

Chapter 43

USA



INTRODUCTION

It all started for OAC-USA in Illinois on September 22, 1956. On this day, Jim Duffecy and his team conducted the first open-air meeting in this country on the corner of Quincy and State Street in downtown Chicago. We were eventually incorporated in Illinois in 1958 and, by God's grace, have continued our open-air ministry non-stop since that time. In the early days of our history in the USA, the headquarters was located in Wheaton, Illinois. Olga Kruck was our first USA office worker, coming on staff in 1959. The Lord used Olga for nearly three decades as a faithful servant carrying out various administrative responsibilities. Olga was beloved by many donors who received a personalized, hand-written ministry update note from her with each contribution sent to our Wheaton office. In 2017, just one month short of turning 100, Olga was promoted to heaven.



OLGA KRUCK

Jim Duffecy recorded many details regarding the early part of our USA history in "The Truceless Warfare Advances" book. He included a general mention of some of our staff up through 1983 which included Tammy Bellinger (who would marry Chip Welton), Eric and Diane Briscoe, Bron and Nessie Carlisle, Ralph and Emile Coglianese, Al and Francis Collins, John and Sue Cutlip, Wes and Belva Dunn, Bob and Deidra Ewerth, Sam Frey (who would marry Sherry Siler), Janet Fureman, Lisa Gruthusen (who would marry Philip Lundstrom), Russ Hodder, Fred and Barb Kornis, Olga Kruck, Orlando and Stephanie Lafica, Ed and Cathy Lowe, Tom and Rita Major, Mike and Cindy Malszycki, George and Betty Naggy, Chuck and Fran Phelps, John and Pearl Prince, Randy and Judy Riddle, Mary Rosier, Lou and Kim Sari, Chris and Barb Schroeder, Jim and Koline Sherwood, Sherry Siler (who married Sam Frey), Art and Peggy Williams, plus David

and Elaine Wilson. What follows in this introduction section is a bit of overlap with the history to provide additional details about a few of our staff who joined before 1983 but continued in active roles beyond that era, some of whom are still ministering today.



THE CARLISLE FAMILY

Bron and Nessie Carlisle came on staff in 1952 in New Zealand. God blessed them with two daughters, Averill and Adrienne. The Carlisles came to the USA and were part of the Chicago work in the late 1950s. Bron was an accomplished accordion player, and together, he and Nessie had quite a wonderful singing ministry. Using Chicago as their base, they conducted campaigns in various states in America using their music, open-air, and pulpit supply talents. In 1961, Bron transitioned

to a ministry with Columbia Bible College in South Carolina as their director of evangelism. In this role, many individuals were educated about the ministry of Open Air Campaigners, and some of them went on to join our staff, including David Fanstone and Randy Riddle. In 1964, Bron joined David Fanstone and Jim Duffecy to conduct open-air outreach at the World's Fair in New York City. The fair included exhibitions, activities, performances, films, art, and food presented by 80 nations, 24 U.S. states, and nearly 350 American companies, making it an excellent setting for reaching many people with the gospel. During Bron's ministry with us as USA staff in the 1980s, he actively represented us at conferences in local churches and Bible colleges. Bron was promoted to heaven in 1992 at the age of 78.

Art Williams first heard about us in the fall of 1960, while a student at Tennessee Temple University. He met with us a few times to learn about the work, but it wasn't until he spent two weeks on a crusade with Jim Duffecy in New Jersey that he was convinced of God's call on his life to join us. He and his wife, Peggy, joined OAC in 1961. Art ministered in various roles through the years, including that of an evangelist, New York-New Jersey director and national director. In 1991, he left OAC and, together with Jack Kreidler and a group of Independent Fundamental Baptist pastors, established the Bible Open Air Mission (BOAM), headquartered in New Jersey.



ART & PEGGY WILLIAMS



BELVA & WES DUNN

Highly talented individuals, Wes and Belva Dunn, were professional musicians in California. They had their own TV program called "The Singing Strings," which broadcast on a local station in the Los Angeles (LA) area. Belva was a world-champion steel guitarist, the daughter of Delbert Dickerson, who manufactured steel guitars. The Dunns were also tennis pros and owned a couple of tennis shops. In addition, they umpired professional tennis matches, and knew some of the day's top players, such as Rod Laver and Billie Jean

King. In 1960, they were involved in a terrible automobile accident; both of them were seriously injured, and Belva nearly died. She never fully recovered from the accident and remained somewhat crippled for the rest of her life. Wes and Belva trusted Christ in separate hospitals during this time, to their mutual surprise!

After they left the hospital, they decided to take some vacation time. During their travels, they stopped to take in the LA County Fair. While there, they ran into an OAC team led by Jim Duffecy! When Jim learned they were musicians, he asked if they would stay and help out; they never went on their vacation! In time, Wes and Belva joined our staff, working with Don Avilano in the newly formed LA branch, eventually joined by Ed and Joyce Martin. When Ed left the OAC ministry, Wes succeeded him as area director in 1971.

Wes and Belva's ministry consisted primarily of weekend ministry in downtown Los Angeles on Friday nights and Hollywood Boulevard on Saturday nights. As a Biola student, Russ Hodder joined them in that ministry in 1970. Weekdays consisted of noon-hour meetings in downtown LA parks and children's ministry in housing projects in the afternoons. Russ joined them full-time in that ministry, when he came on staff after graduating from seminary in 1977. Wes and Belva also conducted holiday ministry and led evangelism in Mexicali, Mexico, in conjunction with a local church.



HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD MEETING

Wes stepped down as area director in 1982 but still wanted to be involved in the Hollywood ministry. Russ succeeded Wes as the branch's leader. OAC co-worker Orlando Lafica scouted some great beach and pier sites, so with the approval of our national director, Art Williams, they decided to move the weekend ministry to the piers. Belva was promoted to heaven in 1993, and Wes in 2000.

Ed Martin is a native of California and surrendered his life to Christ in the parking lot of Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park. He holds an M.A. in Biblical Counseling from



JOYCE & ED MARTIN

Grace Theological Seminary and earned his B.A. in Christian Education and Bible from Biola University. Ed learned about OAC when Don Avilano, Jim Duffecy, and Lou Finney spoke at Biola College and his local church in 1960. Ed and his wife, Joyce, came on staff in 1963 and served with us for ten years. Ed became our Chicago area director and then our Los Angeles director. After serving with us, he was a Harbor Chaplain to boaters and seamen along the Southern California coast and owned his own business there.

Ed became a licensed professional counselor, accredited by the State of Tennessee. In 1984, God led Ed to serve as the executive director and lead counselor of the Tri-Cities Center for Christian Counseling in Tennessee, where they currently live. He also served as a member of the American Association of Christian Counselors and as a recommended counselor for Dr. Dobson's "Focus on the Family" ministry.

Through the years, Ed has served on our national board of directors. His background as a former OAC staff member and branch director was a great help in providing us with insightful leadership and godly counsel.

David and Elaine Wilson came to Baltimore in 1970 and worked in the Baltimore-Washington branch under Larry Bateman, who left in 1972. David then became the director of Baltimore and was joined in 1976 by Fred and Barb Kornis. In 1979, the Wilsons moved overseas for a year of sabbatical ministry, during which time Fred served as acting director. After returning from their sabbatical year in 1980, God gave David and Elaine a vision for international evangelism. As a result, the OAC Overseas Ministries Division of OAC-USA was established under David's leadership. Eventually, Overseas Ministries would become a separate organization. Still, at this point, all of the administration, including bookkeeping, was part of the USA work (see chapter 47 on Worldwide Proclamation for more details).



ELAINE & DAVID WILSON

FUN FACT #1

Former staff member and Los Angeles Director Ed Martin held a pilot's license and flew a small turboprop airplane. Worldwide Proclamation founder David Wilson had a commercial pilot's license and was a Captain with Air New Zealand before joining OAC.



BETTY & GEORGE NAGGY

George and Betty Naggy were radically committed to Christ. As active members in their local church, they were eager to serve the Lord in any way He desired. Betty reported that George was convinced of God's call to preach in the open air early in his Christian walk. There was a time when George quit working at Dupont and attended Bible college. He participated in the Sketchboard Evangelism Training (SET) at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago in August 1965. In October of that same year, George was traveling to Upstate New York to speak at a church. Passing through New York City, God touched his heart with a burden for the lost of that great metropolis. He and Betty, moved from

Delaware to Long Island in January 1966 to start his ministry of evangelism. George and Betty joined OAC in 1970 and ministered in the greater New York City area for the next 37 years. George and his team have held thousands of open-air meetings for children, teens, and adults in all five boroughs of New York City. George worked with OAC staff, local church volunteers, and folks from other missions.

Some of his OAC co-workers through the years included Dave and Joy Braun, Ken Fisher, Sam and Sherry Frey, Chris and Barb Schroeder, Larry Tiss, Phil and Rose Foglia, Ron and Michal Stoesz, Chuck and Linda Williams, Ron Bamford, and Art and Peggy Williams. There were several other faithful volunteers and folks from different ministries who also worked consistently with George, including Scottie Teague and Bruce Hoppie.

George desired to preach in the open air as long as God gave him strength, and he did so until he was 80. His desire to be in the open air remained strong, but the years of outdoor ministry in the concrete jungle had taken a toll on his body. In 2007, he and Betty moved back to Delaware, and in 2008, at 81, George was promoted to heaven.



GEORGE MINISTERING IN NEW YORK CITY

After George's homegoing, Betty lived with her daughter, but was certainly not ready to sit in a rocking chair! She had an unstoppable spirit, love for the Lord, and enthusiasm for life. She ramped up her involvement in her local church, remarried, and created a "bucket list" of things she wanted to do, including a mission trip to Haiti and skydiving,



BETTY ON THE MOVE IN HAITI

but, after briefly considering bungee jumping, she decided not to do that! Betty continued to love OAC and witnessed to the lost after George was gone. On one occasion, our Baltimore team worked with a group of young people out of their local church. They called their youth outreach the "Mission Possible Team" and did outreach in the Ocean City, Maryland, area. Betty and her daughter, Donna, showed up to help this youth group just after parasailing at 800 feet, which impacted the entire team. Having a "retired" OAC missionary like Betty join the group, someone who had ministered in New York City for twice as long as these young people had lived, was a powerful testimony. Her love for the Lord and sense of adventure were contagious. Betty was promoted to heaven in 2022.

Frontline Story

The Ocean City location mentioned above has been a great place to hold open-air meetings through the years for many of our OAC staff. It is encouraging to hear testimonies of how God has used this location to touch the lives of many individuals. Here are a couple of examples.

