

01-11-2010

Greetings to all,

It has been a busy 4 weeks since Deb and I left the States. As Deb mentioned in our last mission letter, we celebrated Christmas with Edna Johnson, an ELCA missionary to Curran Hospital. It was a wonderful time to reflect on the real meaning of Christmas but sad to be so far from loved ones back in the states. Included in this e-mail is Edna's last mission letter.

We have named our tent city at Day Memorial Church the Jerry Freeze Memorial Camp Site. It is only fitting as Jerry was active in the renovation planning of Day and so much wanted to be a part of the on site renovation work but the Lord took Jerry home Dec. 8th. We definitely miss him, but can imagine the Lord must have a special project for him.

Jan.6th Sandy Nelson and Arthur Erickson joined our team helping to prepare the Day Memorial Church site for the larger crew arriving in a few days. Carl Dierksheide, Catie May, Mike Edwards, Carolyn Coy, Bud and Joyce Walters will join the team at Day on Jan. 12th. We will be 10 missionaries sleeping in tents. Even though our second container has not reached us yet we are doing fine and moving ahead with our work.

Carl, Bud, Arthur, and Mike will be working on the renovation of Day Memorial Church.

Catie, Carolyn, and Sandy will be conducting teacher training workshops for the schools in this area.

Deb will get them organized before we leave Day. Last but not least, Joyce will be feeding the crew and taking care of any medical needs.

My work at Day was to build a 13 X 30 warehouse building for the renovation projects use and to set up the camp site with its entire infrastructure. One very neat thing about the building we built is that after the project is finished it will be the first section of the new Emma V. Day Memorial School.

Deb's work here, along with helping me, was to organize the teacher training workshops conducted here.

Deb and my work is nearly done here at Day, Praise God, and by Thursday or Friday we will be moving on to our next project about 3 hours away in a small village called Sanoyea.

Sleeping in tents back in the bush has been a great experience. Deb, who has never slept in a tent before, has been a real trooper and even enjoys her camping adventure. I woke up a few nights ago to the symphony of jungle night time sounds. Between chirping crickets, bellowing frogs, an occasional bird song, and the rush of the St Paul river rapids in the background, it is quite a song the jungle plays when sun go. I sat on the edge of our bed looking out the screened side of our tent and it was so cool to see the moon light illuminating the jungle trees dancing to God's symphony of sounds. Looking out the side of my tent was like watching a giant big screen TV with this tranquil production unfolding before us. God's creation is a magnificent masterpiece. We thank God for this experience.

As we continue our work, please pray that the second container would reach us tomorrow as predicted, and pray for safety and productivity in our work, both teaching and building. Pray we touch lives as our brothers and sisters touch ours.

In His service  
gary & deb