

GUYANA UPDATE

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FEBRUARY

In February, we said goodbye to the need greater who was here with us the longest. Amber Sabattini, who stayed with us for 6 months, went back to the states. It was sad to see her go. Amy Rivera, a close friend of ours also came to visit. Another couple, Ken and Allison Houghtaling, came to serve and they are also heading back to the states as well. It is such a blessing to have willing, self sacrificing people come out to Guyana and help. There were a few things that took place this month.

CIRCUIT OVERSEER VISIT: At the beginning of the month, we had our circuit overseer visit. It was a very encouraging visit. We had an excellent time in the ministry with them. They went on a few sign language studies with us, though they do not know any sign language. We would conduct the studies in sign and voice to them what was being signed. If they wanted to ask a question or add a comment, they would tell us and we would sign it back to the study. It was encouraging for everyone. We also had the privilege to host them at our home. This was nice because we were able to spend some additional time with them. At the time, a cricket



tournament was going on and they helped us to understand the game as we watched some of the matches on TV. We also discussed the morning text together every morning. This is shown in the picture above. We 1st did it in english and then we watched in sign language. They both said that they really enjoyed watching it in sign language. It was really a good week.



BETHEL TRIP: Recently, we arranged a trip to Bethel for the deaf ones in our territory. 25 deaf people went, as shown in the picture above. 20 additional hearing publishers went, totaling 45 people. The whole group is shown in the picture on the right. It was a wonderful trip. Weeks in advance, we were explaining to the deaf how important it was for them to understand what Bethel was all about. Some of them took the day off of work to be able to attend. We all met at the ferry at 6:30 am in New Amsterdam. Arrangements were made for 3 mini buses to take us on the trip. We arrived at the Branch mid-morning. The brothers were awaiting our arrival. The group was split up into 3, and as the tour guide spoke Donielle, Kali, and Ken interpreted. Donielle is

shown in the picture on the left interpreting for one of the groups. They were able to see how the literature that we place with them arrives into the country and how things are organized. The tour really brought them closer to Jehovah and his organization. While the tours were going on, one of the vans went to Kentucky Fried Chicken and we purchased lunch for the whole group and brought it back to Bethel. The brothers and sisters in the Branch really went out the way for us. They provided us with some refreshments. They also adjusted their lunch arrangements to allow us to use the whole dining room to seat our group. This



is shown in the

picture on the right. It was a wonderful expression of kindness on their part. We all exchanged hugs and left the Branch and headed to the zoo. It was a rainy day, so unfortunately we did not stay at the zoo for a long time. We then headed home. The deaf are still talking about the trip. It was an experience that many of them will never forget.

OTHER HAPPENINGS: In February, both sign language classes came to an end. This was a little sad for both us and the students. Even though we will still be working together in the sign language field, we were really enjoying our time together every Saturday. The students have really made excellent progress over the past 5 months. The class was told that just because the classes are over, your learning does not stop. One young publisher practices the alphabet almost every night before going to bed to see how fast he can do it. Now there are more skilled local signers that can help out

in the sign language field. Ken, the need greater that came, conducted 2 classes on how to interpret. This was a big boost to the friends because this was one area that we really needed additional help in. Since the classes are over, one book study will be held on Wednesday night and the other on Friday night. Also this month, the congregation got together to fix up the kingdom hall for the memorial. The whole exterior of the kingdom hall was painted, as you can see Kali doing in the picture on the left. At the meetings, more and more deaf are attending. Recently at the Sunday meeting, 19 deaf were in attendance which was a new peak for the congregation.



