an exciting time! Thank-You Lord for this privilege.

BACK COVER

A dream has to have a dreamer who believes enough in God and himself to carry it through. This is Delmer's dream, inspired by God, supported by a loving wife (sometimes with great trepidation!) that has seen him accomplish many dreams. Encouraged by friends, but always the challenge to spur him on has come from a deep abiding faith that we are put here on earth to better another's life. Delmer has big dreams. Evelyn has big faith.

With many, many friends and supporters, Better Life Television is reaching into the very private lives of people longing for a loving God.

We have been blessed and enriched to walk by their side on this journey to *Lift Up Our Eyes*.

This book was written, dear reader, not only to scatter little ideas throughout how you, too, can have a Christian television station in your town or city, but to share what God is waiting to do through **very ordinary** people.

Evelyn Wagner, author of *Patti and the Briefcase* and *Patti's Journey in Faith* lives in the mountains of the Rogue River area with her husband Delmer . They have a son Ed, and a daughter, Judy Blair, and have five grandchildren.

Dave and Ann Reed live in Rogue River, Oregon. They have three daughters Julie Parsons, Brenda Johnson, and Diane Parady and have eight grandchildren. Dave is a contractor and Ann loves to garden, write, and do her hobbies.

ISBN 0-9651001-2-X