



North Country News

from the Hekmans

1020 Hunterhaven Road NW, Calgary, Alberta T2K 4K6

May 2006

GREAT NEWS FROM CHAD, AFRICA!

"February 25th, was a very hot day (104 degrees F in the shade) and humid, but people were ready to celebrate! It was the day of the long awaited Kera New Testament dedication!! Close to 3000 people from Chad and across the border in Cameroon came to celebrate the arrival of God's Word in their language.



There were speeches, songs, dances, and touching moments, such as when a group of young people arrived singing and dancing with boxes of New Testaments on their heads, (wish we had a pic of that) declaring that "God's words have arrived in our language, here they are, here they are!"

Towards the end, people danced in holding up the head of a cow and a goat to show that there was meat on the menu - proof of it being a *real* celebration and feast!

"God's words have arrived! Here they are! Here they are!"

Selling the New Testaments turned out to be difficult and even dangerous! People were so afraid there would not be enough copies for everyone, they massed against the fence surrounding the place we were selling from, risking bodily harm and damaging the fence. So many people surrounded us it was impossible to sell any books! I had to lock everything into an office and "go hide" till the crowd left the yard. We then found another way of selling them and 1,944 copies were sold in about three hours! For a while there I thought we would be the first team who did not sell any New Testaments during a dedication!

I remained in the village for two weeks following the dedication and it was such a joy to see people standing up in Church and reading from the Kera New Testament. The Pastors are thrilled that they no longer have to search for the right terms in their language, and have gained much more confidence in preaching."

(Excerpted from a letter we received written by the Wycliffe translator working with the Kera people.)

Well, for all those of you who have followed us through the years and were “with us” in the late ‘80’s when we worked in Chad, you can imagine that this dedication is really a special, heart-warming event for us. We are thankful for the small part we had in the Kera New Testament translation. So via this letter we are doing a little of our own celebrating with you! Maybe we’ll fire up the grill and eat steak tonight! ☺

Something sobering, though, to share with you is that a week after we got this letter we also received an urgent prayer request from the Kera saying that there is a meningitis epidemic sweeping the area and daily people are dying. One of the main Chadian pastors just lost his little daughter. So do pray for these people and the Lord’s intervention in their lives at this difficult time.

Some non-work events of the past few months

-We celebrated Passover with our son and family here in Calgary thanks to our daughter-in-law, Helen, who enhances our lives with her Jewish heritage! And for all of you who ask, yes! Helen is making steady improvement health-wise. Thank you for your prayers for their family!

-Don had a big birthday! He can hardly believe he has entered his 7th decade!

-Pray for our daughter-in-law, Claudia, who was diagnosed with Lyme Disease and is embarking on a long road of treatment—beginning with 9 weeks of 3-times-daily intravenous antibiotics.

-Don and I had a five-day vacation in Tucson, AZ—just loving the desert, bird-watching, learning to identify cacti, and thoroughly relaxing in the special atmosphere of the Southwest.

(Note!) *We would like to begin sending more of our newsletters electronically. That way they will not only be in color, but get to you “hot off the press” while saving postage costs. If you would like to receive them this way, send us an e-mail so we have your address. If you prefer the printed version we are very happy to continue doing that!*

God bless,

Don and Martha



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