In 1973, a young man named Hunter, a dropout from junior high school and a hippie on drugs, was walking along the boardwalk in Ocean City, Maryland. In his pocket was a loaded .32 pistol. His wife was divorcing him, and his world was crumbling. At the end of the boardwalk, he planned to walk out on the rocks, shoot himself, fall into the water, and disappear forever. As he was walking to his final destination, his eye caught something glowing on the beach, and he wondered if it was real. Coming out onto the sand, he saw an OAC sketchboard with a blacklight illuminating the message. Joining the crowd, he listened as the good news of the gospel was being proclaimed. After the message, he was the first to respond and sat down on the beach, where he prayed to trust Christ. God worked mightily in his life from that point, and a year later, he was back at that same spot on the beach, this time as the preacher, and people were responding to Christ! The Lord used him, and one by one, lives were transformed, including atheists, homosexuals, and those contemplating suicide. Hunter attended Bible school for a year, completed a psychology degree, and has since served for many years as a Christian counselor at a hospital. The Lord has done an outstanding work in his life, given him a good wife, family, and a tremendous ministry of pointing people to Christ.

A second example of how God has used the Ocean City location took place in 1975. A lady named Linda shared with us how, in the summer of that year, she was with a group of friends who decided to mock some of our open-air workers who were sharing Christ at the shore one evening. However, God had other plans: one of the team members shared the gospel with Linda, she knelt on the beach and prayed to receive Christ. Linda recently told us that she wanted to express a special thanks from the depths of her heart because our workers were faithful to God that night. She told us, "I obtained a degree in Christian missions, married a godly man, and served the Lord in Lebanon and Canada with my dear husband. We have seen people saved, and much seed has been sown. All my children have made professions of faith."





DEIDRA & BOB EWERTH

Bob Ewerth was introduced to Open Air Campaigners through his Christian Service assignment at Washington Bible College in 1973. In 1976, he married Deidra, and in that same year, they joined the Baltimore-Washington branch of OAC. Over the years, he has been involved as an evangelist, primarily here in the States but occasionally overseas. In 1979, Dennis and Sue King joined the Baltimore-Washington branch and, in 1980, joined Bob and Deidra when they transitioned from Baltimore to Philadelphia. The Philadelphia branch office began in Bob's house, then the Salvation Army provided him with some space in their building, and then the Roxborough Baptist church offered an ideal location that not only had office space but also

areas for storage and equipment prep. Meeting rooms at the Roxborough location were frequently used to host local and national staff meetings. Bob's father and mother (Robert, Sr., and Betty) lived close to the office and were a great help to Bob and his staff, often coming into the office and helping with various branch projects. Over time, the Philadelphia branch staff also included Eric and Diane Briscoe, Karen Boorse, Joe and Wendy Toy, David and Joy Braun, and Dan Henry. Dan joined the staff in the mid-1980s. He was born and raised in Alaska, went to Bible college there, married a gal named Donna, and was part of the Philadelphia work for a short time before moving on.

Over the years, Bob has served as the Philadelphia branch director, national management team member, and on our national board of directors. As the Philadelphia director, the Lord brought him godly counsel from committee members, including Rex Trent, Ted Johnson, and Richard Secrest. These men appreciated the open-air ministry



THE PHILADELPHIA TEAM - 1985

which Bob and his team conducted and were glad to be a sounding board for Bob. They provided solid guidance, wise suggestions, and offered keen observations to help the work improve over time.

As the personnel development director on the management team, Bob gave direction and counsel to branch directors, led our training seminars, and ensured that all incoming staff were adequately informed about this mission through the Orientation/Candidate School sessions he coordinated.



OAC leadership appointed Bob to establish the James A. Duffecy Endowment Fund in 2008. The goal of this initiative was not only to enable us to open up more branches and sustain current ones, but also to ensure that more lives would be changed and touched by the gospel through our staff on a long-term basis. God brought to us a Christian financial advisor, Bernie Bostwick, to assist

Bob in this endeavor. The endowment fund has grown through the years and continues to provide secure financial stability for our work. In 2009, Bob received the Washington Bible College Alumni of the Year award. He retired in 2022 on the 46th anniversary of his faithful service with OAC. Deidra graduated to heaven in August 2022.

Frontline Story

We love investing in the lives of others by teaching them to use the sketchboard and other visuals to present the gospel effectively. A youth pastor encouraged us with the following note: "We have been sending a team of young people (ages 13-18) to Philadelphia for training through the Open Air Campaigners for about a decade now. The training has been excellent, relevant, and practical. Each year, we have used the sketchboard ministry as the foundation for our teen group's outreach. It has been used for boardwalk ministry, teaching in Sunday School, church programs, fairs, Day Camp, multiple VBS programs throughout the East Coast, Five-Day Clubs, open-air meetings in the Washington, D.C. area, and on college campuses. It has given us a tool to be out there ministering to young folk and adults alike."

FUN FACT #2

Our Sketchboard Evangelism Training sessions, which currently run Monday through Friday, were three weeks long for many years!

After a successful ministry stationed overseas with The Navigators, John and Pearl Prince returned to the USA and joined our staff in 1976. They were based in Indiana and had a fruitful ministry for several years. In his later years, John struggled with Parkinson's disease, which took his life in 1996. Pearl continued living in Indiana, where she remained active in her local church and was promoted to heaven in 2004.



JOHN & PEARL PRINCE



FRED & BARB KORNIS

Fred Kornis trusted Christ on July 11, 1970. One of his life verses, which set the tone of his journey with the Lord is Philippians 1:6: "Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will **carry it on** to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." God has been "carrying it on" in Fred's life all these years, and we are glad part of his journey included Open Air Campaigns.

When Fred trusted Christ, he was in the U.S. Army, but as a new Christian, he also found himself in another kind of Army, the Lord's Army. The early days of Fred's journey included experience as an Army paratrooper with a tour in Vietnam. Despite the challenging environment of LZ English, where he was stationed, Fred's compassion shone brightly. He actively participated in drug rehabilitation efforts and helped with medevac rescues.

After his days in the Army, formal spiritual warfare training began at Trinity College in Florida. But this was just the beginning. His dedication and thirst for knowledge continued through the years as he achieved his Master of Arts Degree and a doctor's degree in Ministry from Faith Evangelistic Schools, followed by an Honorary Doctorate of Theology from Trinity College.

In 1976, Fred, his wife Barbara, and a young family came on staff in our Baltimore-Washington branch, working with David and



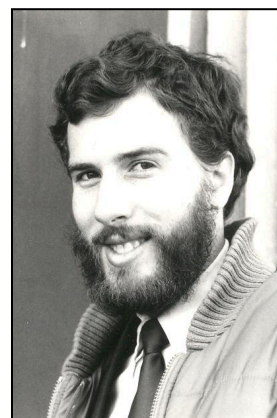
Elaine Wilson and Bob and Deidra Ewerth. Fred started as a staff evangelist and then became the branch director in 1979 when David and Elaine moved to India for a year. Several years later, Fred was appointed as our national field director. The days of ministry in Baltimore included heading up Sketchboard Evangelism Training, working with youth groups, church teams, schools, open-air outreach, pulpit supply, prison ministry, nursing home services, and a host of other opportunities.



**LEFT TO RIGHT
DENNIS KING, BOB,
EWERTH, FRED KORNIS,
VICKY ROGERS**

In 1979, Vicky Rogers came on board to assist Fred and the Baltimore team, which would grow to include Dennis and Sue King and Tom Major, who married Rita in 1982.

In 1984, the Lord led Fred and Barb to move to the Philippines, where they worked with Barry Tetley of the Sowers Program, a ministry started through



TOM MAJOR

OAC New Zealand (see chapter 30 for more details). When they returned in

1986, Fred continued to serve as our

national field director. He then left OAC in 1988 to begin a missionary-evangelist role with Ambassadors for Christ

International (AFCI). Even though this role was with a different mission, AFCI had a close connection with Open Air Campaigners. The AFCI director from 1960 to 1975 was former OAC staff member Les Werry. Then, Allan Gardner filled this position from 1991 to 2002. Allan became acquainted with OAC as a teenager in Australia and joined the OAC Australia staff when he was around 18! For more than 65 years, Allan served the Lord as an evangelist, pastor, teacher, and mentor in more than 70 countries.

In 2001, the Lord led Fred to establish Heartland International Ministries. The vision for such a ministry began in the back of a pickup truck on a rainy night in Nicaragua. Fred and his friend, Tony Reyes, talked and dreamed about how they could help connect two world groups. One sphere was made up of poor, Third World countries where they had been planting churches, evangelizing, and ministering to people. The other was the United States, often wealthy and affluent, needing to connect with real needs in suffering areas of the world.

Today, the Lord continues to "carry it on" in Fred's ministry. After more than 55 years of ministry and developing committed spiritual relationships at home and around the world, God has used Fred to establish a network of 300 indigenous/national workers across 15

countries. His travels have taken him to diverse places such as Mexico, India, the Philippines, China, Kazakhstan, Europe, Nicaragua, Egypt, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Fiji, New Zealand, Haiti, Croatia, Guatemala, Honduras, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Poland, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

Here at home, Fred's legacy of love and devotion extends beyond his world mission calling. With a family that blossomed to include four married children, 16 grandchildren, and 8+ rapidly growing great-grandchildren, he embraces the challenges of life with grace and maturity. His wonderful wife, Barbara, of more than 55 years, has been a vital part of this journey through every step.

But wait, Fred is not done "carrying it on" yet! As of this writing, he continues as minister at large with Heartland International Ministries, serves on boards, authors books, ministers to his family, and travels near and far, "Proclaiming Christ By All Means Everywhere."

Russ Hodder was introduced to OAC in 1970 while in Bible college and came on staff with us in 1977. Here is how God orchestrated all of this in Russ's own words.



"After a tour of duty as a soldier in Vietnam, with my life and testimony being amazingly protected there, it was becoming clear that God might be calling me to some sort of ministry. I applied and was accepted as a student at Biola College (now University) in La Mirada, California. Arriving in January 1970, I was informed that I needed to choose a ministry assignment in the local community, which was required of every student in this Christian institution. My roommate was working on his assignment with a group called Open Air Campaigners (OAC), and he invited me to join him. After some training and a time of prayer in one of the classrooms at the college led by the local OAC director, Ed Martin, we were transported down to Hollywood for my first night of doing evangelism, right on famous Hollywood Boulevard. Evangelists Wes and Belva Dunn already had their van set up for our first street meeting of the evening. It was an experience dealing with tourists and the local population of runaway kids, many of whom came to Hollywood to seek fame and fortune and wound up living on the street.

"After a rather rough start with OAC (I was shy by nature), God made it clear that I was to remain working with this ministry. I stayed with OAC all the way through college and that extended into my entering Talbot School of Theology on the same campus.

Being a missions major at Talbot, I wanted to get a taste of working in a foreign country, so I applied for a summer training program with a mission doing ministry in Mexico and Central America. After a very encouraging time in Mexico and Guatemala, I was encouraged by members of that mission (and their personnel secretary, Ken Bemis) to join them when I completed seminary. As my time in seminary drew to a close, I had a choice between OAC and this other mission. God had not made that choice clear to me, so I applied to both missions and left it to God to sort it all out. It was not long before I received a letter from the other mission telling me that their personnel secretary, Ken Bemis, whom I had met in Mexico, had left to join another ministry. In the midst of the transition, my application form had been lost. I was asked to reapply. I went to the Wednesday night prayer meeting that week, and our pastor, Chuck Swindoll, introduced our new assistant pastor, Ken Bemis, who walked up on the platform! In the meantime, OAC accepted my application and invited me to attend the training seminar and the following Orientation/Candidate School held at Wheaton College in Illinois, where I first met Jim Duffecy. While there, and to our mutual surprise, I ran into Ed Martin, who was working with another ministry. He asked me what I was doing at Wheaton. "I'm attending the OAC Candidate School*, and I guess I'll join them if they want me," I replied. Jim Duffecy, overhearing our conversation, came over to us and said to me in his broad Australian accent, 'Don't worry, mate, we want you, we want you!' My future was settled!

