



The

Storyboard

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Solving a Dilemma by the Rostvit Twins

In a land where one can expect the unexpected, no one in the PBT family panicked over the situation that presented itself following the days of celebration. We visiting Americans all crowded into the Pryor's living room and waited as David and Yabru evaluated what routes were available for transporting the nine of us out of the village and back to Madang. The options were presented to us, weighing the feasibility of each:

✂ BY AIR—The hopes of being able to fly everyone out by Mission Aviation Fellowship were dim since the inspector had not yet come to approve the airstrip for use.

✂ BY ROAD—With two days of recent rains, the road would be in extremely bad condition. The only conveyance that could get us through would be a tractor pulling an open trailer on which we would all ride. Although slow, this might be the most dependable alternative.

✂ BY CANOE—We could all be sent upriver for a five-hour journey, and then be flown out from the airstrip at Tumba. As exotic as this idea sounded, it was not a very viable option in the practical sense. The trip would necessitate an overnight stay. Sharran and David didn't have enough mats or mosquito nets, food or cooking supplies to send along.

✂ BY "BANANA BOAT"—We could hire the use of the 20-foot fiberglass boat, devoid of seats, usually used to carry cargo to market. It would take us to the mouth of the Ramu River, then on the ocean to a road access on the north coast. However, the banana boat might not be operating, as the ocean was often too rough at this season of the year.

After explaining the full scope of choices, Dave took the dilemma to the right source. "Let's pray," he said. The following morning, David's son, John, checked with the man who ran the tractor. It was disconcerting to be told that the axle on the trailer had broken the day before.

Meanwhile, the PBT teams in Madang did their part to check on possible flights. The airstrip near Garati for certain had not yet been approved. MAF also reported that heavy rains in the Tumba area had temporarily made that airstrip inaccessible.

With options diminishing, David ran to the river's edge to inquire about the banana boat. He returned with surprising news. We could hire the boat, but to avoid heavy seas, we

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Editor's

If you are like I am, you will agree that it is always fun to start something new or to learn something new or to change one's routine . . . at least for a while. "Variety is the spice of life" is a true maxim for my work schedule and recreational activities. I also like variety in my reading materials (although I tend to go back to my favorite genre, mysteries, most often).

Beginning with this issue, we are featuring a new column authored by one of our illustrious translators, Mike Sweeney. It is called "Coping Devices," and it is guaranteed to give you a humorous "insider's" view of a translator's life in the bush of PNG.

Also in this issue is an "end-of-the-story" article by Faye and Janice Rostvit about God's provision for getting them and other PBT personnel out of Garati after the Kire New Testament dedication last June. We did not have room for it in our autumn 2002 edition, but we believe that it has a message you will want to hear.

I am so thankful, too, that God's mercies are new every morning! (See Lamentations 3:23.) Whether it is rescuing us from furry, four-legged creatures or getting us out of a transportation jam, God's "new" mercies are a constant we can count on from day to day.

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Translation Bloopers by Martha Wade

We had worked on Luke for over four years by the time it was ready for the final consultant check. I thought it was a good translation and was very confident that there would be few changes to make after the consultant checked it. We began by checking a simple passage, Luke 1:26-38, where Gabriel goes to Nazareth to tell Mary that she will be having a baby. I read the passage to a couple of men who had not been involved with the translation process, and immediately I knew we were in trouble by the looks on their faces which said, “Gabriel did what?” I looked carefully at what I had just read and groaned. In the last revisions the men decided to change the term for province from the word for “ground” to the phrase for “short ground”, which means an area or region rather than just dirt. It was a good decision and computers are excellent at making those kind of consistent changes, but unfortunately by making that change a regular idiom in the language had been created. So now instead of saying that Gabriel went down to Galilee ground, the translation said that while Gabriel was on his way to Galilee it got dark on him so that he couldn’t see the road anymore. The addition of one little word meaning “short” had dramatically changed our translation of that verse. Being a translator means learning to pay attention to the details.



Solving the dilemma with: a banana boat

Quick translations into the vernacular, whether oral or written, often include errors that while not crucial, distract the listener from the main point of the story. Once we were checking a very rough draft Luke 1:41-42 when I could tell that the men were puzzled by something. They had the passage read over again and again and finally had me explain what it was supposed to be communicating. As it was written, the passage said that the baby in Elizabeth’s womb jumped up out of the womb onto the ground or someplace outside of the womb, and they were puzzled at how that could possibly happen. The trade language had the term *jump* and the national translator had used the vernacular term for jump, *havalala iahi*. But everyone knows that babies do not jump up or out of the womb, they *havahula iahi*, which is the movement within the womb. This is a minor error—one syllable difference in the terms used—but errors like this in quick translations or oral translations can wreak havoc in the mind of a new believer who is having to accept the miracle of Jesus’ resurrection without having to also deal with introduced miracles such as the baby jumping out of Elizabeth’s womb.

