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Our Village House is Built!!

A light rain fell as the people of Hamelengan began to gather along with invited guests from other villages. The mood of the people was certainly no reflection of the dark clouds overhead or the cold rain falling on their heads. This was a day of celebration! A project that had been in the making for almost five years had at last come to completion. This day, September 23, 2009, was to be the official opening of our village house and Bible translation office!

A national pastor, who had hiked six hours over the mountains from his home village to attend, preached a sermon and then prayed that God would use this house and translation office to bring His Word to the Nukna people in their own heart language. Amen! After a song of praise to God had been sung, he officially opened the house by cutting a string that had been tied across the stairway. Later that afternoon, a huge celebration feast took place. The smell of roasted pork wafted across the village and mingled with the shouts and laughter of the Nukna people. Our hearts were overflowing with thanksgiving to our great God for what he had accomplished in our midst!

A lot of work had been going on for months and even years to prepare for our house building, but this latest and final chapter - the actual building of the house - began on August 31st as our family and a small crew of construction workers from Ukarumpa flew out to



Our newly-completed village house and office

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The work team l-r: Bradford, Samuel, Dan Snow, Michael Wright, Danny Carroll, John McWilliams, Curtis Carroll, Ryan Faircloth, Becca DeLoach, Christy Taylor (with Julianne), Matt Taylor, kids: Nathan Taylor, Kaitlyn Taylor, Joshua DeLoach and Justin Taylor. Not pictured: Vico, Katy and Isai Solano.

Hamelengan village. Well, some of us did, anyway! Most of the team along with the helicopter was stranded overnight at the airstrip in the next valley, as Hamelengan became enveloped in heavy fog that hung around for the rest of the day (the valley where they were waiting was almost perfectly clear!). Losing a day of work right off the bat was not the way we had envisioned the building project starting, and it was a bit discouraging.

The next day, everyone arrived first thing in the morning and the work began. The Ukarumpa work crew consisted of Michael Wright (SIL Construction Dept. Assistant Manager), Dan Snow (SIL Aviation Engineer), Samuel and Bradford (SIL Construction Dept. Apprentices), and Vico and Katy Solano. The village men were eager to help whenever they could, and as the cement foundation was laid and the first walls began to go up over that first week, we were tremendously encouraged.

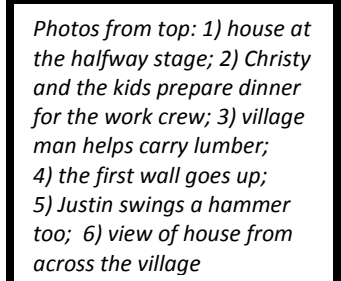
The weather over the entire 3 1/2 weeks was all we could have hoped for. While we did lose an afternoon or two of work to the rains, overall we have never seen such good, dry weather in our village before. God truly "showered" us with blessing by withholding the rain!

On September 8th, a work crew of four men from Iowa, led by our friend Curtis Carroll, arrived by helicopter. Their arrival was a real shot in the arm as they doubled our work crew and rate of progress. The other three members of the Iowa team were Danny Carroll, John McWilliams and Ryan Faircloth. Christy's friend Becca DeLoach also arrived that day to help Christy cook and care for the now quite large work team. Preparing three meals a day for sixteen people, while caring for five children at the same time, kept them very busy indeed!

Everyone on the work team was amazing, starting work just after dawn and working until it got too dark to see. We are so grateful to every member of the crew! Not only did they leave their families and homes to sleep on the bamboo floors of village houses, take cold showers, and work twelve-hour days, six days a week, but they did so with great attitudes and servant hearts. This house truly could not have been built without each and every one of them!

At the end of the 3 1/2 weeks, as we gathered to celebrate the opening of the house with the Nukna people, I reflected upon what it was we were celebrating. The physical house, standing in front of us, was certainly a cause for celebration. But on a deeper level we were celebrating what, God willing, the house will make possible. Our

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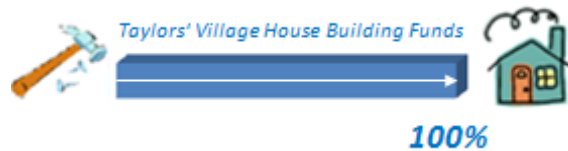
Photos from top: 1) house at the halfway stage; 2) Christy and the kids prepare dinner for the work crew; 3) village man helps carry lumber; 4) the first wall goes up; 5) Justin swings a hammer too; 6) view of house from across the village

living quarters upstairs, fitted with running water, solar-powered lights, and enough living space to enable Christy to home school our children, will make it possible for our family to spend much more time in the village working with the Nukna people than previously when we lived in the small, rustic bush house. The two office rooms downstairs will provide a place for the Nukna translation work to take place. Before there was nowhere to work on translation other than sitting outside on the ground or on a log. Office lights will enable the Nukna co-translators to work at night drafting translation of Scripture portions, and allow them to still work in their gardens during the day. This was a big problem before, as they did not have enough daylight hours to do both.

