

# the NICOLSight

M Term 1, Volume 7

August 2009

## A Letter Home

Dear Readers,

As I look back on the last three months I ask myself what I have accomplished. In my North American mindset I wonder where the time has gone and feel as if I have nothing to report. In June Solo and I tried to get a work schedule for Bible translation set up. We worked together several days, juggling interruptions from visitors, baby and the rain, which called him to his fields for planting.

July was set aside for a trip to Mennonite World Conference in Paraguay. This should have been a highlight of the year; 6000 people of the same faith from nationalities from all over the world meeting in one place to worship together. A three month old, even a well-behaved one, is not conducive to participating in meetings like this though. I

got well acquainted with the nursery but joined in only some of the singing and listened to only bits and pieces of the reports and sermons. My enjoyment of the trip wasn't improved by the fact I arrived in Paraguay with a fever of 104. The first two nights in Asuncion were spent in the hospital. Then, in the three days we had free after the conference, Norm got sick and *he* spent the rest of our time there in bed. We didn't see Paraguay at all.

At least we did get to spend time with my mother and father, two sisters, a brother-in-law and my 9 month old nephew. (picture above) The fact that they were also at the conference made the long trip worthwhile, especially since it was the only time we could show Nadine off to them as a 3 month old.



*Daddy, Uncle Dave, Grandpa, Grandma Mommy, (me), Tanta Starla and Cousin Arlen, Tanta Carla*



*Last jamming session with Daddy before going to bed.*

I was ready to jump into work upon returning to Burkina but the day we arrived in Tin Norm got sick and was diagnosed with malaria and dysentery. He was on medication for one week, slept the following week and is slowly, slowly starting to feel strong enough to work a little in between his rests. Despite having house help where the dishes get washed and the kitchen is cleaned like magic, it seems as if I spend my time running around caring for my little one, organizing, preparing lunch and suddenly evening has come and I have not even turned on my computer. And there August is over.

A Bible translation consultant said that projects have the most problems in the beginning and in their final stages. The Siamou translation has never gained any momentum and my joining the translation team doesn't seem to have made a difference. The Thiessen family has decided to stay in Canada for the next two years with Paul spending the months of November and February in Burkina like last year. Solo has

been working independently when I can not work with him but last week his computer hard drive froze up due to several viruses. Norm has been working on getting the studio ready to record translated scriptures but due to a continual onslaught of sicknesses as well as constant interruptions for building advice or computer help, he has been making slow progress. Even I have had to deal with sickness more this year than in all the previous eight years combined of working in Burkina. Several times during the trip to Paraguay the whole world spun to the point of making me nauseous when I was lying down. Though this has lessened, I still feel slightly off balance much of the time. I am debating whether this dizziness is something worthy of seeing a doctor about.

Mennonites don't like talking about spiritual warfare but here it is as real as snow for Christmas is in northern Canada. I am beginning to think that we need to ask for special prayer for protection against spiritual attack. This extends to all areas of our lives; our health, relationships, motivation, productivity and safety.

We praise God that he is in perfect control, that he knows our trials and fears and that he has promised to be with us each day. We trust that God has called us here for a reason and that his Will will be worked out in his time. We pray that we will stay obedient and faithful through times of uncertainty and difficulties as well as in times of joy.

## Prayer Concerns

- Omar, the man from our courtyard who supervises the use of our tools, is very sick. He was not feeling well the whole month of July but last week blisters started forming on his face. He is now in Orodara getting tests done at the clinic.
- Pray for good health for the three of us. I have ordered malaria prophylaxis for Nadine and me; pray that it will be effective. Pray that we will be able to avoid other sicknesses as well.
- Norm still needs to find/make time for concentrated language study.
- Pray that Norm will find a close friend from the village; one with whom he can communicate, hang out with and learn from.



Moussa with our dinner.

## Praise Items

- We have hired Moussa who worked for the Thiessen family last year. He washes dishes, cleans the kitchen and does any other odd job I ask him to do. He even cooked snake for us.
- Nadine is a central attraction in the village. She is 'fought' over and frequently rewards the 'combatants' with a smile and laugh.
- Please humour a mother's bragging: Nadine is growing fast and is at least a month ahead of the 'textbook babies' in her development. She can almost sit up by herself, loves to stand and is adept at turning in circles on her stomach.
- Our courtyard family has been very supportive through Norm's weeks of convalescence.



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## Addresses

The opportunity to align with God's work in Burkina Faso is made possible through the prayer and financial support you give. Your notes of encouragement and gifts of finances are greatly appreciated. If you would like to express your support of the ministry in Burkina Faso with a donation, you may send it to:

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### Please send personal mail to:

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