*Editor's note: The Orientation/Candidate School is a one-week instruction required of all incoming staff. This week, a detailed explanation is provided regarding our mission, organizational structure, and in-house policies, protocols, and procedures. OAC documents included in this teaching time include our Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and policy manual.

"Over the past 50-plus years, I have worked with OAC as a student, then as staff, then as Los Angeles area director, and then on the national board of directors. I am so thankful that God directed my way to OAC so many years ago. I have been blessed to have been chosen to continue to record the history of Open Air Campaigners that has occurred since 1983 and the heritage left to us by such pioneers as James Duffecy and those who preceded him since this mission was founded back in 1892."



Since coming on staff with us in 1977, God has brought many team members, financial supporters, volunteers, and staff to assist Russ in the Los Angeles ministry. Folks such

as Larry Baker, Bette Bond, Barry Felis, Gerald Hester, Margaret Holtrust, Carol King, Jim Kirkpatrick, Tom Knox, Orlando LaFica, Dr. Arthur Lee, Grant Nakadate, Bob Rennie, Mary Rosier, Jonathan Shader, Duang Tamti, and Ken Walker have all been a great help and blessing.

For several years, Russ mentored co-worker Frank Baldus and, in 2016, turned over the directorship of our Los Angeles branch to him. Russ continues to minister in the open air as a senior evangelist and is active in his local church.

Frontline Story

Russ has always had a good rapport with individuals in the open air. It is not uncommon for him to encounter adults in the greater Los Angeles area who recall their childhood days when Russ taught them Bible stories in their neighborhood. Here is an example as told by Russ in a report he gave several years ago.

"Juan used to come to our kids' club on Townsend Street in Santa Ana when he was about 10 years old. He was mildly challenged and struggled with the take-home Bible lessons we gave him. Each week, for about two years, I would help him do the lessons on-site. When he finished, I had him repeat the same lessons he had done by himself, giving him a real sense of accomplishment. He was always faithful in bringing back his completed lessons each week, and I could see he was spiritually growing. He moved to another neighborhood, and I lost track of him. I always wondered what happened to him and would pray for him. This last month, as we were going to Townsend Street, I thought of him again and prayed that I would be able to see him again. The only sure way of getting parking in this very crowded neighborhood is to follow the street sweeper every Wednesday, as the street, by law, must be cleared. That day, we went to a local park to wait for the street sweeper to come. A young man walked by, took a double-take, and walked back. He looked in the window of my van and said, 'Russ! Do you remember me?' It was Juan! We had reconnected as a direct answer to my prayer! He is now 28 years old, and it has been about 10 years since I last saw him. I had not been able to give him a prize for the last series of Bible lessons he had completed, as he had moved. He remembered after 10 years ... 'Russ, you owe me a prize.' I believe that God has brought us together again for a reason, as I think He has spiritually drifted and needs encouragement. And yes, I gave him his prize!"



ED LOWE

The Early Days

Ed and Cathy Lowe lived in Chicago and had a great working relationship with Moody Bible Institute (MBI). Ed graduated from Moody in 1973 and, as our Chicago branch director, hosted many fruitful Sketchboard Evangelism Training sessions on the MBI campus and led student teams in the open air throughout the greater Chicago area. Some of his team members included Billy Richter, Lisa Gruthusen (who married Phillip Lundstrom), Lou Sari, and Wayne Conway. Ed remained an associate staff man with us until 1995. He then founded Bridgeman Associates in Western Pennsylvania and continued ministering in the open air through the late 1990s. Ed and Cathy eventually moved to Central Florida and established a custom art and scenery business named KellGrace.



ED & CATHY LOWE



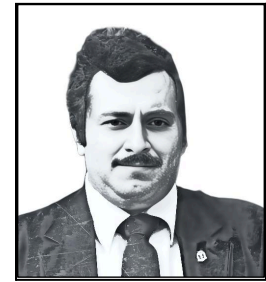
WAYNE CONWAY



LISA LUNDSTROM



BILLY RICHTER



LOU SARI

Frontline Story

We received a letter from a lady who shared that, as a young teenager, her house was often filled with people partying and just looking to have a good time. The neighbors had called the police to this house 57 times! One afternoon, one of our OAC staff members, who lived next door to this lady, felt led to hold an open-air meeting in her backyard. She and her friends asked the staff member to leave, and he did so politely and respectfully, as a courteous servant. After a long and painful life of disobedience and rebellion, this lady ended up in jail, facing up to a 20-year sentence in prison. She found herself in bondage to drugs and even contemplated ending her life to spare her daughter the life she was subjected to. And then, the God of change captured her heart and changed her forever. She felt led to contact us; her note encouraged us to keep ministering and be assured that our efforts for the Lord are not in vain. After a complete surrender to God, she answered God's call to ministry. Her note to us ended with " ... Thank you from the bottom of my heart; if there is ever anything I can do for you, don't hesitate to contact me."



VICKY ROGERS

Vicky Rogers became involved with OAC while attending Washington Bible College in Maryland. She joined the open-air teams that went out each week into the Baltimore-Washington area and grew to love the open-air ministry. She reached a point where she was convinced that after graduating from Bible school, the Lord wanted her to utilize the administrative skills in OAC that He had given her. Vicky joined our Baltimore-Washington branch staff in 1979 and helped establish an office for the three evangelists there: Fred Kornis, Bob Ewerth, and Dennis King. She also helped with the children's open-air meetings. It was during this time that God prepared Vicky to serve as Fred Kornis' administrative assistant for many years in the various

ministries he was involved with. She also served in the New York-New Jersey office for a year in 1981, helping out the national director, Art Williams. After a hiatus of moving back to Baltimore and working at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine to pay off her college debt, she relocated to the Kansas City area in 1988, to again, serve as Fred Kornis's administrative assistant. In 1990, she joined Fred and Barb, who transitioned out of OAC to Ambassadors for Christ International.



Both John and Sue Cutlip grew up in Thompson, located in Northeast Ohio near Lake Erie. Sue was saved at a young age, and John trusted Christ at 18 through the witness



JOHN & SUE CUTLIP

of a fellow teenager at the local grocery store where he worked after school each day. A detailed account of John and Sue's leading to join OAC can be found in Chapter 1.

In 1980, as John was walking across the graduation platform at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago to receive his diploma, the school's president, Dr. George Sweeting, told John that there was a great church in New Jersey that he highly recommended. Dr. Sweeting's brother, Norman, had been the pastor at Hydewood Park Baptist Church in North Plainfield, New Jersey, for several years, and it was a local

church known for its love of missions and solid Bible teaching. As it turned out, John and Sue visited Hydewood when they moved to New Jersey, joined, and remained active until their relocation to Pennsylvania in 1989.

There is an interesting connection between Dr. Sweeting and Open Air Campaigners. Since age 13, Dr. Sweeting attended Hawthorne Gospel Church in New Jersey, was baptized there, and became active in the youth group. He grew in his faith at this local church, met his wife there, was married, ordained, and eventually returned to minister as Hawthorne's associate pastor. Jim and Joyce Duffecy were part of the Australian team responsible for expanding this mission's work to North America. In 1952, Jim Duffecy preached his first sermon in the USA at Hawthorne Gospel Church. When Jim and Joyce eventually moved to America, they settled in the Glen Rock, New Jersey, area. They became active members of Hawthorne under the leadership of its pastor, Hermann Braunlin. Pastor Braunlin's daughter, Connie, attended Moody Bible Institute and became good friends with Sue Cutlip from 1978 to 1980 while Sue worked in the Dean's Department at the school.

Through the years, John has used his gifts in administration and helps to function as the director of our Central Services office. It is his joy to provide the administrative and support services needed to keep our front-line evangelists equipped and at the evangelism task to which God has called them. John also has the opportunity to minister in the open air and in his local church. He and Sue are grateful that God has used them in this ministry for 45 years of uninterrupted service.



JOHN, AKA "MR. C", USING SCIENCE LESSONS TO DEMONSTRATE SPIRITUAL TRUTH

FUN FACT #3



In 1980, the largest Sketchboard Evangelism Training took place at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago with 78 individuals registered. Out of this group, several came on staff with OAC, including Randy Riddle, Chris and Barb Schroeder, and John and Sue Cutlip.



ERIC & DIANE BRISCOE

Staff evangelist Eric Briscoe was saved at the age of 13 at Happy "T" Ranch in New Hampshire. He studied at Massasoit Community College, receiving an Associate Degree in 1971, and was immediately drafted into the Army, serving two years with the 82nd Airborne Division. A Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Math was earned in 1975 from Boston State College. Eric and Diane were married in 1976. Between 1981 and 1982, Eric attended the Word of Life School of Youth Ministries in New York, where he was introduced to the Open Air Campaigners ministry. In the spring of 1982, the Lord made it clear he was to do the work of an evangelist. That year, Eric and Diane joined the OAC Philadelphia branch and eventually moved to the Boston area, where he became the branch director in 1986. Through the years, Eric's OAC co-laborers in that field have included Richard and Diane Burley, John and Tiffany Copell, Gordon and Beth-Eden Loop, Sue MacNeil, Rick and Dovie Moore, Jeff and Carol Owen, Jay Ricci, Mark and Shelby Sohmer, Aaron and Tonya Wentz, and Paul and Judy Zagrobski. An additional ministry came Eric's way as he was appointed our USA field director in 1991, serving as a member of the management team and also a

national board member. Eric mentored Brian Harmon for several years, who eventually took over as field director in 2020. Since then, Eric has continued to lead the evangelistic outreach in our Boston branch and serve as a consultant to the management team and the board of directors. Additionally, he organizes ongoing open-air training sessions and leads outreach teams in Boston and at multi-state locations, including the annual student break outreach to Miami, Florida.

In Eric's opinion, the two open-air meeting pictures below illustrate the foundational purpose of OAC: a mission that comes alongside the local church and the body of



Christ, equipping them to reach their community with the gospel. The pictures show Torre Fuerte Iglesia and Marsh Corner Community Church collaborating to serve a community within walking distance of the Spanish church. Months after this event, the pastor sent Eric this note: "Marsh Corner has been blessed in our

working with you in 2024. You were a catalyst in bringing us closer to our brothers and sisters in Lawrence. You challenged many in our congregation to step outside of their comfort zone and reach people in their own communities. What is more, working with OAC has enlivened all of the congregation, even the ones who were not part of the Lawrence outreach, and excited them about being a part of a church that does outreach. It is a joy to see."



