

HOWe THINGS ARE...

October 2002

Hello! My project with a September 1 deadline sort of worked like I planned. There was one remaining thing broken and I decided it wasn't a big enough thing to stop the presses. THEN, this guy came to volunteer for two months. He's a programmer type. He fixed the broken thing AND he's working on another thing on my list of stuff that needs to be done.

I'm so excited about having help. My boss wrote a To Do List for the volunteer guy on the white board in his office. The first thing on his list is "Help Sheryl". It just warms my heart every time I go into that office and see "Help Sheryl" at the top of the list.

Stuff to pray about:

- **Praise** for the completion of Wycliffe USA's center in Orlando. One of the Wycliffe presidents came to Waxhaw to share the story of God leading to move to Orlando and how God confirmed the decision along the way. God is amazing. Plus, I'm impressed with Wycliffe's leaders who totally rely on God.
- **Pray** for me as I work through the process of deciding on my next assignment. I would like a burning bush moment at which time a loud voice tells me where to go (or to stay here), thus relieving all doubts about my decision. However pray for wisdom and direction.

Plus, the volunteer guy (his actual real name is Brian, not "the volunteer guy") has decided to join Wycliffe as a result of his time with us. It's good that we're not scaring people off if they come to volunteer.

I discovered that one hilarious thing about working with Christians is how conscientious people are about sending thank you notes for every little thing I do. Okay, I think it's hilarious. I suppose other people may not experience the same level of amusement I do at receiving a thank you note for taking a minute to answer a question that's part of my job. I do sometimes go out of my way to help people, but I also get disproportionate appreciation for say, answering the phone and telling someone I can't fix their problem, but that they might try a website where they might be able to fix it themselves. I promise it's funny. Picture all of our Christian "customers". They're all missionaries. They're all about encouraging people and stuff. They send thank you notes ALL the time.

We sent out a system email the other day because we had a problem that caused email services to be interrupted one Monday morning from 1am to about 3:30am. I, luckily, am not the person who gets called at 1am when things break, but one of my coworkers is. So, 1 am to 3:30 am our time isn't like prime business hours for us, but it is prime business hours for some of our people on the other side of the globe. A couple of those people, who had this two and a half hour interruption of

email services smack dab in the middle of business hours, wrote back to thank us for our excellent service. And they're not being sarcastic. Email breaks; they realize that whoever has to fix it is getting up in the middle of the night and they're all grateful.

Thank you notes to us often start with, "I know no one realizes what a vital job you're doing and no one thinks to say thank you that they have email...". It cracks me up when there are like six messages telling us that no one probably remembers to thank us and they're sure we feel unappreciated. I like the being thanked all the time thing, but it's also very funny --- this constant stream of thank you's from people who are convinced no one remembers to thank us. In addition to being a source of amusement for me, their notes also tell us how email helps them in their jobs which ensures we don't forget why we're doing what we're doing.

These people writing to thank us also sometimes point out that they know it must be difficult to explain to supporters why we need missionaries in Waxhaw, North Carolina. Just so you know, apparently you all are like a special breed of people who get what we're doing. (Or, who trust us and don't really care what we're doing) The majority opinion (among missionaries who write thank you notes) is that only special folks would support a missionary who doesn't have at least one jungle/very large insect adventure story. Thanks!

... because of stuff like this...

"In the past I gave my congregation crumbs from God's word when I preached in *Lingala*. Now I preach in *Ngbaka*, I can give them a full meal! When I prepare my sermons using my *Ngbaka* Bible, I don't need commentaries or dictionaries to explain each verse. I can understand the clear sense for myself. I never used to pray in *Ngbaka*, but now I do, and I have a new communication with God. I can communicate God's love now without barriers. People have a new hunger for God's Word and they have new riches to use as they grow. They also are getting much better at discerning truth and error." --Testimony from an *Ngbaka* pastor

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