

Update from Brenda Buell

November 7, 2013

What a Trip!

I made arrangements to go higher in the mountains to a church in the country. The reason for choosing this church in this location is that I had also made arrangements to spread Ed's ashes after the church service. I will tell about that first before I tell about the other parts of the day. So I am going to tell about the last thing first and the first things last! Are you still with me?

The pastor at this church was a very good friend of Ed's. Ed and I both really enjoyed being out in the country at this church. It is a beautiful area high up in the mountains. The pastor agreed to help me with spreading Ed's ashes. After church he, his elders, 13 people that traveled out with me, and I went to a hill. Bob Baird said a few words and someone prayed. Then I spread Ed's ashes in the wind. It rained shortly afterwards so the ashes were washed in to the earth as Ed wanted. It was a very hard thing to do and I cried as others cried with me. Yet, it was good to see Ed off once again. We all knew he had already gone to the arms of Jesus but it was very symbolic to all of us gathered that part of Ed remained in DR Congo. That is where a large part of his heart was and he loved the people as they loved him. Sometimes it is still so unreal that he is gone and his absence is especially felt by the people here.

Ready to spread the ashes.



On a happier note, we had a very adventurous trip out to Chaninpanzi. It rained a lot Saturday night and was still raining Sunday morning. I had hired a good friend, Dido, to take 14 of us out to the church. He had a large size van or mini bus. The Baird family, Mary Medsker, many of my workers from the house, Tracy's Heart, and the Sawmill Project, Jean Pierre and his wife Esperance, and the new Assistant Legal Representative and the new Secretary for our churches all crowded into the van. I asked Dido if he thought it was safe to go or if we should reschedule. He said we should go but we needed to be leaving. The further out of town we traveled the worse the roads became. Several times we got stuck and the men had to get out and push. A couple of times I really thought we were going to slide right off the mountain. We began praying and singing as Dido did his best to keep us on the mountain road. We did arrive safely and praised God for His protection. We were an hour late but still in time for the biggest part of the service. While Bob Baird preached several of us that were visiting went to see the two different classrooms where the children were having church. There were a lot of kids in each group. We introduced ourselves and I taught a short lesson about staying close to Jesus. It was raining heavy by then. When it let up just a bit we opened our umbrellas and headed back to the main church building. Well, the path was just dirt which had turned to mud, very, very slippery mud. There was a place where we had to go down an embankment. I know many of you will not be surprised to know that I ended up face down in the mud. This left my clothes really muddy. Then my friend, Mary Medsker, followed me down the hill. In slow motion she slipped as well, getting the side of her skirt muddy. We stood in the rain and laughed so hard we could hardly breath. Then I realized that I still had to stand before the church and teach! I had some wet wipes in my purse so Mary and I cleaned up our hands as best we could. I put my jacket over my nice blouse (I had dressed for the occasion). Then decided it would have to do and headed back into the church. Several of the women were grinning at me so I knew that they knew what had happened. As I got up to speak God gave me an additional message. I asked if they knew I had slipped in the mud and they all said they did. I said that I had gotten my nice blouse all muddy and then unzipped my jacket and showed them. They all laughed with me and took pictures. Then I told them that the path of life can be slippery

sometimes and if we let go of the hand of Jesus we will fall into sin. That sin will make us all dirty. Even if we try to hide it like I did with my jacket it is still there and God knows it is there. I said I would go home and wash and my worker would help me get the mud out of my good clothes. The women really laughed when I said the worker would clean them because they knew I would not know how to get that much mud out of good clothes. Then I said I could clean myself up on the outside but only the blood of Jesus will clean up the dirt we hide in the inside. It was a great object lesson and they responded to it very well. God will turn what we think is an inconvenience into something good if we let him.

A good lesson.



After the church service we were all invited back inside the church for a meal. Mary and I both enjoyed the food. It was her first taste of Congo food and we both had an enjoyable meal. It will probably be a couple of weeks before I write again. There is still so much to do and too little time to get it done. I am hoping almost everyone that is going to stop by has done so by now because it is difficult to get a lot done with constant interruptions. I do enjoy seeing everyone and they are coming to give me their condolences. It is a precious time as I listen to each person tell me how much he loved Ed but how happy he is that Ed is now with Jesus. I agree with all of them!

Mary and me at the meal.

