

Bill Ardill

From: Bill Ardill [bill.ardill@sim.org]
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2008 9:53 PM
To: ardill-news@sim.org
Subject: twin birthdays and driving lessons

My ears area still ringing and my headache just left this morning. On Saturday a large group gathered at the polo grounds beside the hospital compound. They were M's who had come from all over Nigeria apparently for a fundraising "launching" for two new M schools. I don't remember ever seeing a crowd so big as they came all day Saturday and packed the roads around the polo field and hospital. What normally was a ten minute drive to the school took over 30 minutes. Several groups had LOUD loudspeakers going all day preaching and teaching and the speeches went until 2:30 am Sunday morning. Then they started up again at 5:45 am Sunday so not only could we hardly think because of the noise, we obviously got little sleep. Along with the crowds, merchants gathered with their wares – cloth, shoes, hats and all sorts of merchandise and set up their shops along the road medians, the sides of the road and any empty spot near the meeting place. They finally finished up on Sunday afternoon and left the streets littered with their trash since most of these venues have not only no provision for rubbish but no toilet facilities either. We were thankful it was only one night of no sleep and that there were no "incidents" of either violence or incursions on our compound. Instead of being angry at how much our peace is disturbed, I try hard to remember they are an important reason we are here and we indeed live in a fallen world in which we are to be light and salt.

Last Tuesday I had a good trip with our neighbors, Rick and Brenda Naatz, to the Abuja U.S. embassy. My passport was out of blank pages so I had to personally appear with my passport to get new pages added. After about 40 minutes of waiting outside in the heat and then 1 ½ hours of waiting inside we eventually received our passports with the new 24 new pages neatly sewn into our original passports. We are thankful we had no car trouble and were not hassled by the various checkpoints along the way.

As a family we enjoyed Wednesday through Friday at Miango. It was quiet, the meals were generally good, the electricity was surprisingly good for Miango and we had running water most of the time. Dorothy challenges her classes each holiday to try and read more than her so she and David were busy reading and I got a good book read as well. I was thankful I had a tennis partner there as well and we managed to squeeze in a hike to a nearby extinct volcano with our friends the Mitchells. Another mission organization was having its annual spiritual life conference at Miango so our kids had lots of friends to play with which made our life easier. I was also not asked to help with any emergencies nor was called to come back to Evangel in Jos for any crisis. Although not too exciting, it was a restful break for all of us.

This week a team from the SIM International office is visiting Nigeria as part of a mandated "country review" of all the SIM fields. They are interviewing hundreds of people and groups from all over Nigeria to help in their evaluation of the work of SIM throughout Nigeria. The team met with the SIM teachers on Sunday after lunch so Dorothy and I sat in on that meeting and then on Monday I sat in on the meeting with the Evangel medical SIM missionaries. So I have been "reviewed" a fair bit this week. We will get to hear their preliminary report on Friday and then a final version in about a month. I also have a Hillcrest meeting tomorrow afternoon and an SIM council meeting on Friday and Saturday. I am mindful that "God so loved the world that He did NOT send a committee!"

A team from a church in the Dallas area of Texas arrived this week. Several on the team have been to Nigeria before so it was good to see them again. One member of the team, Jimmy McGonagill, is an optician who helped bring to Evangel donated equipment to set up a workshop to make eyeglasses. We are still working out a few problems with the electricity and getting some bugs worked out of the equipment but we are optimistic he will get the workshop into production of eyeglasses before he leaves in several weeks. This has been in the works for several years now and it is terrific to finally get it off the ground. The Texas team also brought the new elements for the autoclave so I asked our maintenance supervisor, Ben, to install the elements today. Maybe tomorrow it will be up and running again so I will let you know later.

Heather and Anna had their 15th birthday on Sunday. They had some friends over for a sleepover and we had a small party for them. This Saturday they will invite all the girls in their class over for a bigger party. They were very excited when I offer to take them on their first driving lesson when we were at Miango. Our van is a manual shift vehicle so it is a bit more challenging. I drove out along the road to a quieter flat strip of the road with fewer cows and trees to hit and they both did very well for their first lesson. We went again the next day and they did better and were driving with more confidence. So lookout world, clear the highways, our girls will soon be on the loose! (Not really!) Marie is busy filling in college applications and scholarship forms. We are

busy praying the Lord will provide for her in the school of His choosing. She has done very well in school this year and we hope that helps her in the application process.

Thanks for your emails and prayers for us. We are very grateful.

In Christ,
Bill Ardill

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