

## Bill Ardill

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**From:** Bill Ardill [bill.ardill@sim.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 11, 2008 4:22 PM  
**To:** ardill-news@sim.org  
**Subject:** a program and a programmer

On Saturday afternoon in the middle of the girls' varsity basketball game during the end-of-season tournament, the rain came in a powerful and dramatic way. Normally the first rainstorm is a lot of wind and not much rain but when the heavens opened, it rained hard for over an hour. Of course, the kids ran all over the school in the rain and thoroughly enjoyed the excuse to get drenched. It was so refreshing after the last several weeks of hot weather. So the basketball tournament was suspended. In addition to the cooler weather, the rain also washed off the top layer of dirt and dust on the bushes, trees, buildings and everything so the place looks brighter and cleaner already. More fallout of the first rains, unfortunately, is more road accidents as people slip and slide on the wet streets. So over the weekend we had an unusually high number of auto accident patients admitted to the hospital. The government hospital was still on strike so we get all the major trauma and the hospital is now full to capacity. We have not had rain since Saturday but it is definitely cooler and more pleasant.

On Saturday morning about 450 women, many of the hospital staff and a group of visitors and dignitaries including representatives from the TV, radio and press descended on the parking lot of Evangel Hospital for the annual VVF reunion. Every March the hospital invites back any woman who has been a VVF patient for this grand celebration. It is an opportunity to see how the women are doing since they were discharged and to give them encouragement, counseling, medical help and a few small gifts. The celebration ceremony went well with lots of amazing testimonies of how much these women have suffered and God's amazing grace to them through the staff of Evangel. One woman testified she had a fistula for 35 years before hearing about Evangel and coming for the surgery. She is now dry and danced with praise to God. A unique aspect of the program this year was an increased emphasis on the men who came with the women. Although there were only 50 men who were somehow related to the women, they also received a challenge, counseling and encouragement and were given an opportunity to testify. After all, they are a big part of the problem of VVF in Nigeria and it is good to educate them and increase their understanding of the problem and the solution, including prevention by helping their wives get good maternity care when they are pregnant.

I was also excited that Dr. Lengmang invited representatives from the Ministry of Health of about 8 surrounding states where the Evangel VVF women come from. He wanted to increase their awareness of the problem and the basic fact we have been caring for "their" women for years. He challenged them to consider how they could help us take care of their women and also volunteered to help those states by providing training for their doctors in VVF surgery and better awareness in their communities. I was pleased to hear the enthusiastic response from these government officials and their interest in helping solve the problem in their localities. It was a wonderful program and a day of rejoicing.

Just to wrap up the basketball story, the tournament final was rescheduled for Monday afternoon. Marie's varsity girls' team was the only Hillcrest team to make it to the finals and they won handily. We were very proud of her and the team for representing the school so well. Next is soccer so we will see how well Marie does with kicking the ball instead of shooting and passing. At least in soccer there is a bigger target! Heather and Anna have their intramural basketball team tournament today so we get one last chance this year to watch the girls shoot hoops.

On another note, I have been on a committee at Hillcrest School to redesign and update the Hillcrest website. We believe it could be a useful recruiting tool for teachers and students and might even help us with fund raising for special projects. The current site has not been updated and has lots of bad "links." The committee has done a lot of work to get the basic content together of what we would like on the website and the general organization of the information. Now we need someone who can help us with the programming or final design of the program for the site. The computer staff at the school does not have the time to devote to this so I am asking if you know of anyone who would be willing to help the school. It will involve taking the content we have and putting it in a web format that can be undated by us and stay fresh. The school is on a very limited budget so we are looking for a capable volunteer who knows how to write this kind of program. According to the computer people, the "front end program" can be almost any web design program but the "back end" database program needs to be either MS Access or mySql because of the web host we are using. So, please let me know if you are interested or know

someone who would be willing to help us launch the new website in such a way that it looks professional and the school can maintain it locally. In case you want to see what the school has now, you can go to [www.hillcrestschool.net](http://www.hillcrestschool.net) to see why we need to improve on our current site.

Dorothy has made some progress with her difficult student and is now learning her own ways to cope with him. Thanks for your prayers and encouragement. Some have asked for an update on the bucket grain project Dorothy started a few years ago. We have heard a number of encouraging stories recently of churches that are continuing to collect grains and are helping the widows and orphans in their communities. We did not receive enough funding this year to distribute more buckets but are hoping by next February and March when the women's conferences meet in 2009, we will have enough funds to distribute more buckets.

The crisis pregnancy ministry continues to touch the lives of many women. The hospital recently approved the idea of moving the Miriam House for the unwed pregnant women onto the Evangel Hospital campus. That would provide better supervision, better access to the needed medical help and be less expensive than renting a property. The proposed plan involves renovating two staff houses for the girls and dorm parents and building two more houses for the staff that will be displaced. I will let you know more about this project but just wanted to give you an update. Thanks for praying for these girls and the counselors who hold their hands through their difficult circumstances.

We have had a lot of electrical problems this week. Although the internet situation has improved, without electricity we still cannot do email. In spite of the "infrastructure" problems, we are grateful each day for God's provision and protection as we continue to serve Him here in Nigeria.

In Christ,  
Bill Ardill

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