

January 22, 2013

Greetings to all,

We are all fine and working plenty hard. Our time in Liberia for 2013 is growing short as thankfully our list of “must do’s” is also growing shorter. This has been a trying trip as the number of people begging for tuition support continues to grow.

Deb and I recorded over 200 new student’s names for the 2014 waiting list. They will be the first accepted into the tuition sponsorship program (TSP) in 2014 providing we have enough interest in sponsorships. As not to disappoint any young person, we limit the number taken for the waiting list.

Just outside the school classroom where we do our work there was a large group of parents who couldn’t understand that we only take so many new students each year and were loudly expressing their disappointment and discontent. Our Liberian TSP team made sure the parents understood the work of the TSP and disbursed uneventfully. Deb thought a “riot” was a better description but really it’s just another day in Liberia!

We are nearly finished recording the student info and picture taking for the 2013/2014 school year. The first couple days we were recording nearly 400 students a day. Ed, Hanna, Sandy, Deb and I along with our Liberian helpers were really working to keep up with the crowd!!

Friday we received some shocking news. A student was returning home by motorcycle and was involved in an accident. She was taken to the ER at Phebe Hospital but did not survive. We are grieving for the family’s loss. With so many motorcycle taxis weaving in and out of traffic, this is a stark reminder of the danger on the roads in Liberia.

Christy Edwards-Running and friends from NJ collected a suitcase full of Bibles for us to carry to Liberia. These precious books will be given to Phebe Community Lutheran School and gifted to students as a reward for special achievements.

Sandy, Deb and I paid a visit to the school building project of Belefanaï Lutheran School. This 12 classroom facility is coming along fine and we will post some pictures on our web site in the near future. We will also post some pictures from the construction at Bishop Main Lutheran School.

Sadly one memory still keeps replaying in my mind. Two young mothers met me on our porch as I was headed out. They both asked for our help to pay their children’s school fees. I explained, as I have done so many times, we can only take so many children each year and we have no room this year. You must wait until next year. The one mother clasped her hands in prayer and the second fell to her knees in front of me both loudly appealing for help for their children. No easy job. This will never go away. All we can do is give it to the Lord and do as much as we can.

Please continue to pray for us. Pray for our wisdom and Christ like manner in dealing with all. Pray for our team as we wind down and start our trip home.

In His service
gary & deb