Frontline Story

In 2006, Eric Briscoe, Paul Adams, and Mark Johnson began recruiting students from Liberty University in Virginia. Diane Briscoe also became a regular recruiter! Richard and Diane Burley, along with Rick and Dovie Moore also participated. Eric and his team would train the students in effective open-air evangelism methods and travel to a major city for outreach. Up to three of the wives would do the cooking. From 2006 to 2008, Daytona, Florida, was the destination. In 2009, Miami became the city of choice, and it remains the annual outreach destination to this day. This concentrated week of evangelism is an opportunity to reach adults, children, and also college students who visit Florida during spring break. It has proven to be a time abundantly blessed by God. Here is what some of the former Liberty students have to say about this time of ministry.

Gretel said, "This trip truly taught me what it meant to depend fully on the Lord for strength. I particularly enjoyed how our leaders encouraged us to ask people questions first and answer them according to what they said. It reminded me of how Jesus communicated with people and spoke according to where people were at while discerning their intentions too. Even though I had some difficult conversations that left me speechless, I learned to surrender these people to the Lord and trust that my job was solely to sow the seeds while the Lord produced the growth."

Kacie said, "I am so grateful that this was my first mission. It was so inspiring to see the kids so receptive to the gospel! I was also very moved by the father and daughter that returned the next night with the girl's sister to talk to me again. They were so interested and respectful. I could tell they were curious and thinking about what I was saying, but they were still very firm in their Catholic beliefs. I know the Holy Spirit was moving in them, I saw them thinking and questioning. I hope I planted a seed. I am so grateful for every conversation I had. It allowed me to see what I need to gain more knowledge on to be able to answer more questions and it showed me different ways to share the gospel. I am very grateful I got to have this experience. I will never be the same."



ERIC BRISCOE AT THE SKETCHBOARD

Hannah K. wrote, "I had never been on a mission trip until this one and I was new to doing street evangelism. At the beginning of the trip I was nervous to do things that I had never done before; it was definitely out of my comfort zone but being able to see how intentional the Lord was with bringing people that were hungry for the gospel was truly so impactful. I also loved being able to get closer to the team we had. Getting to walk through this experience with other believers helped me grow in my faith; through conversations and getting to hear testimonies of people on the team really helped bring the team closer together."

Ruthie wrote, "The trip was an eye-opening experience and helped me realize that to grow closer in my relationship with God and challenge my faith, I would need to do things like this. Working with the kids in the poorer inner-city neighborhoods was very fun, but it saddened me to see the life that they were living. The very last day of the kid's ministry was the best in my opinion because I got to share the gospel with a group of kids that were attentive and listening and seemed receptive to the message. The adult ministries were a whole different ball game and I think every Christian needs to be put in this kind of challenging situation to grow in their relationship with God. I had to solely rely on Him to know what to say to people when I got into a conversation, and I relied on Him for the courage to hand out tracts. Rejection was a major fear, but each night, I got a little bit more confident. I know that He was able to use me to plant seeds in everyone that I talked to, even if I stumbled through my words or wasn't able to give a solid answer."

Charis said, "I was encouraged by the whole team and their excitement to tell people about Jesus. I gained so much wisdom from the leaders and grew in my personal walk with the Lord. Sharing the gospel is something I've always struggled with. I know as believers we are called to make disciples; however, it still can be a scary thing for me to do. I saw God work every single night as we were evangelizing. God gave me peace as I talked, and He provided so many divine appointments. It always amazes me the number of strangers who are willing to talk about what they believe about eternity, and who are willing to hear the gospel. This trip reminded me of the power of the gospel and that I should not be ashamed of it. We live in a broken world, and people need the hope of salvation. The Holy Spirit was working, and I learned how to better rely on Him for strength and for the words to say."

Hannah B. wrote, "Working with the children's ministry opened my eyes to so many things I had never considered. The ability to show love to those hearts and receive it back felt like more of a gift to me than them. The street ministry was something I was very nervous about. However, it gave me so much more perspective than I could have

imagined. I learned so much by being questioned by others and hearing their perspectives. God allowed me to meet so many people who were already searching for him. There were so many divine conversations and purposeful moments that it would take many pages to write them all down. On this trip, I saw God's hand still reaching. The ability to experience what we did renewed and strengthened my faith and left me with a desire to pursue him and future ministry."



Lou Sari came on staff in the Chicago area in 1982 and was engaged to Kim in 1984. In 1985, he followed Ed Lowe as the Chicago branch director and was blessed to have Wayne and Karen Conway come on staff to work with him in 1986. The Chicago team had excellent ministry training and led students from the Moody Bible Institute into the open air. Wayne is known in our OAC family as the one who was stabbed on a bus in Chicago, which injured one of his lungs. He survived this attack but had a long road to recovery and was eventually back to ministering in the open air. Lou was promoted to heaven in 2013.

Chuck Williams learned about OAC during his seminary training in Chattanooga, Tennessee, through one of our staff members, David Braun. On some frigid winter days, David and Chuck would minister in the open air at a local flea market, where Chuck learned the basic methods of our ministry. These outreach times caused Chuck to dedicate himself to the Lord for a lifelong open-air preaching ministry.



CHUCK & LINDA WILLIAMS

Chuck and his wife, Linda, moved to New Jersey in 1982 as new team members of our New York-New Jersey branch after graduation and completing our Sketchboard Evangelism Training and Orientation/Candidate School. After ministering for a few years, Chuck sensed the Lord leading him and Linda to begin a new branch of OAC on the West Coast. The plan was to visit



California with another evangelist to see if the area could support the ministry. Instead, David Innes, pastor of Hamilton Square Baptist Church, invited Chuck to come on staff and have an open-air evangelism ministry through the church. In this way, the local church would replace OAC as the hub of his open-air ministry. Being in total support of the local church, we gave Chuck and Linda our blessing as he moved his family first to Pacifica and then to South San Francisco.

As of this writing, Chuck is nearly 90 years old and continues to have a ministry of writing and helping multiple churches in their efforts to call a new preaching pastor, including tutoring several preachers, all behind the scenes. He lives with his eldest daughter in Gilbert, Arizona. His wife, Linda, is with the Lord as of May 2016.



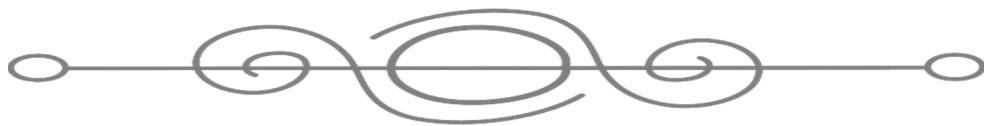
NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY STAFF - CIRCA 1982-1983

Front row (left to right) Art Williams / Peggy Williams / Betty Naggy / George Naggy

Middle row (left to right) Sherry Siler (who married Sam Frey) / Linda Williams / Sue Cutlip / Barbara Schroeder / Janet Fureman

Back row (left to right) Chuck Williams / John Cutlip / Chris Schroeder

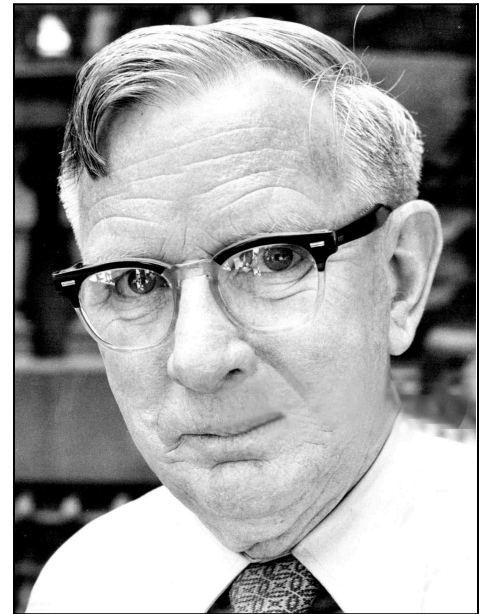
In 1982, the training picture below was taken at Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga; several participants became OAC staff. Front row, from far left to right, includes Barry Tetley, Jack Kreidler, Russ Hodder, Art Williams, Chris Schroeder, and Ed Lowe. For readers familiar with our history, here is a challenge: see if you can name the other OAC staff members in this picture, including Orlando Lafica, Eric Briscoe, Barb Schroeder, Diane Briscoe, Bob Ewerth, George Naggy, David Wilson, Chuck Williams, Jim Duffecy, and Lou Sari. Also in the picture are Chip Welton and Tammy Bellinger, who met during this time, fell in love, and were eventually married. Chip and Tammy currently live in Canada, which serves as home base for their open-air ministry.



THE DAYS OF CHANGE

1983 was a notable year of change in our OAC history, as this was the last year of Jim Duffecy's earthly ministry. On November 18, he was to speak in Toronto at a retirement banquet for Canadian staff Norm and Shirley Wyman, but suffered a heart attack, which took his life the day before this event.

Conducting open-air evangelism and training others to do the same was in Jim's spiritual DNA. In addition to sharing Christ in the open air, helping OAC expand to new fields, and promoting this ministry to the Christian public, he wrote four books: *Another Sherlock Holmes in England*, *Sketchboard Sermons*, *Sketch-board Sermons No. 2*, and our first OAC history book, *The Truceless Warfare Advances*. He was devoted to the call God had given him to participate in and expand the ministry of open-air preaching to those who will not or cannot come into the local church to hear the gospel. In fact, on the last Wednesday of his life, he was preaching in the open air, unaware that early the next day would be his last in this world.



JIM DUFFECY

At the memorial service in Canada held on November 19, OAC International president Tom Swan reported that he read the many telegrams and letters of sympathy from far and near. On behalf of OAC International, he extended our sense of shock, compassion, love, prayer support, and appreciation to Joyce and the family. Art Williams led in prayer, Norm Wyman read the Scriptures, and Dr. Paul B. Smith of The Peoples Church spoke. At a memorial service held in Sydney, the Rev. Bernard Judd said of Jim Duffecy: "His was a victorious and fulfilled life."

FUN FACT #4

John Cutlip's father, Elmer, did automotive bodywork as a hobby. In the early 1980s, he repainted Jim Duffecy's van at the Cutlip home in Northeast Ohio. John was taught how to prep and paint vehicles by his dad as a teenager. In the late 1980s, John spray-painted a vintage Studebaker for New York staff member George Naggy in George's backyard at his home on Long Island!

God used Jim Duffecy and the leaders of his era to lay a solid foundation for OAC, which has been built over many years. Since Jim died in 1983, the Lord has provided additional staff and new leadership, helping us continue preaching the same gospel in new fields worldwide.

Tom Swan was appointed the OAC International president, succeeding Jim Duffecy. Tom was from Canada and excelled at organizing and formulating short and long-term goals. In the years that followed, he would be particularly instrumental in helping us here in the States with problem-solving sessions. God used him to help us formulate our strategic vision, goals, and objectives. His assistance allowed us to establish a solid administrative structure that would confidently take us into the future. We are grateful for his willingness to pour himself into our lives and equally thankful to his wife, Holly, for sharing him with us during those years.