And so we hope and pray that all of these physical conveniences will ultimately lead to God's Word being available in the language that the Nukna people know best - their own heart language. If cement, wood and nails can be the means to bringing God's Word, then they are a cause of celebration indeed! May God be glorified in the lives of many through our new house and office!

Village House Finance Update

During September while we were in the village building our house, a few more gifts towards our house building were given, and we can now report that we have 100% of the money needed to pay for our house! We are amazed and humbled as we reflect on how God has provided for everything we needed to complete our house. And to all of our partners and supporters, we want to say a very big thank you. You and your prayers and gifts have been as important to our village house as the building materials and the people who built it!



Update on Simendi

Many of you have been praying over the last couple of months for Simendi, one of our co-translators, after his accident falling off of a cliff. In our last prayer update, we shared that his body was on the mend, and he seemed to be out of any physical danger. We were able to spend a lot of time with him during the house building (his house is right next to our new house) and he has indeed been healed of most of the injuries he sustained. A deep cut on the back side of his right elbow is still affecting him, however. Even now he cannot completely straighten his right arm. Being right-handed, this is having no small impact on his ability to carry out the heavy manual labor that is so much a part of the Nukna people's daily lives. Would you pray with us that God would continue to heal him and restore his arm to normal? When I shared with him that many of you in America had been praying for him, his eyes lit up and he asked me to tell you how grateful he is for your prayers.

Translation Update

In our last prayer update, we shared that we were having trouble finding a translation consultant to check Genesis 12-22. After we shared this need, a translation consultant became available and it looked like the checking would take place. However, when the house building team left, there was still a lot of unfinished work remaining on our new house, some of which needed to be completed before we could leave two weeks later. And so we did not have the time to prepare for the consultant check and had to cancel it. While this was disappointing, we know that God's timing is perfect and we hope to, God willing, complete the checking next year when we return from the United States.



Photos from the top: 1) Kaitlyn shovels sand for the cement mixing; 2) view of the house; 3) John, Michael and Danny consult the plans; 4) Nathan paints siding; 5) view of our new kitchen; 6) village men prepare to butcher a pig for the house-opening feast



We're Heading Back to America

On November 18th, we will leave Papua New Guinea and fly back to California for a furlough/home assignment. Our main reason for coming to the U.S. is for Matt to finish his Master's degree in Applied Linguistics. He has almost completed it, but he must finish the degree in 2010 or he will start losing some of the credits earned back in 2001 when we first joined Wycliffe. We will spend four months in Dallas, Texas (Feb-May) while he attends classes at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics. The rest of our time will be mostly spent in California. We hope to return to PNG in July or August.

It is hard for us to leave Papua New Guinea after we have just finished building our village house. We would much rather head back out to the village to begin working on the translation work we have had to postpone for so long so that we could build the house. Also, 2010 is not the year for our normally scheduled furlough, but we feel that God is directing us to finish Matt's degree before the opportunity passes. Having a Master's degree in linguistics will make Matt more effective in his translation work and may also open as yet unforeseen doors in the future in our ministry with Wycliffe.

Wycliffe has also asked us to spend time visiting our partners and partner churches - in other words, you! - which we are very eager to do. So much has happened during our last two years in PNG, and we know a lot has happened in your lives too. It will be great to swap stories and catch up!

Along with that, we are hoping that God will raise up additional financial partners for us, so that we can head back to PNG fully supported. Our support level this last year was around 90% of what Wycliffe recommends is needed to fully fund our ministry with the Nukna people. Would you pray with us that our furlough time would be a fruitful time of connecting with partners, both existing and new, and that we could return to PNG fully equipped to continue working with the Nukna people to translate God's Word?

Another item for prayer is that at this point we do not have a vehicle for our furlough time. We have been looking into possibilities, but so far nothing has worked out. We would need a vehicle large enough to fit six people (including four child car seats).

Prayer

- ▶ for continued healing for Simendi
- ▶ for our family as we prepare to return to the U.S. for furlough and to finish Matt's degree
- ▶ for good opportunities to meet with our partners in the U.S. to share about our ministry and build relationships
- ▶ for God to raise up new partners for our ministry
- ▶ that we could return to PNG next year fully supported
- ▶ for a vehicle we can use during furlough

Praise

- ▶ our village house and translation office have been built
- ▶ our village house has been fully funded with gifts from our partners
- ▶ for all the people who came alongside us and helped us build our village house
- ▶ for the good weather, good health and safety that we and the work team enjoyed during the house building

To see more photos of our village house building, visit our website at:
<http://www.taylormissions.com/photo/ministry.html>
and click on the "Village House Building" link



Photos from top: 1) Curtis, Matt & Ryan turn on the running water for the first time; 2) Samuel surveys the progress so far; 3) Christy, Becca & the kids visit the building site; 4) Bradford & Dan build window frames



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