

Editorial

The response regarding the imminent re-appearance of *Seedbed* has been very heartening. So after the two-year hiatus caused by the passing of the last editor, our beloved brother Wendell, we invite our friends to read, respond and react to Issue No. 1, 2003. The first editor of this magazine, Sam Schlorff, has reminded me of *Seedbed's* original purpose. "*Seedbed* is a publication focusing on church planting in the Arab World. Its purpose is to serve as a forum and channel of ideas and information useful to those involved in church planting in the Arab World." We intend to retain that focus. Let *Seedbed* therefore be the voice of AWM in the areas of Muslim evangelism, discipleship, church planting, missiology and Islamics. However, we intend that it also be open to discuss wider questions like globalization and missions, religious pluralism and post-modernism without being unnecessarily controversial.

Please note that we welcome your comments and observations and will reserve a section entitled "Letters to the Editor." *Seedbed* should do much more than inform; it must relate experience and stimulate debate. We will have missed the point if all men agree with us. Of course, the viewpoints of any article remain those of its author, and not of *Seedbed* itself. If there are issues you believe should be featured, please say so.

This first "revived issue of *Seedbed*" is purposely multi-faceted. Do take time to carefully reflect on the main articles such as the "Vulnerability and Genius of Christianity," and "God's Purposes for Jews and Arabs." Perhaps you will agree with Brent Mitchell who believes that "Missions Have to Change." And don't skip on the book reviews that introduce you to the learned doctors of script.

Finally, as David Lundy writes elsewhere, *Seedbed* is dedicating this issue to Wendell Evans. No one loved the Arab peoples more, worked more assiduously for their conversion, nor prayed more fervently for the Church of Christ in these lands. We honor your memory, Wendell, and shall seek to imitate your example.

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Why Resurrect SEEDBED ?

by David Lundy

Imagine my shock when, at my first set of Global Forum and International Council meetings as ID last November, I was informed by one of the leaders: "Oh, by the way, David, I hope you realize that you are responsible to edit our in-house journal, *Seedbed*, or find someone else to do it for you." My answer was, "What is *Seedbed*? I've never even seen a copy of it before ... and I'm not into gardening!"

Well, now I have been introduced

to it and note that there has not been an issue since 2001. Why indeed resurrect *Seedbed*? My simple answer is that I see it as one means of "sharpening the saw," to take an expression from Steven Covey in describing one of the essential ingredients for maintaining effectiveness in work and character development during adult years. Or call it another ingredient in what we now say we are embracing as a core value in our company, a commitment to life-long learning.

Not coincidentally, in my quiet time this morning I read Proverbs 28:17: "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." This journal provides us with yet one more mechanism for sharpening one another in the areas that our company is particularly interested in, and where we are seeking to develop more insights or practical skills. That may be in Islamics, in contextualizing the Gospel in Arab cultures, or keeping conversant with current missiological issues with which the global church is wrestling.

I can think of no better person to pick up where Wendell Evans left off than Abe Wiebe. To me, Abe personifies what we are talking about. Now officially entering retirement years, Abe continues to engage in formal studies in Islamics. Any good leader has an unquenchable thirst to learn (documented by Warren Bennis and Burt

Nanus in *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge*) as do effective, growing companies (documented by Peter Senge in *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*). Abe has graciously agreed to serve as our interim editor of *Seedbed* until we identify who should serve as our full-time missiologist.

May I be so bold as to dedicate this issue to the memory of Wendell Evans. He was the last editor of *Seedbed*. He kept his saw sharpened right to the end. Right now, our AWMJ Directors are revisiting our policy on church planting. More than one comment has been made that it will be difficult to improve on the document Wendell prepared on that subject some years ago. May *Seedbed* be one of God's tools to fashion many more Wendells in the years ahead.

I close with the example of the apostle Paul. Admirably, toward the end of his earthly existence, while languishing in prison, he still sought to love God with all his mind. He therefore instructed Timothy and Mark to bring on their next visit "my scrolls, especially the parchments." From this we pick up that he wanted to meditate on the Book of books and to keep learning by reading his other written materials. May *Seedbed* be instrumental in keeping us growing.