OLGA KRUCK



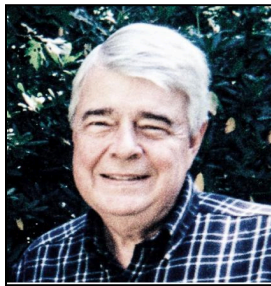
**RALPH
COGLIANESE**

Since the leadership days of Jim Duffecy and Tom Swan, new fields of ministry have opened before us here in the USA, and God has blessed. As noted, the work in this country began in Chicago, where our national headquarters was located in Wheaton, Illinois. This location change when Art Williams became the national director. Since he was also the New York-New Jersey director and lived in the

Plainfield, New Jersey area, our national leadership office moved to New Jersey and was established in Art's home; however, the Wheaton, Illinois office remained intact, although we did move to a smaller office location on Wesley Street. Staff members Ralph Cogliane and Olga Kruck faithfully carried out our daily national accounting activity at this new location.

The last national leadership meeting in Illinois was held on September 16, 1982, with Chairman John Barrier presiding. At John's request, Art accepted the resignations of the Illinois board members to clear the way for a new leadership team in New Jersey, who would now be in charge of the USA work. The first new leadership members were Hugh McKay, Pastor Charles Horton, Elmer Van Dyke, and Bob Howard. Many new leadership meetings occurred at the Goodwill Home and Rescue Mission in Newark, New Jersey. In the beginning, the contact man at this rescue mission was its director and OAC New York committee man, Elmer Van Dyke. Later, our contact was Al Nicholson, a Hydewood Park Baptist Church member in North Plainfield, where OAC staff members John and Sue Cutlip attended.

Although we were officially registered as a non-profit corporation in Illinois in 1958, the leadership's move to New Jersey made it expedient that Open Air Campaigners also incorporate in that state. As a result, OAC became registered as a non-profit organization in New Jersey in 1983, with the legal help and counsel of a Christian attorney and long-time friend of OAC, Jim Ozias.



DONALD PETERSON Another notable person who loved OAC and was a great help to us in the 1980s was New Jersey businessman Donald Peterson. Donald was a dedicated Christian with a degree in electrical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an MBA from Rutgers. He and his wife, Jean, were passengers on Flight 93 (the only married couple on board that day), which was hijacked and deliberately crashed by terrorists into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, on September 11, 2001.

In 1983, Sam Frey joined our staff. Sam's father was a staff member at Word of Life Bible Institute (WOLBI) in Upstate New York, so Sam's growing-up years around the Word of Life culture gave him a solid spiritual foundation for the rest of his life. We, too, had a connection with Word of Life. In the early 1970s, Jack Wyrzten from Word of Life and our USA Director, Art Williams, created a training plan for WOLBI's students. The school would send groups of 24 students to us for nine days at a time. During these nine days, our New York-New Jersey staff would teach these students in the classroom about open-air evangelism and then take them into New York City to apply, through outreach meetings, what they had been learning about in theory. At first, the teams were housed in rented quarters in Irvington, New Jersey, and later at The Fellowship Deaconry in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, and then Manhattan Bible Church in New York City. In the 1980s, this training expanded to include not only New York City but also our branches in Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia. At one point, there was serious consideration of OAC purchasing a building dedicated to training and outreach, but this did not come to pass. Here is Sam Frey's account of how the Lord moved him in our direction.



SAM & SHERRY FREY

"When I was [a student] at the Word of Life Bible Institute, I joined their choir in large part so I wouldn't have to minister in open-air evangelism. The very thought scared me to death as I was quite the introvert. While a student at Tennessee Temple University, I



SAM FREY - 1980

had to complete a ministry requirement my senior year, so I selected OAC. Under the direction of and instructed by David Braun, I joined him, his wife, Joy, and the team for ministry day trips to Atlanta, Dalton, Georgia, and Birmingham, Alabama. Surprised at how God saw fit to use me and that I was still alive, I spent three days in New Jersey with OAC during my Christmas break.

"One day was spent gluing together the ends of rope tricks. On another, more notable day, I accompanied Art Williams and some 'preacher boys' into the Bronx for a day of outreach. It was cold, so after they preached, each guy in turn would warm up inside a nearby store. I didn't know how to preach a sketchboard message, so I didn't warm up. Being fearful, I talked to no one all afternoon and handed out only five tracts. I did, however, listen intently to the dialogues the others had with passersby. I was stunned as I heard people making remarks to our team members like, 'I never heard this before!', 'You mean Jesus is physically alive — not just that His ideas live on?' and, 'I wouldn't know how to get to heaven if you paid me to tell you!' That day, I saw the need of many lost souls for the gospel, a message few of them had heard before in our so-called Christian nation! As I noticed the crowded planes flying over our heads from LaGuardia airport, observed the city buses crammed full of passengers, and saw the rivers of rush-hour crowds passing by on foot, I tried to imagine a reason I could stand before God some day and give Him a satisfactory answer for why I didn't spend my life trying to reach so many uninformed, but open souls. I had nothing, so I told God, 'I could never do what these guys do with the board and such, but if I can help them do what they do, I'm available.' Little did I realize that by God's grace alone, I would be doing exactly that, and soon.

"I followed God's leading by taking the OAC training seminar at Tennessee Temple University in June of 1983 and went directly to Orientation/Candidate School at



SHERRY WAS ACTIVE IN THE OFFICE AND IN THE OPEN AIR

Washington Bible College in Maryland. Within 24 hours of graduation, I found myself with no money, no car, no permanent housing, and no promised support, temporarily staying at the Goodwill Home and Rescue Mission in Newark, New Jersey, with two other summer staff members. That lasted for only five days, though, as I accepted an invitation to stay and sleep on a sofa bed in a third-floor apartment in Plainfield, New Jersey, with John and Sue Cutlip. A couple months later, an apartment opened for me a couple of doors down the street, and I moved in with OAC staff man Ken Fischer for eight months until Sherry and I were married.

"I phased into full-time work with OAC within the first six months. During my time in Plainfield, I worked with Dave and Joy Braun, John and Sue Cutlip, Ken Fischer, Janet Fureman, Jack Kreidler, George and Betty Naggy, Chris and Barb Schroeder, Ron and Michal Stoesz, Al and Linda Terhune, Art and Peggie Williams, Chuck and Linda Williams, David and Elaine Wilson, and Ken Worrell.

"After a second six months, co-worker Chris Schroeder had left OAC, and I was placed into the position of New York City branch director, where I served for several years until joining Word of Life.

"Since leaving OAC in June of 1991, I have been laboring as Word of Life Evangelism Ministries coordinator. By God's grace, I've had the privilege to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ and train other believers to do the same in about 80 towns and cities of 14 nations worldwide. I will always praise God and be thankful for my eight years in OAC. It was there that I was taught, encouraged, and mentored, made life-long friendships and connections, and gained experience to allow God to use me in the work of evangelism. It was with OAC that I caught the vision, set the trajectory, and followed the example of others to reach the lost where they are. To God be the glory!"



AL & FRANCES COLLINS

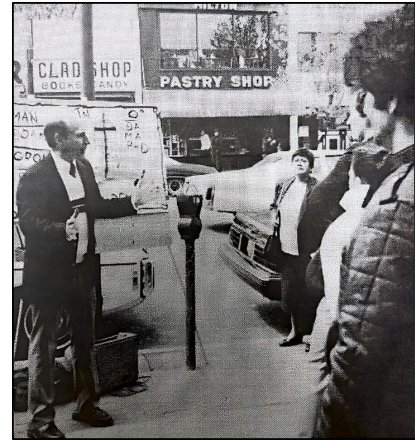
during his post-career years. He even made an extra effort to earn his Doctor of Theology Degree from the Emmaus Bible Institute on November 20, 1984.

Al Collins, at age 72, was actively conducting jail ministry with us in the early 1980s. He and his wife, Frances lived in South Carolina and felt the Lord calling them to serve Him in a vocational manner during their retirement years. Al, a former Metropolitan Life Insurance representative asked the Lord to grant him health and strength for an active front-line evangelism ministry



AL'S LICENSE PLATE

In 1983, Art Williams made his annual trip to the Atlanta School of Biblical Studies to speak to the student body about the work of OAC and trusted the Lord that he might make initial contact with future staff as a result. One of the students from Minnesota, Ron Stoesz, was very interested and participated in our training seminar that year. After the training was done, he ministered with Chuck Phelps in our Minneapolis-St. Paul branch, as he prepared to come on staff. Ron and his wife, Michal, came on staff with us from 1984 to 1990. In 1986, They transferred from working with David Wilson in our Overseas Division to being part of our New York-New Jersey team. They and their two children lived on Staten Island. They had vast ministry opportunities in the greater New York City area, including inner-city community centers, Staten Island Ferry, schools, and prisons. They enjoyed great times with Word of Life students who came to our New York-New Jersey branch for training and outreach. Ron also helped coordinate professional Christian athletes



RON STOESZ



**RON STOESZ (far right)
LEADING A TEAM IN HARLEM**

who would come to New York City high schools to speak and share their testimonies. Evangelistic trips to Europe, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti also occurred. Their continuing connections in Minnesota provided additional ministry opportunities at state fairs and local church events in that region. Trips to various other states during the year to conduct training and outreach were not uncommon. After six fruitful years with us, the Lord led Ron and Michal to other ministry.

FUN FACT #5

An Airstream travel trailer was donated to OAC in the early 1980s. Word of Life Bible Institute in Upstate New York allowed us to park it at their camp facility for OAC staff and board members to use until it was sold, proceeds used for open-air ministry.

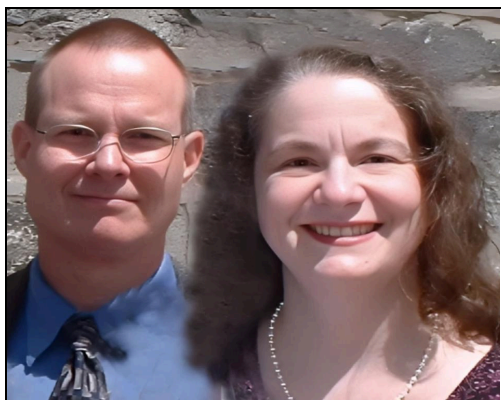


CHRIS & KAREN WILLIAMS

Karen Williams was born and raised in a Christian home. She attended church from the cradle and trusted Christ as a preteen. She was introduced to Open Air Campaigners at her local church. Being of a shy nature, she was not looking to be involved in outdoor evangelism, but God had other plans. Through her church, she was assigned to a 10-day evangelistic New York City trip led by the staff of OAC. After graduating high school, she explored other mission career options, but God kept bringing her back to considering OAC. She joined us as a full-time worker in our Philadelphia branch office in 1984. It took several years of working behind the scenes to discover that God had gifted her to also work with children. As a result of taking a course on teaching children offered by the Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF), she began working with them on loan from OAC in 1998. This opportunity to teach children's clubs several times each week allowed her to develop a unique presentation style. The mix of involvement with both OAC and CEF resulted in exciting Bible stories illustrated on a sketchboard that captured the attention of both young and old alike.



In September 2006, Karen transitioned back to full-time with Open Air Campaigners and, in May 2012, married Chris. They currently reside in Arizona, where Karen continues to present the gospel to children, teaches others to use her techniques, and produces custom-made object lessons for evangelistic outreach.



