

Dear Friends near and far,

May I begin by thanking you all for your prayers for us and for our family during the visit we had with our boys. It could not have gone any better. We really enjoyed our time together, short as it was, and reconnected with each other on many levels. We all got PLENTY of sun that week and a half of which I am reminded daily as I look down at my alligator skin and watch myself peeling away!

A couple of days after the boys left we headed out as a family to "upcountry". We spent New Years in Mamou (about 5 hours out of Conakry) with good friends there and welcomed in 2007 by lowering a real lighted ball from the water tower a la Dick Clark and Times Square (my mom couldn't stand that we were dropping a tin foil covered basketball each year so sent a large electric Christmas ball to be sure we could do it RIGHT!) After that we headed for the Forest Region where I spent a few days working with the church to straighten out some financial and banking records. Aside from freezing to death the trip went very well and we accomplished a lot in those few days. We all actually bought jackets and pants to stay warm...Tim said it was nothing like when he and James May were there and were buying winter coats!!! During harmattan season we get winds off the Sahara making the nights quite cool. Some say it's the coldest harmattan they can remember.

On returning we heard that a strike was being planned for the 10th of January. Sigh. My sister asked me why they were striking. I replied that I was pretty sure that it had something to do with people being tired of working and not being paid, having no electricity or water, and not being able to afford food anymore with prices rising as they are. Being one of the wealthiest countries resource-wise in this area and yet living in the conditions in which people are living here is often the topic of conversation wherever we go. Guineans continue to try to solve these things peacefully. All businesses shut down and no one works until they get what they want. In thinking of what the people here live with it's hard to be selfishly concerned about how this affects us, but we have tickets for this Saturday to take Katie to school in Dakar where she will finish out this year at the school there. Rumors have gone around about whether or not the airport will stay open, what flights will be let in, etc., so we're waiting to see if we are going or not. Two other missionary families are to come in on Saturday, and the rest of the kids from Guinea leave for school in Dakar on Sunday. So lots of comings and goings in the midst of so much uncertainty.

Life continues to be busy and get busier. We have a new co-worker coming in at the end of this month. Andrea Herman worked here in Guinea for a year and half with us in the Forest as volunteer coordinator. She has felt the Lord calling her to work with Maninka women and has headed in that direction since. She arrives on the 23rd of this month and will be working in Siguiri with Tim and Heidi Norton. We will spend some time in orientation, then get together with Tim and Heidi and family for a time of fellowship, prayer, and bonding together as a team here in Guinea.

A week after we send the Siguiri team back upcountry Tim leaves to teach a two week course at our seminary in Togo. We have three men currently in training there. We realized when he flies over that he has to spend two nights in Dakar en route so he'll get to visit with Katie for a bit on his way and on the way back. That was an extra blessing thrown in that we hadn't counted on.

Prayers!!!

\* for the country of Guinea. Please praise God that things have so far been calm. Yesterday was day one and we are pretty much just staying home and laying low. We stocked up a la Y2K and are ready for the long haul. Pray that compromises can be made and people can go on with their lives. As much as this is a valiant effort, it is not easy on the economy either when no one is working!

\* For all the traveling happening this weekend. Pray that flights will continue to go in and out safely

\* For Katie as she starts this new adventure. Anyone that knows Katie knows there is a lot of turmoil and "angst" with all things new. This was her choice to go and she's excited but it's another good-bye and means being away from home long term for the first time ever.

\* For Andrea who is now the only one at home. This is a big adjustment for her as well.

\* for Andrea Herman as she prepares for her trip over here, for her time of orientation, for our retreat together, and as she settles in and seeks God's plan for Maninka women in Siguiri and beyond.

\* For Tim as he prepares for this course he is teaching and for his time there.

Lots happening!! We appreciated all the Christmas cards and notes we received this year. Thanks for remembering us! And thank you, as always, for your faithfulness in prayer, both for us and for God's Work here on this side of the planet.

In Jesus,

Tim, Beth, Katie, and Andrea Heiney