

Newsletter # 3 – November 1, 2013

First of all, bear with me! I know the newsletter looks like it's really long, but it's mostly pictures. It's been an interesting month, that's for sure! If you remember the last time I wrote to you I told you I'd be attending a New Testament dedication for the Oku people near Bamenda, Cameroon. It was quite a celebration, and getting there was a chore! The roads here are terrible, potholes (we call them "vehicle launchers") lurk around every corner and only the most seasoned of drivers can navigate them. Not to mention that the roads are mostly dirt so sometimes it's more a matter of finding the "best" part of the pothole to run over; with traffic coming on the opposite side you sometimes have no choice. So, to say the least, travel is slow around here. The trip to visit the Oku people was very exciting! First, we navigated a mountain road and the vehicle in front of us (also full of Wycliffe workers) kept overheating. So, eventually we left that vehicle parked on the side of the road and just made room for our friends in the rest of the caravan.

I saw some very interesting sights on the way there, but out of respect for the culture I didn't take pictures. There is a general belief that when an American takes a picture of you they are going to try and make money off of it, much like National Geographic did several years ago. The problem is the people in those pictures didn't really see any of the money the magazine made. So... you can see how that would have created a problem. And let's put it into perspective - would you want a foreigner coming to your neighborhood, taking pictures of your house, your land, and your way of life and then make money off of it, while you don't see a dime? All that to say I didn't get a whole lot of pictures of people. But I can tell you that one of the funniest things I witnessed was two guys on a motorcycle with a GOAT in between them. That's right ladies and gentlemen, a live goat. And the goat was just as calm as could be too. Motorcycles are a common mode of transportation around here; I've seen as many as 4 people riding on ONE. This sometimes includes children and babies! And, you aren't going to believe this one... We saw a casket riding on top of a taxi van or "bush taxi" as they are called around here. Different from regular taxis, the "bush taxis" carry people from town to town. Well, back to the casket; I was told by a Cameroonian who was driving our truck that it is common to place caskets on top of vans in order to transport bodies to the correct town. I have a picture of it below!

Another interesting thing I learned was about an animal called a Bush Rat. It is a type of rat, but it isn't your typical house rat. These rodents are HUGE and people hunt, sell, and eat them! You'll see one pictured below. Now to be honest this isn't a picture I took myself (remember what I said earlier about pictures?). I wanted you to see what I was talking about when I said they were big, so I found this picture online for you. It's the first one you'll see below when you scroll down. And, in case you are wondering, I do plan on finding someone knowledgeable to buy and cook one for me, so I can say I tried it!

The New Testament celebration was wonderful, and I was able to get some pictures there because it was acceptable for me to snap photos in that setting. There was a choir, several special guest speakers, and about 500 people in attendance! They also had a feast afterwards, with some traditional Cameroonian foods!

After the trip to Oku/Bamenda two of my colleagues, Peg Seitz (who is the Program Manager in my area) and the Vice President of Recruiting for Wycliffe Associates, Deborah Bartow, traveled with me to Limbe to scout out possibilities for our Wycliffe Associates Africa Area Conference coming up in April. While there we researched hotels and prices, etc.

Let me share with you that even the fanciest 5 star hotels that this part of the world has to offer are very different than you would expect. That got me thinking about something... who decides what "poor" really is? I mean, who says that "this person is poor" and "that person is not poor"? How do we set that standard? Do we base it on a person's house, income, clothing, what? Or, do we judge by the happiness in their heart, the contentment on their face, and the joy in their conversation? I prefer to judge by the latter because I believe in my heart that wealth cannot make you happy. I once heard that Americans are the unhappiest group of people in the world, statistically speaking. Why is that? By everyone else's standards we have it made! We have roofs over our heads, food in our bellies, clothes on our backs, air conditioning, automobiles, and fast access to excellent doctors! We have everything one would think you need in comparison to developing countries, and yet we are an unhappy people. Could it be that

happiness isn't defined by *what you have*, but perhaps it is defined by *WHO you have*? The One who lives in you is the source of happiness! I'm reminded of this bible verse, *Luke 12:15: And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."*

Thus far I have been able to assign two people to jobs here in Cameroon, a lovely couple. She will be working as a kindergarten teacher with students who do not read or write English very well. Her efforts will ensure that the parents of these students can continue working to advance bible translation. Her husband will be assisting in the Internet Technology Department, keeping the internet and software up to date and running so the process of translation is not slowed down!

If you wish to write to me, my mailing address is:

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If you are receiving this newsletter through the regular mail and would rather receive it by email please write me at Holly_Emmerich@WycliffeAssociates.org, and state your full name in the email.

I want to thank each of you for your ongoing prayers and financial support. Your help in sustaining my ministry here in Africa is a precious thing. I will continue to pray for each of you BY NAME every day. Our Father in Heaven is the source of life and all good things. How precious to be a team working together to see God's word translated into so many people's heart language! Please email me anytime. I love hearing from you and am honored when you bring your prayer requests to me.

Prayer Requests:

- * Spiritual and physical safety for those currently working on bible translation around the world.
- * Pray that the Oku people will have eyes to see and ears to hear what the Lord is saying to them through the New Testament, now in their own language!
- * For my continued adjustment in this assignment.
- * Pray for divine protection as there has been an outbreak of theft in the area. Specifically pray that the thieves would open their hearts and their minds to legal ways of obtaining what they want or need.
- * Our internet is still unstable; pray that we are able to obtain a more reliable connection. In my job I rely on the internet to search for candidates to fill jobs on the field. Not to mention that I use it to communicate with friends and family!
- * The dry season is coming, this means *high heat* and *low water*.

Praises!

- * Praise God the Oku people now have the New Testament in their own language!
- * I will soon be receiving another series of vaccines to protect me from Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Tetanus, and Rabies.
- * Praise God for the dedication of the new Bamenda Regional Training Center in Bamenda, Cameroon. It will be used to further bible translation in this region!

A Bush Rat!



The goat on a motorcycle!



The coffin on top of a taxi.



Just a small sampling of the homes some people live in.





The following pictures are from the Oku New Testament Dedication!

A choir sang for us!



They carried the bibles in the traditional way, on their heads!



The people are enjoying the ceremony.



Even the rain didn't stop us from enjoying; groups shared umbrellas and continued to celebrate.



A speaker holds up one of the last Oku New Testament translations available that day
(don't worry, more arrived later!)



Holly Emmerich
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Recruiter/Site Volunteer Coordinator
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“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Romans 10:14,15