DAVID & JOY BRAUN

David Braun was born in Jersey City and raised in Holmdel, New Jersey. Through the witness of a Christian National Guardsman and the ministry of Lincroft Bible Church, he was saved at the age of 28 and found out about Open Air Campaigners as a student at Word of Life Bible Institute in 1980. He also met Joy at WOLBI, and they got married after graduation. Joy was born and raised in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. While a student nurse, she was led to Christ by the pastor of the North Waverly Chapel in Waverly, New York.

David graduated from Tennessee Temple University in 1984 with a BA in Religious Education as a pastoral studies major and moved to New Jersey. He was ordained and joined Open Air Campaigners in 1985, serving as an evangelist in the New York-New Jersey branch before moving to Pennsylvania in 2000 to be part of the Philadelphia branch of OAC.



JoAnne LaRue came on staff with us and served faithfully from 1985 to 2000. Here is how the Lord led in her own words.

“I was a shy and hopelessly homesick freshman at Washington Bible College. On October 9, 1981, I experienced my first exposure to Open Air Campaigners and



JOANNE LARUE

open-air evangelism; my life was radically changed forever! It was that evening after the conclusion of the open-air meeting when I had the opportunity to share the gospel with a 14-year-old boy named Eric, something that so totally departed from my naturally shy self. This had to be God! Eric decided to put his trust in Jesus as Savior, and I had the amazing privilege of leading him in that decision, something I had never experienced before. My life was never the same from that moment on! As one person put it, ‘I spent thousands of dollars to go through four years of Bible

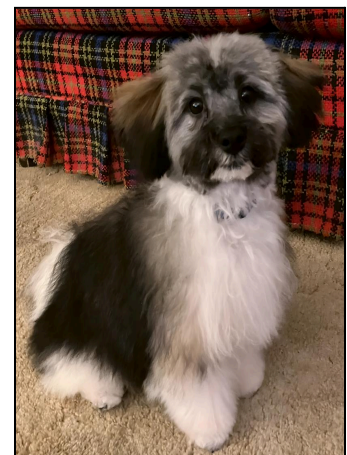
college so that I could be on the open-air team!' That's not so far from the truth! It was the natural step after college to join Open Air Campaigners full time.

"I worked in several different areas, beginning in the New York-New Jersey branch as secretary to David Wilson, the overseas ministries director at that time. I didn't know much about being a secretary as I had never been one, but John Cutlip taught me everything I needed to know. I loved working in the office, but the really special days were those spent on the street doing meetings. I spent a year working in Toronto, Canada, as an administrative assistant to the International President of OAC, who was then Bob McArthur. Toward the end of my year in Toronto, I sensed God leading me back to Washington Bible College to represent OAC there as a Missionary in Residence. I worked at the college for eight years, training students and leading them out in meetings.

"Since leaving OAC, I have continued to use the many things I learned as I work through Heartland International Ministries. If I were to try and condense it, I would have to quote the OAC Motto: 'Presenting Christ By All Means Everywhere.' This motto has served me well during my 40+ years of ministry. It has taught me to seek out new and creative ways of sharing Christ whenever, wherever and however the opportunity presents itself.

"Of course, I have continued to use the sketchboard as my main method of teaching, but other tools have also become very useful in my ministry. First would be my puppet and ventriloquism. I learned ventriloquism as a 9-10-year-old child from a toy my parents got me for Christmas. Amazing how God gave me that interest, knowing I would be using it now around the world! Kids, as well as adults, enjoy it when I get the puppet out of her suitcase!

"Another 'tool' that I have totally enjoyed incorporating into my ministry is my dog! This began back in 2010 when my dog was 11 months old. I had put together a collection of spiritual lessons I had learned from working with and training Opie. I started taking Opie to Christian school chapels, Released Time Bible classes with public school students, Vacation Bible Schools, nursing homes, and just about anywhere I had the opportunity to minister! After several years of training, Opie became a certified therapy dog. This opened new doors, such as the public library, where kids would come and read to him. A week before I lost Opie at 15 1/2, God literally dropped a new puppy in my lap! Even though Marbles is still a work in



MARBLES

progress in his training, he has already accompanied me for several ministry outings. My goal is to have him certified as a therapy dog as well, but already, Marbles is making a name for himself! He was barely three months old when he went to his first Christian school chapel.

“I have often thought back to the first sermon my father ever preached. He wasn’t a pastor but was always willing to fill the pulpit when asked. His sermon title was 'What is that in your hand?' based on God’s question to Moses in Exodus 4:2. As I look back over my now 40 years of ministry, I have seen many things that God has placed into my hand: a paintbrush, some ropes, a puppet, and two different puppies. It is exciting to see how God will use simple things when we open our hands and give them back to Him.”

As of this writing, JoAnne lives in Maryland and continues an ongoing ministry of after-school programs, summer camps, chapels, Vacation Bible Schools, special events, and many other avenues of outreach activity. Marbles has now grown into a faithful companion and is a vital part of her outreach endeavors.

In 1986, Los Angeles staff Orlando and Stephanie LaFica moved to Missouri and opened up the St. Louis area for OAC outreach. Stephanie’s parents, Phil and Madonna Hipps, were from the St. Louis area and instrumental in establishing several Brethren assemblies there. In 1983, our Minneapolis-St. Paul director Chuck Phelps spent 17 days with Dr. and Mrs. Hipps, giving them open-air evangelism training and conducting 63 meetings during their time together. It had been on Orlando’s heart to move to the St. Louis area eventually. So, with his Bible training at Biola in California complete and a good experience working with our open-air team in the Los Angeles area, the time came to launch into this new field of ministry in the Midwest.



RUTHIE & JIM GOCHNAUER

Since the early 1980s, Jim and Ruthie Gochnauer, who lived in the Lancaster, Pennsylvania, area, have been well acquainted with OAC. They operated a graphic design and printing enterprise located in their basement and did quite an extensive marketing and print business in the greater Lancaster area. We often had our printing needs cared for by the Gochnauers, and they have been very helpful in consulting and assisting us in the ministry through the years. Jim and Ruthie

came into OAC as associate staff in 1988. During their time with us, establishing a dedicated in-house OAC publication department was seriously considered. Even though all the details needed to make this happen did not materialize, the Gochnauers' help, advice, and great encouragement in this area were a great blessing nonetheless. God eventually called them to move to New York City and to become involved in the administration and operation of a Christian elementary school for several years. They currently live in Brooklyn.



JOE TOY

Joe Toy was saved in 1982 at the age of 21 while attending Millersville University in Pennsylvania. After receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in economics and business from Millersville, he spent two years in the public accounting field. He was introduced to Open Air Campaigners through a Sketchboard Evangelism Training seminar at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. He participated in the New Jersey Orientation/Candidate School after the training. He was a volunteer evangelist for four years and began ministering as an OAC Intern in 1987, working with Bob Ewerth and the Philadelphia branch team. He and his wife, Wendy, have five children, all boys! After his time of staff

ministry with OAC, God led Joe to take what he had learned and establish a mission called Open Air Ministries (OAM). Today, Joe's ministry continues at full speed and is based in the Raleigh, North Carolina, area. Much of his ministry occurs in this region, with special outreach in other locations throughout the year. One fruitful venue for sharing the gospel is in New Orleans during Mardi Gras each year in conjunction with local churches, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and other ministries. Joe also teams up with Call of Grace Ministries and Sports Fan Outreach International to hold open-air meetings during the annual Super Bowl. At the time of this writing, Joe is an active member of our OAC national board of directors.

Frontline Story

Joe Toy finds that outreach in Ocean City, Maryland, is a terrific place to share Christ. During the days of COVID-19, outreach venues such as the Kentucky Derby and the Indy 500 were canceled, but the Maryland outreach was still on. His team during that time consisted of men from Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and North Carolina. Each day, they preached, witnessed, and passed out tracts. Well over 3,000 tracts were

distributed in five days. At first, Joe wondered whether there would be crowds; if so, would they want to talk or keep their distance? Would people receive gospel tracts? To his surprise, as they hit the boardwalk on Sunday night, the place was packed with people. It was as if COVID-19 were ancient history! People were not social distancing, and 90% were not wearing masks. Joe's team set up the sketchboard to proclaim the gospel. A man in a wheelchair listened to the preaching and engaged in conversation with one of Joe's coworkers, Mark Johnson. He confessed to drifting away from God and began to cry. Before he left, he thanked the team for being out there and even prayed for them. Later that night, a young man named Todd said, "I was meant to talk to you. Thanks." A few minutes later, Joe was engaged in conversation with a couple. The woman told him that she appreciated his non-antagonistic approach, as others she had talked to from other groups had actually been cruel. The team experienced a genuine openness in the people to converse about spiritual matters.



CARMIÑA & PAUL ADAMS

Paul Adams was introduced to Open Air Campaigners through Forcey Bible Church in Washington, DC, on July 4, 1989. Paul and his wife, Carmiña, took the OAC Sketchboard Evangelism Training and Candidate School and came on staff in 1996, working in our Baltimore-Washington branch, which, at that time, included, among others, co-worker John Plasterer and his wife, Cathy, who were with us from 1993 to 1998. Paul's service in the Marine Corps also prepared him for ministry on the front lines of evangelism.

He has been involved in leading youth mission teams for over 35 years, equipping and training churches in evangelism, teaching, and preaching as a guest on Sunday mornings, and leading Sunday school classes. In addition, Paul served as our director in the Baltimore-Washington branch for several years, until 2011, when he was appointed evangelist-at-large. This position fulfilled a long-time desire to be involved in teaching and training in a focused way.

Paul and Carmiña moved to the Richmond, Virginia, area in 2017 and currently live there. From this base, Paul assists our field director in visiting and encouraging OAC staff, helping branches with special outreach initiatives and training, identifying potential evangelists in various cities, equipping them, and encouraging individuals to consider a staff position with OAC. He also helps establish branches in new locations.

Frontline Story

God has used both Paul and Carmiña in the United States and in various places overseas, including Romania, Albania, England, and Finland. Two days after returning from one of their trips to Albania, a team of volunteers from a local church in Maryland



PAUL ADAMS CONDUCTING PARK MINISTRY

came to assist Paul in starting the first OAC ministry for children in the Richmond, Virginia, area. During the week of ministry in a challenging neighborhood, team members were able to provide snacks, play games, give prizes, and, most importantly, share the gospel with children

at two different club locations. It was a tremendous blessing to witness the team grow in courage, moving from fear of entering a neighborhood where spent gun casings littered the ground to confidently sharing the gospel and playing with the kids, even giving them piggyback rides all around the area. This experience served as a public testimony to the grace, goodness, and power of God.

Doris Johnson was on staff on two different occasions. Both of her times with us were located in our New York-New Jersey branch. Although the majority of her ministry was administrative in nature, she did join our open-air teams from time to time. After serving with us for several years the first time, the Lord led her back to OAC in 1989, when she joined us as an associate staff person. She worked for Art Williams in his office in the New York-New Jersey branch and also joined the teams for outreach ministry as she was able.



