

Hello again...

The rainy season is well under way here in Malejon (Mal-A-John). This means the temperatures have dropped and humidity has *increased* – something we thought would be impossible! The temps have been in the mid to lower 80s during the day and upper 70s at night. One night Linda was complaining about being cold and was happy she brought the quilts her mother made for everyone. I thought I'd check to see what this “cold” temperature was – 77.8°F! I was still sweating, more like “condensating”, but wet nonetheless!

It seems we've been getting rain 4 or 5 times a week. Maybe not hard, but some. I just returned from a trip to the Northern region where people were telling me the rains have delayed. They're a bit concerned since normally they finish in August. We pray God will bless them with enough rain to meet their needs, soon.

Kids

We have successfully navigated the birthday season yet again. Elisha turned 13 in June. He's pretty happy about it. We're still in shock. Libby turned 11 and Simon, 9. We served brownies all three times and had friends to celebrate with, too. This was the first year we haven't been around to celebrate Grace's birthday. We had to content ourselves with sending her a present and having a phone conversation.

School has slowed down during the summer season because everybody else is out of school. We hate to have the kids miss out on any social opportunities so we have school when we have it and not when we don't. Everyone has started the next school year, though. So far, things are going well.

Grace is living in Missouri with her Aunt LeAnn and working on her fiber arts business. Currently she is writing articles and even a book on the topic! Her health is improving with time.

Ministry Progress

On the ministry front, there have been small, promising steps. I had worked with several Deaf leaders to schedule a meeting to gather Deaf church leaders together to discuss Bible translation. A goal of that meeting was to create a sign language translation board to direct translation efforts in a way that is fully Deaf led. This group will “take ownership” of the



Elisha is officially a teenager!



Assembling a borrowed trampoline takes teamwork!

translation efforts which should increase the value of our work in the community.

A big challenge with these kinds of meetings is they create program expectations. Without proper funding these expectations may be difficult to meet. It would be best to get funding first. Kind of like knowing your budget before you go to the store. On the other hand, you have to have some sense of what is available and the prices before you can make a budget. So, which comes first, the chicken or the egg?

In our case, a couple of representatives of potential funding agencies were passing through on the same day, so I had to postpone that meeting and attend a very different kind of meeting. Since that time, I've had a follow up that was promising in some senses. We still do not have cash in hand to set up a translation office and video studio, nor do we have money to pay translators, but, we do have some key Ghanaian leaders who are beginning to understand our needs. In the long run, it would be best for the local church to fund as much of the project as possible, so this is a good step.

At this point I've been able to evaluate a few interpreters to help give the Deaf some idea as to how much information they are getting/missing. Interpreter training and certification is a HUGE need here. I'm hoping we can find a local college who is willing to do what it takes to establish a good sign language training program that could develop into an interpreter training



Seeing Papa off on his trip.



Learning to say 6 the way the village Deaf do in Bole.

program. The impact would be far, far reaching. I'm also praying to find people who can help set up such a program.

My next steps are to try to train Deaf people to gather linguistic data and help me with the analysis. We need to publish information about the language(s) the Deaf use with each other. That will give legitimacy to the needs of the Deaf as well as establish the ground work for translation, interpreter training and, hopefully, Deaf teacher training. At this point, most teachers at the Deaf schools do not use local sign language. These teachers have no or very limited signing skills, and those are not in the language the local people use.

At the same time, I will try to find Deaf people who are willing to learn how to teach local sign language. Currently, there is no place for people to go to learn how to sign.

Language research and sign language teacher training are in my near future. Neither one of these efforts will take large amounts of money, but will take a lot of time. The main cost will be my travel expenses and wear and tear on our personal

vehicle.

Please pray for this work. The travel is very time consuming. Travel here is very stressful. Fuel prices have risen a lot since we arrived, but it hasn't seem to cut down the number of drivers. Also, maintaining relationships can be difficult. Communication and expectation problems are frequent.

Northern Region

Last week I attended a GILLBT conference. While in the area, I took the time to go visit friends, Paul and Jen Schaefer and Paul's parents Bob and Nancy Schaefer.

Paul said there was one deaf man in the village where they translate. Once I got to their area another man talked about a few deaf living in the bigger town. Paul asked if he could bring a few people together so I could meet them. The man responsible for gathering people made an announcement on the radio for people to bring their deaf friends and family members!! I had no real agenda, so I had to come up with something so people wouldn't be disappointed!

About 30 people trickled in. Since the village Deaf signed so different a Deaf man I could communicate with served as an interpreter. With help, I could follow some of what was said, but knew there was no way our current translation would be understood. Most of these people have never attended school and don't interact with other deaf. About 8 people had attended a Deaf school in their region. I could communicate okay with them. I took the time to show one of the stories the DOOR team had translated. It became clear they weren't really grasping much. We have a LOT of work ahead of us!

May God grant you a greater knowledge of Himself, Jason, Linda, Nate, Elisha, Libby, Simon



I passed by many villages with these solar street lights

Partnering with Wycliffe to support our work financially is easy!

Write a check to: 'Wycliffe Bible Translators' with a note saying:

'With preference for the Wycliffe ministry of Jason and Linda Hopkins #286005'

Mail to: Wycliffe Bible Translators, P.O. Box 628200, Orlando FL 32862-8200

Or go online:

<http://tinyurl.com/wycliffe-hop>

GILLBT
P. O. Box OS-3063
Osu-Accra
Ghana

ATTN: Jason Hopkins

jason_hopkins@sil.org

linda_hopkins@sil.org

Praises...

Good rains on our area.

Cooler temperatures!

Some signs of interest in the hearing community which may, in turn, help fund our work.

Healthy recovery from Malaria for Jason. He had a fever that peaked over 106°F!!

Safe travels on the roads – a big praise wherever you live in Africa.

Good water supply at our house.

Grace's improving health, and Jason's not worsening skin trouble.

Ghana, at this point, is Ebola free.

Prayer Requests...

Fighting exhaustion. We're not sure why, but we are drained a LOT. We assume it has to do with the heat and are learning how to cope, but it gets oppressive.

Still praying for the translation committee. Now we need to set a new meeting date. I'm waiting for one of the key pastors to return from a conference in the US.

Linguistic research. Please pray things will get freed up so Jason can begin the linguistic research side of things soon. He is wanting to develop contacts with a group of Deaf who live near by. Please pray for good relationships.

Qualified interpreters. Please pray a good quality interpreter training/mentoring program will be established. Pray God will begin to move on the hearts of people with the required skills and draw them to Ghana.

More workers. Please pray God will raise up more people, both local Deaf and people from other countries, willing to invest in this work. These could be full time linguists, interpreters, Deaf teachers, or Deaf people who want to come and minister or hold training workshops. At this point, pretty much anything is a possibility.

Again, pray for our financial status. The prices continue to rise here as the local currency devalues. This is causing trouble for many people.

As I said above, Ghana is Ebola free, but it wouldn't take much to change that. Pray leaders will implement good, well-informed, policies for the safety of all involved.

Pray for those who are in affected areas. Containment is very difficult because people don't trust their governments or health care providers and aren't receiving the information they need. We are getting stories of people who go to the hospital with a fever and are instantly put in an Ebola ward and others who get gangs of people together to “break out” their sick loved ones. The situation is very difficult, but if contained, the virus burns itself out. Please pray for wisdom and mercy.

One last minute thing, today we started talking about how GILLBT can help disseminate some of the CDC and WHO Ebola information in local languages, including local sign language. Most of the Deaf do not get good health information, so I'm hoping this will be well received. Please pray God will lead us in this project.