Dear Family and Friends,

In this newsletter are a couple incredible stories from the mission field, along with a few pictures of our JFA Team and orphans at our orphanage.

"Brink of Disaster"

Article by Gayle - Gayle Haberkam Project
Have you ever slid downhill towards a corner precipice, out of control, right to the very brink of disaster? We just did that today! Let me tell you all about it. ....Read more

"By This Shall All Men Know Ye Are My Disciples"
Article by Brian Atwell - Bangkok Outreach
While in Bangkok I needed a place to prepare my messages and found just the spot in the office of the Center for East Asian Religions, one of the General Conference study centers dedicated to learning how we can best share the message of hope in Christ with those of other faiths. The director was sharing about the upcoming conference they were having, which I had written off for various reasons, time and money being the main ones, but as I listened I realized I needed to pray about attending. ...Read more

JFA Team in India
Kirk, Christian, Jonathan and Ken spent a week at our orphanage in South India getting background stories on each orphan, interviewing and filming the children, walking them to school, eating with them and just being a part of their lives for a week. Learning some of the situations these orphans came from was heartbreaking to hear. We’re grateful these kids now have a place to call home and be loved. When the guys left, many tears were shed. Christian (middle right in picture above) is planning to return in the fall and spend a year there, much to the delight of the orphans.

On March 30, Christian returned to America, while Kirk, Jonathan and Ken headed to Chennai, India, where they are visiting our evening schools and gathering information necessary for our new clean water project (for more information on this project, call us at 423-413-7321). Also, with extra donations given, MP3 players have been purchased, containing the Bible in the Tamil language, for the illiterate. We are so thrilled that those who can’t read will be able to listen to the Bible in their own language. Praise God!

Please keep the three JFA volunteers in your prayers as they continue on their journey for another two weeks.

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**Monthly Updates:**

As of April 3, 2015 *(Thank you!)*
God bless!

Dede Van Buren,
Dede@Jesus4Asia.org

To the consecrated worker there is wonderful consolation in the knowledge that even Christ during His life on earth sought His Father daily for fresh supplies of needed grace; and from this communion with God He went forth to strengthen and bless others. Behold the Son of God bowed in prayer to His Father! Though He is the Son of God, He strengthens His faith by prayer, and by communion with heaven gathers to Himself power to resist evil and to minister to the needs of men. As the Elder Brother of our race He knows the necessities of those who, compassed with infirmity and living in a world of sin and temptation, still desire to serve Him. He knows that the messengers whom He sees fit to send are weak, erring men; but to all who give themselves wholly to His service He promises divine aid. His own example is an assurance that earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work—will avail to bring to men the Holy Spirit’s aid in the battle against sin.
100% of your donation goes to your designated project.

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"Ask of me and I will give you the heathen for an inheritance." Psalms 2:8
Brink of Disaster

Dede Van Buren

March 31, 2015 / Update

Have you ever slid downhill towards a corner precipice, out of control, right to the very brink of disaster? We just did that today! Let me tell you all about it.

It is Thursday. We have tried 2 times today to get to BYT without success. The first time was 5:30a.m. If we beat the cement workers, we can get through the short way, saving 3 hours of driving. But this morning it began to pour with rain before we even reached the turn off. This is shocking because it never rains in March. We know that it will be impossible to make it because rain creates disaster in this place. We turned around and went back, thinking that by the afternoon we could go the long way. By 1p.m the sky was blue and the sun hot. Our truck was loaded with medical supplies, food and 4 people: BletJhaw, Tucker, ChaGooGoo (BletJhaw’s brother-in-law, who will teach BletJhaw Thai for a few weeks), and myself.
We go the short way thinking that because of the heavy rain this morning they may not be working on the cement. However, the road is blocked and we retrace our way back to the long way.

This road is horrible. Our truck is lurching around. The people in the backseat are hitting their heads against the windows and our belongings are falling and sliding all over the place. After driving approximately one and one half hours there was an explosion of thunder on our left, followed instantly by huge drops of rain, which whacked the windshield as if to announce the grand arrival of a deluge of rain! Just as we were making a dangerous descent, the rain hit, causing an instant mudslide of our road! Oh how our hearts sank and how the truck slipped! No sense in trying to reach our far off destination in these conditions – that would be suicide. We need to turn around and rush back before things got any worse! But alas, things were quickly getting much much worse! The road was very steep with a bank on one side and a steep precipice on the other side. We held our breath as we went up one side of a mountain and down the other. Suddenly we were confronted with a red mud downhill that had been plowed recently, sending the loose, rich, red, oozing, mud around a corner and over a cement section. We lost control immediately and went into a crooked slide directly toward the precipice!

“Oh God help!” Escaped softly from BletJhaw’s lips, followed by:

“Stop, Stop, Stop, Stop!!”

But we did NOT stop for what seemed like ages. We braced ourselves for a crash down the ravine! But no, it did not happen. We came to a sudden side ways stop with the left back tire off the edge of the cliff!

“Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!” The words of Samuel popped into my head just then. (1Samuel 7:12) It felt so good to be standing still – Thank you Lord! But now we have to get out of this scary situation. Our hearts and hands felt a little shaky.

The rain continued to pelt down on us as we worked feverishly with the wench. No wonder the truck went into a slide, we could not take one step without sliding down two! We abandoned our shoes because of the caked mud, and Tucker climbed the cliff to attach the wench to the strongest looking tree. Of course the wench is not needed to pull you DOWN the slick hill, but to hang onto you if you go over the edge. Surely a 7200 pound wench would keep you from flipping end over end down the ravine! —We might just find out!

I managed the remote on the wench and BletJhaw got into the driver’s seat. What would happen? With the tightening of the wench the truck slide even more sideways. It was too scary to even look at that back wheel. The men gathered a log and placed it beside the truck. It looked safer with it there, but actually it will not help at all.

After that BletJhaw leaped up the steep bank and attached the wench to a different tree, the truck’s nose was eventually pulled so close to the bank that the back wheel was out of danger. We finally loosened the wench...
and BletJhaw pulled the truck onto safe ground!

Most assuredly: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

*Gayle Haberkam Project*
Connect with Us

By Dede Van Buren

April 3, 2015 / / Update

While in Bangkok I needed a place to prepare my messages and found just the spot in the office of the Center for East Asian Religions, one of the General Conference study centers dedicated to learning how we can best share the message of hope in Christ with those of other faiths. The director was sharing about the upcoming conference they were having, which I had written off for various reasons, time and money being the main ones, but as I listened I realized I needed to pray about attending. Well, I am so grateful I went as a rich blessing was gained. Many people from ten countries were there and shared what the Lord has been doing all over Asia in ministering to Buddhists and others. We had set aside three times throughout the day for united prayer and I was blessed with an open mind and a realization that trying to share Christ here the same way we do in America is not going to work.

Christ said in John 13:35, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” So often, we want to show we are His disciples by how much we know, at least I did. It is easier to talk about a belief or a religion than to live it, but when the people you are seeking to serve are under the belief that your feelings dictate what is true, the Buddhist philosophy, then any amount of information will not make up for the experiences of their past. Only seeing the message will bring home the truth. The Buddhists here who know about Christians see them as a group that feel they don’t have to be good people, who can do whatever they want and still receive the promised blessing now because Jesus saved them. Far from the truth, but this is what the Christians they meet are ‘preaching’ by their lives. The theme of the conference was ‘Hosting Personal Encounters with God’ and isn’t that what we are called to do? We are called to be His body; we are the ones He wants to use to reveal Himself to the world, but if we are so focused on our arguments and knowledge and not connected to Him, then how will anyone see Christ in us? We have to be the medium in which Christ is able to connect with those who don’t know Him yet. I know what many are thinking; “obvious statement” “easy to say, harder to do”. That is very true, but we MUST do it, or all our efforts will be useless.

So often we start out strong, seeking God and desiring Him to work through us, being humble because we have little knowledge. But we grow in our understanding of the Bible and start gaining confidence in ourselves. Then what happens when things get challenging and our faith is tried? We fall into the trap of relying on our own wisdom and understanding. We take more time in preparing a sermon/Bible study to share with others than we do praying that God will guide us and the ones we are sharing with. This is backward. When we truly understand just how little our part is in the whole plan of salvation, we will stop working so hard in our own strength and will spend more time in surrendered prayer, seeking for Him to work out consecrated service through our lives, following Him as He leads.

Being here in Thailand, realizing that all I know about the Bible means nothing to 98% of the people, is a humbling experience. While it has taken a long time for the realization to sink in, it is slowly making an impact. Love is how we are going to reach the world. In this conference, it was discussed that different approaches need to be taken in different cultures, and while that is true to a degree, full surrender to Christ and allowing Him to love people, in a practical, as well as spiritual, way, through us, is something that is cross-cultural and will be of greatest value.

I am not sure what each of your ministries are, but I ask you to evaluate the service you give the Lord and ask...
yourself if the focus of your labor is more toward converting peoples minds through information, or if the focus is on the heart through love. We have a very unique message as Seventh-Day Adventists and it does have a lot of information. I am not saying that is not important, but taking the statement that “the truth shall set you free” and applying that simply to sharing information is a misuse of the text. Christ IS “the Truth” and He sets us free through a relationship with Him, not just knowing ‘about’ Him. May we seek for greater service from and for the heart and be granted the ability to see where we are laboring to receive glory for ourselves and the humility to accept that realization and seek God to change us for His glory.

Please pray for us as we continue to seek the Lord’s guidance for the direction of our ministry as well as our health. Burn season has begun in the north and the pollution level is at dangerous levels according to the weather. We have purchased a filtration machine but it is only big enough to use in one room. Please pray that Asher, our son, will not have complications from the smoke. Also, that God will grant us a greater love for the people here and we can build deeper, more meaningful, relationships.

From our heart in love,

Jessica, Brian and Asher (Bangkok Project, Thailand)

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

–Titus 2:13