DORIS JOHNSON

THE DAYS OF CHALLENGE - Composed by Russ Hodder

We must now pause and look at a trying time in the history of OAC here in the United States. The history of Open Air Campaigners has, in general, embraced a number of denominational backgrounds, reflected in the makeup of our staff members. Our ministry is united by a basic doctrinal statement that all can agree on, which has historically and wisely avoided denominational



USA STAFF - 1983

labels that could be cultural rather than Bible-based. When Jim Duffecy was alive, he successfully kept the ministry free of potential problems, including disagreements and strife over non-essential doctrinal issues.

Our USA leadership on the board level during the early 1990s felt that, for the work here in the States to grow, we could not be as broad-based as we had been in the past, but needed to side with the independent fundamentalist side of the Christian spectrum and separate ourselves from all other broad-based thinking. During these days, board members were selected by the US director in a self-perpetuating management style. There came a time when some immediate measures were taken to remove staff who disagreed with this philosophy. A written directive was sent to all USA staff, stating that if any could not abide by these guidelines, their "...immediate resignation was demanded." The American staff were deeply concerned by these events.

David Wilson separated from the USA work and established a separate organization, Open Air Campaigners, Overseas Ministries, which was renamed Worldwide Proclamation in 2016. In a short time, about one-half of the USA staff resigned. Some staff put themselves under the authority of the Overseas Ministries, while others eventually joined another mission board or formed their own. Those who remained with OAC-USA tried to reason with the board, but at this time, there were no staff members on the board, except the director. This writer suggested at a staff conference that two staff members be appointed as non-voting members of the board to represent staff interests. Such staff members would have the power to address any board directive

they felt went against staff interests. Surprisingly, the board allowed this to happen, revisited the separation directive, and made revisions that were more acceptable to the staff. This took place at the OAC-USA staff conference in Boston, February 1990. However, as time went by, it became increasingly clear that our staff were not able, in good conscience, to follow the continuing dictates of the existing board of directors. The two individuals representing our staff on the board continued dialogue with the leadership. At a December 10, 1990, board meeting, the US director and entire board resigned, agreeing to serve as caretakers of the work until March 18, at which time new leadership would be put in place by current staff.

The March 1991 meeting was held at Liebenzell Mission and Conference Center in New Jersey. This writer was one of the two staff representatives present. The staff and the proposed new board members were outside the meeting room awaiting the anticipated leadership change. When the old board stepped out, and the new board stepped in, only a few minutes were available to conduct the business at hand. John Cutlip, our administrator, had everything ready to go on paper. The new board was quickly elected, and the latest guidelines were voted on without delay. It was 5 p.m., and we had made our deadline! Our remaining staff were informed and, with many tears of joy, rejoiced over what had happened. Open Air Campaigners was now in the hands of new leadership; we could move ahead with confidence.

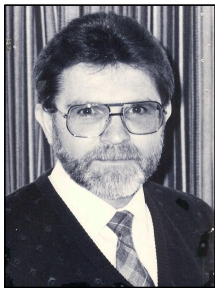
Our struggles took a severe toll on several staff members, but the mission in the United States had survived. We were ready to rebuild our mission and expand again. It should be emphasized that no one on either side of this issue was “evil.” We were dealing with a difference in the ministry's philosophy and management style. The majority of our staff felt that the old board's exclusive approach was incompatible with a ministry like ours, which sought to be international and interdenominational in scope rather than narrow and selective. There was also agreement among most of our staff that OAC leadership should be appointed by a majority vote of the current staff and board membership, rather than being self-perpetuating.

The positive side of this challenging time was that most staff who left to form new organizations continue to this day. One of these missions, Bible Open Air Mission (BOAM), was founded by the former US director and has a broad-based international scope. Fred Kornis founded “Heartland International Ministries,” which also has a global outreach in evangelism and helps ministries. Sam Frey joined Word of Life in Upstate New York and, to this day, is their evangelism ministries coordinator, active in ongoing open-air evangelism and in training other believers to do the same in about 80 towns and cities here in the US and 14 nations worldwide. The Ezekiel Project, founded by Chris Schroeder and headquartered in Michigan, is working in evangelism training

among the Brethren Assemblies. Joe Toy, now based in North Carolina, founded Open Air Ministries. This ministry conducts open-air evangelism and trains people to share their faith in the Raleigh area and in several states, including outreach at Mardi Gras, sporting events, and beach ministry in Maryland and South Carolina.

THE DAYS OF COHESION

With the “time of testing” over, OAC-USA was ready to heal, unite, and expand the ministry into new fields. If all this were to succeed, a key ingredient would be new leadership with a vision and God’s blessing to move us forward as a unified body. We are grateful to God that He has led several such leaders our way. The members listed below have served at some point over the past 30 years. Our new policy states that a majority vote of current staff elects board members, who may serve no more than six consecutive years, after which they must rotate off for at least one year. This system of electing and rotating encourages new members to join us. It curbs the tendency for leadership to serve for many years without a break, thereby becoming ingrained and resistant to change. Our initial new board chairman was Rex Trent, whose love for OAC and heartbeat for open-air evangelism were one with ours and continue to this day.



REX TRENT

Rex reports, “In 1980, my wife, Carol, and I were serving as youth leaders at a church plant located in the Germantown-Roxborough neighborhoods of Philadelphia. There, we became friends with Bob and Betty Ewerth, as well as their sons, Bob and George. Now, George was young, dashing, and handsome, and Bob, Jr., well, Bob was a missionary with Open Air Campaigners! I remember Bob speaking at our church service and being impressed with his message. Afterward, he spoke to me about helping them (Bob and Dennis King) with a joint OAC-CEF children’s program at the East Falls Schuylkill Project. At the time, the OAC Philadelphia office was located at the Roxborough Baptist Church. I would visit on occasion to help set up their computer system and just to visit with the rest of the staff, Karen Boorse and Joe Toy. Perhaps a year later, Bob put together a Philadelphia branch committee. Ted Johnson and I were both asked to serve. I continued as a layperson in this capacity until 1990, when I was invited to join the OAC-USA board of directors. Including required sabbaticals, I remained on the board, serving for the next 30 years (rotating off and on as policy required). After this, I stepped down because I felt that the leadership team needed some new, younger blood better suited to deal with the upcoming issues of social media, as I was dealing with my ongoing atrial fibrillation.”



LARRY BAKER

Larry Baker is also well acquainted with OAC. His connection with us started when he was a teenager. Larry and California staff man, Russ Hodder, became friends in high school and later attended Ventura College. Larry enlisted in the Navy Reserve program, serving on the USS Indianapolis, a communications ship. Russ served in the Army. Interestingly enough, one morning, Russ looked out from his bunker in Vietnam and saw Larry's ship just off the coast! After their military service, both returned to Southern California and have been lifelong friends ever since. Larry's background and experience in banking and as a small business owner have also been quite valuable for OAC. Larry currently lives in the Simi Valley in Southern California.

David Bulkley learned about OAC through Karen Boorse (who later married Chris Williams). Karen and David's wife, Mary, worked together to minister to Cambodian and Vietnamese children in Philadelphia. David worked for 28 years as an attorney at Sunoco Corporation, earning his degree from Villanova University School of Law. We are thankful not only for David's legal background and financial experience but also for his ministry in marriage counseling and conflict management.



DAVID BULKLEY



DANA EDWARDS

Dana Edwards learned about our mission from staff member Eric Briscoe in the Boston area. Eric has known Dana for most of his life; they attended the same local church and served together on the elder board. Dana also, at times, went with Eric into the open air to conduct ministry and was very familiar with the heartbeat of our mission. Dana was employed by Bose, which manufactured audio equipment, and was able to obtain a 50% discount on sound systems for our staff, not only here in the States but also for David Proaño to use in our OAC Ecuador outreach. He rotated onto our board for a term of service with us in the late 1990s.

Tom Garcia's vocation was as a Senior Marketing Representative for the Utica National Insurance Company in the Richmond, Virginia, area. He found out about OAC through his pastor, who put him in touch with our Boston branch. Tom participated in our Sketchboard Evangelism Training in 1998 and was acquainted with staff members Eric Briscoe, Gordon Loop, Aaron Wentz, and Sue MacNeil before serving on the board.



TOM GARCIA



MATT HARVEY

Matt Harvey spent the summer of 1988 in Philadelphia training with Bob Ewerth, Joe Toy, and Karen Boorse. He also worked closely with Gordon Loop and received additional training from Paul Adams. His vocational training and experience have included designing, implementing, and administering computer networks for the US government. We are blessed to have Matt contributing in a significant way through the years to many projects which helped advance our work. He currently serves as vice-chairman of our national board.

Hugh Holmes and his wife, Susan, live in Maryland. He received his education from Virginia State University and Moody Bible Institute. His working career has included serving as associate pastor and outreach director. He currently works for the US Department of Education as an auditor. Hugh grew up in the church and made a confession of faith at the age of 12. He took our Sketchboard Evangelism Training in 2002 at Lancaster Bible College and has been preaching in the open air for over 20 years here in the US and abroad. He has served OAC in the past as a local branch committeeman and currently serves on the local committee of Child Evangelism Fellowship of Anne Arundel and Prince George County. Hugh and Susan have been active members in their local church through the years, during which Hugh has used his gifts of evangelism, shepherding, preaching, and teaching.



HUGH HOLMES



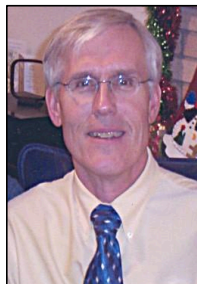
GREGG HUNTER

As a student at Liberty University in Virginia, Gregg Hunter found out about Open Air Campaigners. He volunteered with us as a team member for about four years, served on our Miami spring break outreach team for three years, and even joined our staff as an evangelist in the Baltimore branch in 2010 for a couple of years. God called him to pastor a local church in 2013. As a former OAC staff member and as a pastor, Gregg has given us good counsel on our board, and we appreciate his ongoing interest in and love for this open-air ministry. He currently serves as chairman of our national board.

Bill Kabasenche learned about OAC through his staff position at Lancaster Bible College (LBC). He ministered as the director of the Christian service there. He heard firsthand the positive effects of open-air evangelism on the students in the evangelism classes at LBC. Bill's deep commitment to open-air evangelism and his connections at the college were used by the Lord to help this ministry immensely in many ways through the years. Our annual one-week Sketchboard Evangelism Training seminars became an ongoing activity on that campus, and students were assigned open-air outreach ministries throughout the week. Bill's influence was also instrumental in hosting our OAC staff conferences, leadership meetings, and even an OAC International conference in 2004 on the LBC campus.



