

ghana rural integrated development GRID newsletter

December 10, 2004

Dear GRID Support Team,

Thank you for the prayers on behalf of the six of us who left on Nov.11th for our project site in the Deg area. How I wish each one of you could have been with us. I think I can speak for each one when I say we were so blessed by these wonderful people and we are filled with a new zeal for this important work. I am just going to try and hit the highlights for you. We were met at the airport in Accra by our NEA Board Member, Dr Zakaria, Chief Surgeon at the Accra Hospital and Sam Adjetey who hastened our way through Customs, Baggage etc. After about a nine hour drive from the city of Accra to the Deg area in the North, we beheld in amazement the changes and improvements that had taken place. The whole of the north is touched and helped by this work. Our hearts overflowed with thanksgiving to God for the wisdom He imparted to our Director, David Mensah and his wife Brenda, to make all of this possible. First, let me tell you about the Aquaculture program. Located on our site is the Research Station and a very large cement pond where the fish are released when large enough. We had the honour of spending time with the man in charge of this work, Dr Mark Frimpong - a very godly man educated in Europe and the USA (Mississippi). It is far more than just a fish hatchery. The main fish varieties he is working with is the tilapia and catfish. Pray for him as he continues doing research, which if successful will have a profound effect on the entire country and beyond. Our cattle herd, ostrich and emu programs are going ahead so well. We are building up numbers with our breeding grasscutters (they look like a woodchuck) and it will almost take two years to reach capacity status. Grasscutters have litters of 8 when they reproduce. As in all aspects of our work it takes time and education of the people to make this a success. Dr. David has ongoing success in stopping the use of DDT in their fishing practices. Because of the DDT fishing many babies were born with deformities, etc. The site nursery was alive with teak trees, pepper trees, papaya, mango, eggplant, etc. The warehouse at Carpenter is just about filled with bags of peanuts and bags of seeds for the next growing season, from our Women's Co-ops.

God is so good.

We had the opportunity to see the new school and headmaster's home that was built in Carpenter just after our 2001 visit. You can catch a better glimpse of our work by the new pictures that will be posted on our website www.grid-nea.com. Five of the Chiefs (one being the Paramount Chief) are now Christians. This is so exciting.

The Carpenter Chief is one of them. His new name is Solomon. Continue to pray for David as he works on a daily basis with the Chiefs throughout the area.

Friday, the day of the Commissioning of the Project sites dawned sunny and hot. Although we were disappointed that the President of Ghana was unable to be there, yet many people had opportunity to see the work. The Minister of Rural Development and the Minister of Education were replacements for the President. We were impressed by the newly appointed Canadian High Commissioner, Mr Donald Bobiash, born and brought up on a farm in Saskatchewan. With his background, he really understood what was happening in the surrounding area because of this project. It was a great honour to be able to shake hands with the man who perhaps was the reason that the Commissioning Day was possible. His name is C.K. Konadu - the man who picked David from the streets of Tamale, embraced him, called him "brother" and taught him the Bible and supervised David's spiritual growth. He was also his Math teacher at the Secondary School in Tamale and his "running trainer".

(Story available from our office in the book titled: Kwabena-An African Boy's Journey of Faith).

Our Canadian Chairman, Rev. Douglas Porter, Dr. David Mensah and others, had the honour of addressing the several thousands gathered. David and Brenda received well earned recognition as the Chiefs "enstooled" them and made David an Honorary Chief.

On Sunday afternoon, we again looked in awe at the lovely new church in Bamboi, commissioned on that day. The church was filled to capacity and overflowed to the outside. How happy we all were. First we praised the Lord with song and clapping and dancing. Two of our team were overtaken by heat and had to leave. The commissioning sermon was prepared by Chairman Doug, taken from Isaiah 7, called "Challenged and Commissioned". Following the sermon there was a complete surprise as David asked me to come forward to make a presentation to the young pastor of the church, Pastor Jacob. Through tears I had the honour and privilege of presenting Pastor Jacob with a new motorcycle and helmet, in loving memory of our dear son, Pastor David, who went to be with the Lord on the past Easter Sunday morning. The church at Bamboi had prayed around the clock for David, some even sleeping in the church. The men also, went into the bush and fasted for three days for his healing. God chose to give him the perfect healing and took David to be with Him.

We appreciated those prayers so much and we thank all of you who contributed to GRID in his memory. He would have loved that "motorcycle" presentation to Pastor Jacob. The day's blessings were not yet ended. We proceeded from the service to the banks of the Black Volta river where a Muslim man and his wife and four others testified to God's love and power in their lives as they were baptized by Pastor Jacob and Peter, rising to newness of life in Christ.

In closing I want to tell you about the largest, most forceful powerhouse, situated on the Carpenter site in a large gazebo. It is better than our solar power, our agricultural equipment, our man power. It is the power of PRAYER that ascends to God each morning about 6:30am from that gazebo. Each and every morning the entire staff at the compound, some of their wives and children, meet together to begin each new day.

They sing and testify and then are led by David or our Site Manager Noah (our Canadian Chairman also had that privilege one morning) or one of the other who read a scripture portion and then explained its meaning in our lives today. How blessed we were on those mornings. It seemed like being on the "edge of Heaven".

As we approach the celebration of the birth of Jesus, I pray that we might start each new day by inviting the Lord to come into the gazebo of our hearts and be our guide. I would also encourage you to give a gift to Jesus this Christmas, and while we know there is really nothing we can offer as a material gift to Him, yet we can give to those in need - the fatherless, the orphans....and in so doing, we give our gift to Him.

God bless you and strengthen you in this work we do together.

In Christian love,

Ella J. Porter

Public Relations

"He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" - Romans 8:32

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