

Back in the Bush Mission Letter #32007

Greetings to all,

We are all well and working hard.

The Curran Lutheran Hospital job is coming along fine. All the trusses are built and are up on the walls. By Monday all the metal roofing should be in place. The entire hospital will be under roof! Praise God!! We will be totally finishing [electrical, plumbing, and painting] the pediatric wing, administration wing, short stay building, and isolation room. This is much more than I had planned. You can always tell when God's hand is at work.

We temporarily do not have e-mail service back at Curran so my mission letters will come when I can. I am sending this letter out from Phebe Hospital.

I have taken a few days off from the project at Curran and I am at Phebe Hospital for a few days working on other projects. I am doing some information gathering on orphanages in the Phebe area. Friday Butch, Jim and I did a first time visit to Felita Children's Orphanage off the coal tar just outside Sugar Hill. I am looking at additional orphanages for possible recipients of our small help. With minimal assistance coming to orphanages there is a great need for additional support. Friday Butch, Jim, and I also made a visit to Children's Ministry Orphanage in Balama who, as funds are available, we have been providing small help for a number of years.

As 52 children watched clapping and yelling, I received such a wonderful greeting from Korpo at Children's Ministry. As she saw me getting out of our vehicle, this usually reserved lady came running across the ground and put her arms around me squeezing me and almost taking me to the ground. Struggling to keep both of us from falling into the dirt, I am thinking if only Korpo had played defense for the Eagles! OK -- different story!

It is so cool to go back year after year and see how the kids have grown. They feel very comfortable around the white people now. It is really neat to know they are lifting us up in prayer daily.

I have received numerous donations to provide help from friends, family, my home church (Vinemont Lutheran Church), and Vinemont's youth group. After assessing their greatest needs, our help this year will be metal roofing for an additional classroom and new cook house, a pedal sewing machine so Korpo can mend the children's clothing and teach sewing to the older students, plastic cups, bowls, buckets, wash tubs, bags of rice and flour, cement to rid the dirt floor in their house, farming tools so they can plant their garden and the list goes on!!

Members from Vinemont Lutheran Church have given shoe box presents and I should have enough presents to provide all the children at Children's Ministry Orphanage a gift. I am excited.....It will be a special day!!!

Next week I will also be training the Tuition Sponsorship Program [TSP] people here on a new information gathering system. As the program continues to grow we need to keep ourselves efficient at the same time reducing work load. More on the new TSP developments in my next letter.

One quick story before I go. Probably everyone has heard the story of the efficient carpenter who cut off a piece of wood 3 times and it was still too short; well last week our carpenters at Curran were putting extensions on a set of trusses to allow the rain water to reach the gutter. It was agreed on that we should add 12 inches and assuring myself it was understood, I walked away only to come back later and found they had only made them 8 inches. Reprimanding them for not following my instructions, one of my workers proudly said " don't worry, we will just cut it off"

With that in mind please continue to pray for productivity and safety in bringing Curran back to useful service.

And pray for Edna Johnson, ELCA volunteer missionary to Curran, and Timothy Clea, administrator at Curran, providing them the desired equipment and supplies to bring the now finished areas back to a functioning hospital.

One of the most wonderful thrills this year was to walk into the outpatient department and see patients waiting their turn with the nurse and to walk into the lab, and see people busy peering into microscopes where a year ago no roof was, snakes were in control, and weeds were growing out of the floor. God is good!!

In His service, gary