LETHEM, GUYANA: At the end of the month, we traveled into the interior of Guyana. It is an area called Lethem, which is located near the border of Brazil. We went out there to attend the special assembly day. Getting there was interesting. We traveled there in a big bus, similar to a Greyhound Bus in the states. We left around 10:00 pm. After traveling a few hours, we had to stop in a police station, identify ourselves and our seat number and then get back on the bus. We did this 3 times along the way. The first 2 hours or so, we traveled through different villages and towns. Then all of a sudden, we were traveling through the rainforest with only trees and bush on both sides. This lasted for a few hours, and then we came to a point where

we had to cross over a river. The bus had to be unloaded and the bus drove up on a little boat to cross over. As we crossed over we had a nice view of some little falls. It was a nice sight. We got back on the dirt road, traveling pretty fast down the bumpy road. The driver would sometimes stop the bus, get out and look at the road whenever there was a big puddle or huge pothole he had to cross over. Then after sizing it up, he would get back in the bus and we would brace up & cross over it. Once we arrived near Lethem and out of the jungle, we saw beautiful mountains and beautiful



savannah. Once we arrived in Lethem, we checked in the hotel and rested from the long trip, which took a total of 15 hours. The next morning, we met a deaf woman named Shamel. This is shown in the picture above. She did not know much sign language, but she was willing to listen to what we were saying. We placed some magazines with her and reviewed the pictures with her. Afterward we parted and went off to have breakfast. A few minutes later, we saw her again and we invited her to sit with us. She did and we explained more of the magazines to her. As I was doing this, Kali was drawing the sign language alphabet. Kali then started teaching her the ASL alphabet. We asked her if she wanted to come to the assembly the very next day with us. She did not understand us fully, so we asked if we could meet her mom.

We walked and met her mom and explained to her that we would interpret the assembly for her. She said that she would prepare her to come to the assembly. Another sister, Dianne Gangaram, who is in our circuit, came down for the assembly and she knows sign language also. So the 3 of us were prepared to interpret the assembly for Shamel. At this point, it would be wonderful for me to say that Shamel came to the assembly, but she did not. However, we will be sending her some DVD's so she can begin learning. Sunday arrived and the assembly began. I was asked to serve as the chairman in the morning as seen in the picture on the left. That morning I was also

interviewed about being molded by Jehovah over the years. I spoke a lot about how Bethel service made a major impression on my life. After the morning session was finish, it was now time to watch 7 new servants of Jehovah become baptized. The baptism is done in a creek near by the assembly site. So we walked down to the creek and saw the beautiful baptism as shown in the picture on the right. A husband and wife were baptized on that day. It was a big increase because only 2 were baptized last year. The peak attendance for the assembly was 182. Still that was impressive considering it was only 1 congregation. It was a different feel being a part of such a small assembly. Once lunch was over, it was back to the session. Kali and I were then interviewed



about serving where the need is great. We spoke about different experiences we had while serving here in Guyana for 6 months as seen in the picture on the left. A few parts later, Kali was interviewed about her youth and how her mom encouraged her in many ways. Afterwards, Brother Ricardo Hinds, the Branch Coordinator for Guyana, gave an enthusiastic concluding talk. The assembly was so encouraging and something we will never forget. After the assembly was over, some friends who came from Brazil took out their portuguese songbooks and we took out



our english songbooks. Then they would sing one verse in portuguese and we would sing the next verse in english. It was truly beautiful to hear. Then we met these 2 young twins named Petal and Crystal. They were 7 years old. A sister asked them what their favorite bible story was. They said the story of David and Goliath. The sister asked them if they could remember any part of the story and tell us. I can't even properly describe to you enough in words what



happen next. The girls, in exact unison, started reciting the story word for word from the “*My Book of Bible Stories*” book. I immediately pulled out my camera and started filming them. It was one of the most amazing things I have ever seen. After the assembly, we had some trouble with the bus company and everyone could not ride home in the bus. So arrangements were made for Kali and I along with Brother and Sister Hinds to take a plane ride back to Georgetown. The picture of the 12 seater plane we flew back on is shown on the right. This was definitely an experience, since we have never flown in a plane this small before. But we were happy to take the chance, because it meant that our 15 hour bus ride through the jungle would be cut down to 1-1/2 hour plane ride. Riding over the jungle was amazing. It looked like what we pictured Africa was like. Before we left Lethem, we met 2 more deaf people and talked to them also. We also showed them some scriptures in sign language. Arrangements are being made to send all of them sign language literature. We arrived back in Georgetown, tired, but so refreshed spiritually by the whole trip. Well, that is what took place for us this month. We will see what March holds out for us. Take care.

Ramon & Kali Budden

The picture below shows the town of Annai, which we passed through on the way to Lethem.

