

## September Update

### Life and Times

As I got ready to write this update, I realized that many of the experiences that I have had this month will give you a good look at the Nigerian culture. That is why I am calling this update Life and Times.

### New Missionaries:



Shannon, Corrine, and Rene

Three new single missionaries, now staying in my compound, have come to Nigeria to serve. It has been so nice to have new friends to do things with like playing games and shopping. Rene and Corrine are here for two years. Rene is from America and is working in the Youth Camp Ministry. Corrine is from Switzerland and is working in City Ministries with the street boys. Shannon is from Texas and is here for two months working with City Ministries. It has been fun to get to know them and see their reactions to the culture of Nigeria.

**Water Problems:** We have had problems getting city water this month. Now that the rains have stopped, water becomes a big issue. We have two ground tanks and one upper tank for our compound. But with no water coming in for three or four days, we can have a severe shortage. We had to take bucket baths and flush the toilet just once a day for a week. As I went through this routine, I realized that this is the norm for most Nigerian families. Many have wells near their compounds, but in dry season the wells can dry up over time. After two weeks, we were getting city water two times a week that would fill up our tanks. You never know how precious water is until you don't have it.

**Hausa Language:** I am continuing my language learning with my Hausa helper twice a week. I am improving and have been able to speak and understand Hausa better. There have been several instances at the hospital that just made me laugh. One of our therapists went on leave for six weeks. Deborah, the other therapist does not speak Hausa. There were several times that we had patients that only spoke Hausa. We went to the male ward to see one man for therapy. Deborah was trying to speak to him and I was doing some translating for her. She would ask me for a word in Hausa and I would just ask what she wanted to say. The patient in the next bed was surprised and asked why does the white woman know more Hausa than Deborah (a Nigerian). We all just laughed. I have spent a lot of time on the male ward seeing patients. I try only to speak Hausa with them to practice and they have been helping me. Hands on learning is always the best way I believe.

Another time the American doctor along with a Nigerian doctor brought a patient to the department that needed therapy. The patient did not speak English. I looked at the

Nigerian doctor and she said she did not speak Hausa. Wow, There were two Nigerians and the American doctor, who had been there thirty years, and I was the only one who could speak to the patient in Hausa (that is broken Hausa). I was glad there was a patient in the department that could help when I needed it. Everyone just laughs when I tell that story. This just shows me more why I need to learn Hausa.

Most people would not even think that one Nigerian could not communicate with another Nigerian. But with three main languages, and five hundred dialects, it is not unusual for people to come to the hospital and find staff members cannot speak their language.

**Hiking:** A group of us went hiking in the big hills outside the city. We parked our cars in a village and headed off on foot for the hills. It was definitely a challenge as we had a good vertical hike before we reached the top and then headed down the other side. We hiked up part of the next hill until we arrived at a small waterfall. It was a great place to take a break and eat before we headed back the way



we came. We had some beautiful views. We just had to get through the thorn bushes and up the rocks to see them. You have to get outside of the city to really see that there is some beauty here in Nigeria. The views of the hills and the villages that span below is a breath of fresh air.



**CSI Nigeria:** We had a sad incident occur at the Youth Camp. The staff was waiting for one of the guards, who lived just across the stream, to arrive for work. When he did not arrive, they went to look for him. They found him just down stream from the footbridge lying in the water. It was believed that he fell off the footbridge and into the water and drowned. The director of the Youth Camp Ministry went out along with some other missionaries. They found that the man had several head wounds. They found his jacket and one shoe lying close to the footbridge, but his body was further down stream and the water was not fast moving. They had some doubts that he just fell off the bridge, hit his head and fell in the water. But that is as far as the investigation goes. There are no autopsies performed here or any questions asked about the cause of death. The person dies and the family buries them. Most people can never tell you how their relatives died.

**Swimming:** Three of us went swimming at one of the public pools. There was about seven or eight Nigerians there when we arrived. Not long after we got in the pool, we

realized that most of the Nigerians had gotten out. They were hanging out around the pool watching us. One Nigerian had a camera and was taking pictures of us in the water. We seemed to be major entertainment for them. This is the norm here. The white people are like movie stars. We stand out no matter where we are and everyone is always staring at us and trying to take our picture.

Well, I had better stop here for now. Stay tuned for the next update on the Life and Times.

**Prayer Request:**

- Pray for Deborah (therapist at the hospital), as she is due to have her baby soon.
- Pray for the M people, as this is the end of Ramadan. Pray that God would be revealed to them through dreams and visions during their time of fasting and prayers.
- Pray for me as I teach my discipleship group with the boys.
- Pray for Timothy (my burn patient) that he will heal soon and that he will regain full movement of his arm.

Gay Lynn