BILL KABASENCHE



**MIKE
MALSZYCKI**

Through the years, Mike Malszycki has been on staff with us as an evangelist, served as a local branch committee man, and also as a national board member. When on staff, he and his wife, Cindy, ministered in the Minneapolis-St. Paul branch for several years. In 2016, God opened the doors for Mike to minister in Cuba, where he taught a short course called "The Story of God." It was quite a week: teaching, visiting with people from the churches, and even being questioned by Cuban authorities. Mike reports that he discovered the church alive and growing from its decimation in the 1959 revolution. A remnant of believers faithfully carried on since those difficult days, and as a result, the church is now exploding in numbers. Home churches are allowed, and they are quite active and growing. Cuba is not just seeing Christians by addition; the numbers are increasing by multiplication! The people of Cuba and the church still have a way to go before they are free of the many difficulties they face, but they are well on their way, and God is blessing them greatly. We are thankful that God used Mike as part of this blessing. Mike continues to be a good friend of Open Air Campaigners. He and Cindy currently live in Iowa.

Like David Wilson, Ed Martin has had a long-term association with OAC as a former evangelist and branch director since the early days of our history here in America. His intimate knowledge of our mission, history, and mode of operation through the years, coupled with his training and experience in Christian counseling, made him a board member who truly understood the daily ministry needs of our staff. Ed and his wife, Joyce, currently live in Tennessee.



ED MARTIN



MATT MARTIN

Matt Martin is a business owner in Michigan. He and his wife, Vicki, know of us through OAC Michigan director Brian Harmon and his wife, Kimberlee. He was saved at an early age and has been very active in his local church, using his gifts of leadership, teaching, preaching, and pastoral ministry. Matt's heart for this ministry and desire to enable our evangelists to preach the gospel to the lost and mobilize the church have brought about several helpful tools for our staff.

Scott Pope is a graduate of Liberty University. He and his wife, Rhonda, participated in our Sketchboard Evangelism Training at Washington Bible College and interned with Paul Adams and Zane Dempsie in Ocean City, Maryland, for a week. They both gained experience in open-air evangelism by being staff members with us for about a year. This time with us, coupled with his self-employed experience, provided Scott with valuable insight that God used during his term of service as a board member.



SCOTT POPE



RANDY RIDDLE

Randy Riddle is a former Exxon Corporation Marketing Representative who learned about OAC through Bron Carlisle while a student at Columbia Biblical Seminary in South Carolina. He served as an OAC evangelist in South Carolina from 1980 to 1983 and as an associate evangelist from 1983 to 2020. The Lord then led him to minister full-time as a pastor, but he continued to be involved on our board as his schedule allowed.

Bob Rennie is a friend of long-time staff member, Russ Hodder. When Russ was our Los Angeles branch director, Bob served on the local branch committee for many years. His background in OAC on the local level served him well as he came on board to help us on the national leadership level. His many years of work as an IRS agent were also quite helpful to us as an organization.



BOB RENNIE



**JONATHAN
SHADER**

Jonathan Shader discovered OAC soon after moving to Orange County, California, in 2008. Our team was ministering at Birch Street, and Jonathan was immediately captivated by the concept of open-air evangelism. He was trained by Russ Hodder to preach in the open air. Jonathan has a diverse professional background, including working as a certified public accountant. A trip to Nigeria, Africa, piqued his interest in medical missions and international evangelism. He has since earned his medical degree, set up a practice in Arizona,

having completed his residency training in ophthalmology (eye surgery) at The Medical College of Georgia, Augusta University. He has undertaken medical and evangelism missions in Uganda, Africa, and plans to continue preaching in the open air whenever possible and ministering in medical missions to developing countries. He and his wife, Rachelle, have two children.

Dan is on the teaching/conducting staff at Liberty University and is a music minister, worship leader, orchestra director, and pianist. He has performed for 45 years as a free-lance pianist (soloist and accompanist), accordionist, and conductor in various venues. Dan found out about us while a student at Moody Bible Institute in 1972-1973, when he would visit Rush Street with a team periodically on weekends. He reconnected with us and served as our on-campus recruiter for Liberty students interested in open-air ministry. Dan, his wife, Gloria, and daughter, Hannah, have occasionally accompanied some teams to the Ocean City boardwalks (New Jersey and Maryland), Boston, New York, Baltimore and Silver Spring. He and his family live in Lynchburg, Virginia.



DAN SUTTLES



JOE TOY

Joe Toy was on staff with us in the Philadelphia area. Although he left OAC to form a separate evangelistic organization, Open Air Ministries, during our days of challenge, he continues to love this ministry and our staff. His background as an accountant, experience as an evangelist, and knowledge of OAC as a staff member make him a valuable asset to our leadership team.

Having learned about OAC through Bob Ewerth, Dave Trout and his wife, Janel, have worked full-time as missionaries at multiple Christian camps for over 25 years. Before coming on our board, Dave assisted us by hosting many leadership meetings and staff conferences at Mt. Gilead Camp and Conference Center, where he served as director for several years. This camp setting in the beautiful Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania was an ideal meeting place for us, as it was located near our Central Services office. It provided a quiet, relaxing atmosphere for conducting various OAC conferences and meetings. Dave currently serves as director of advancement at Spruce Lake Camp and Conference Center in Monroe County, Pennsylvania.



DAVE TROUT

Even though it's good to have new leadership with a fresh vision, it's equally important to have the stability provided by seasoned leadership, which is precisely what we have in David Wilson. David served for a time on our new board and provided insight on issues based on first-hand OAC knowledge and a track record of open-air ministry experience.



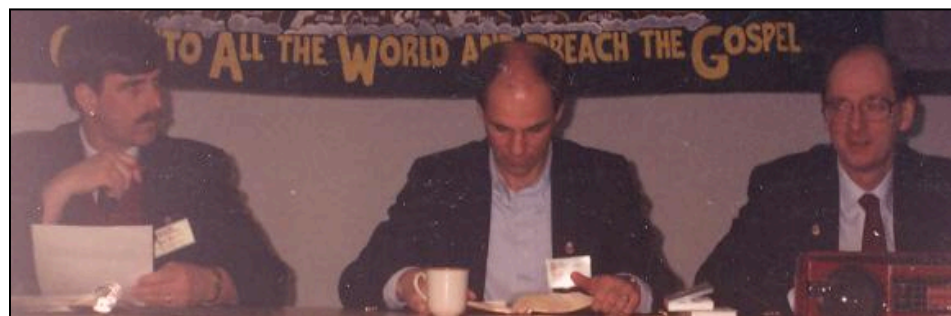
DAVID WILSON

We are grateful to God for the outstanding leadership provided by His good hand and look forward to the days ahead as the Lord continues to add new members who have a love for Him and a concern for our staff. It is good to have accountability as Christians in our personal lives. Our new OAC leadership acknowledged that it is equally important to have responsibility as a non-profit organization. With this in mind, the new leadership of OAC-USA continued our membership with the Association of North American Missions, which began in 1983. This accountability group has a code of ethics that member



missions are to follow to maximize their effectiveness. The four core values include accountability to God and each other, being connected with those who understand and encourage our ministry life, growing through resources and relationships, and being stretched to consider new ministry opportunities. We remained members in good standing with ANAM for many years until a firm alternative accountability network was established.

With a new board in place to establish policy for our USA work, a management team was activated to carry out the day-to-day leadership tasks. This team was composed of Bob Ewerth in Philadelphia (Training Director), Eric Briscoe in Boston (Field Director), and John Cutlip in New Jersey (Central Services Director). It was now time for our days of cohesion to continue as we looked to God for additional staff of His choosing. The following section recounts how He brought this about.



BOB EWERTH
(Left)

ERIC BRISCOE
(Center)

JOHN CUTLIP
(Right)



SHOSHANNA & KURT SCHAFLI

Kurt Schafli was saved during the Christmas season in 1975 at the age of 21. He was attending the first European Youth Conference for Missions in Lausanne, Switzerland, and the following week, he felt God calling him into full-time service. Instead of remaining in banking, his field of training and expertise, he went to England, studied language, and took courses at Capernwray Bible School and London Bible College. During this time, he married Shoshanah, and they helped out at the House of Rest, a Christian guest house, as interim wardens.

They also visited a Kibbutz in Israel, assisted farmers, worked in mission offices, and helped prepare for the 1980 Second European Youth Conference for Missions.

It was during this time at the youth conference that God called them into full-time service with OAC. God also used Kurt's language skills at the conference to guide them into OAC work, translating from English into German and French simultaneously. This answered Kurt's prayer that he would join a mission that wanted to use ALL of his God-given talents. Three years later, after OAC training in Germany and England, he was allowed to represent OAC at the third European Youth Conference for Missions.

Opening up OAC Switzerland in 1985 allowed Kurt to use all his gifts, including bookkeeping and developing new ideas that needed to be adapted to the Swiss culture. In 1991, Kurt and Shoshanah, along with their three children, Lukas, Rebekka, and Ephriam, were seconded to OAC-USA, where they began ministering to Native Americans in Wyoming. In 2003, Paul and Karen Dodson came on staff for a short time and assisted in the Wyoming ministry. Shoshanah was promoted to heaven in 2022. As of this writing, there are eight Schafli grandchildren, Sayde, Heidi, Nadiyah, Isaac, Samuel, Elliot, Felix, and Clara, and one great-grandchild, Adonis Micah.



It has been over 34 years since the Schaflis came to America. Much ministry has occurred in prisons and in the open air of Fremont County and the Wind River Indian Reservation, where they have lived. As a result of the COVID-19 days, with the help of Allen Peil, some house churches were established. Many of those attending these house churches have been reached through the Sonshine Clubs and/or Bible Camps started by Kurt and his team. Many house church members now bring their children to the meetings. The homeless outreach continues, which Kurt calls 'Street Church.' For an extended account of Kurt's ministry, see chapter 40, which describes the history of OAC Switzerland.

Frontline Story

Kurt Schaflis conducts a variety of gospel outreach ministries. One particular day, he was at a park where some young folks were playing basketball. Once the game was over, the kids sat down and watched as Kurt presented a clear gospel sketchboard message. One of the oldest boys helped read Bible passages, and at the end of the meeting, everyone received a Bible. Additional literature was also available for those who already owned a Bible. What a blessing it is to reach non-churched young people in the communities and neighborhoods in this way, where our OAC staff minister regularly. Some of these kids have never had the gospel explained to them before. Kurt also has the opportunity to minister in group homes where young people in his area who get into trouble are sent. He also conducts Bible Camps and other organized meetings geared toward evangelism and discipleship.

Gordon Loop learned about our mission as a student at Word of Life Bible Institute in Upstate New York. He participated in our Sketchboard Evangelism Training and joined our Boston team on staff in 1992. In 2000, Gordon transitioned to our Baltimore branch. During this period in OAC Baltimore's history, Rick Elder and Chad Foor briefly ministered with us. Chad was looking through the links on Ray Comfort's Living Waters website in 2005 and came across our OAC website. From that contact, he felt the call of God to apply for a short-term summer of service with us. He applied and was able to serve from June through July of that year. Gordon married Beth-Eden, and God blessed



BETH-EDEN & GORDON LOOP

them with three children, Micayla, Justin, and Wesley. In 2007, the Lord led the Loops to leave OAC and attend seminary for further Bible training. After graduating in 2014, he served as senior pastor for five years at Calvary Baptist Church in Dedham, Massachusetts. His experience as a former OAC staff member and in pastoral ministry prepared him to serve on our board of directors for a couple of terms. Gordon and Beth-Eden currently live in North Carolina.