Checking our “archives”, we found this humorous article by Martha written in 1994. Please keep Martha and her father in your prayers; he has been seriously ill, and she is currently in the States helping to care for him.

Solving a Dilemma ... continued from page 1

would have to leave within the hour. We all sprang into action, packing up our belongings. Sharran busied herself making sandwiches for our long day’s journey. By two-way radio, David quickly informed the PBT teams in town that the boat would take us to the north coast. Just as rapidly, Bob Harper and Dave Robinson in Madang volunteered to drive two vehicles three hours up the coast to rendezvous with us at a place called Bogia.

Soon the nine of us were situated in the boat and waving goodbye to David, Sharran, Rachel, and many of the local Christians from Garati. The seas were only slightly choppy and the trip went without incident. God had provided a way.

“If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.” (Psalm 139:9,10 NKJV)

Janice and Faye Rostvit are published authors, with their recent book, *Twin Reflections*. If you would like to contact them about ordering a book, email them at rostvit@juno.com, or write them at 1441 Northview Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80909. The twins are also mentioned in an article of the January 2003 issue of *Guideposts* magazine. Watch for it.

Reflections of an Ordinary Working Linguist

(bowed over by the creation of an EXTRAORDINARY GOD!) by Marsha Relyea

Language is truly a gift of God! God himself is a God who speaks. He **spoke** all things into existence in the beginning. Then He made man **in His own image**. One way that we are uniquely like God—and different from all other creatures—is that we have the capacity for language.

When I read the book of Genesis, I can't help but notice how every time God created something He sat back and admired each thing He had made and said that it was good (Gen. 1:17-18). And I can't help but wonder how He felt when He created language and gave man the ability to speak. He must have sat back and smiled!

These past sixteen years since I have learned to speak the Aruamu language, I have constantly been amazed at the wonderful thing God did when He made this language. It has so many lovely, intricate patterns.

For example, the Aruamu way of talking about "this or that" or "these or those" is extremely complicated, much more so than English. The Aruamu repertoire of deictic possibilities is composed of a four-place system of 108 words to choose from.

The way Aruamu marks singular, plural, and dual on every noun is very lovely—and systematic. (Try your hand at the Aruamu Language Puzzle at the bottom of the page to unravel the system for yourself!)

The way Aruamu joins whole stories together makes them flow so nicely. Aruamu has little conjoining suffixes and words that are like glue. They join clauses and phrases and words together so that stories almost sound like music to my ears.

This language is truly a work of art. There is no other sound system on earth like it. There is no other alphabet on earth like its alphabet. God Himself is the one who created the Aruamu language and gave it to the Aruamu people.

And think of it! I have had the thrilling privilege of being the first one in history to actually look closely at its grammatical structure and sound system structure. I feel like a kid in a candy shop! Lucky me! I love this job.

Thank you, Lord! Your creation is awesome. **YOU ARE AWESOME!**

Mar sha and John are trans la tors with the Aruamu peo ple. They are cur rently on home as sign ment in the States. Mar sha is work ing for six months at the PBT Inter national Ser vice Center in Training.



Aruamu Language Puzzle

From the following data, can you figure out the Aruamu system of marking singulars, duals, and plurals on nouns?

Hint: compare and contrast the words and meanings below and look for patterns. When you've cracked the system, fill in the blanks with the correct form of the word.

<i>gumazim</i>	"man"	<i>dam</i>	"pig"	<i>avim</i>	"fire"
<i>gumazimning</i>	"two men"	_____	"two pigs"	_____	"two fires"
_____	"men"	_____	"pigs"	_____	"fires"
<i>tuarim</i>	"chicken"	_____	"dog"		
<i>tuarimning</i>	"two chickens"	<i>afiamning</i>	"two dogs"		
<i>tuariba</i>	"chickens"	<i>afiaba</i>	"dogs"		

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Coping Devices

by Michael Sweeney



“Rats!”

I’m in the midst of a war. It’s a battle of wits, of strategy. A clash of intellects. And I’m losing.

The humiliating part of it all is that my opponents have brains the size of marbles. You see, they’re mice.

When we first moved to the village, I threw together a bush house for us to live in. Except for the metal roof, it was made almost entirely from round timber and bamboo, with holes all over the place – kind of like Disneyland for rodents. I can recall one three-month period in which I dispatched 69 of them. (For those of you concerned with such things, none of them was cute.) But here I am, always winning the battle but losing the war because of their preponderance of numbers.



So when I built our new house, I went overboard to make everything rat-proof. Milled timber, every joint tight, every door snug. Mosquitoes have to knock to get into my house.

I still recall how, early on, when we first moved into the new house, we were still having rat problems, and I said to Linda, “Well, at least we know the pantry is totally rat-proof, since I’ve lined all the walls with plywood.”

With that I opened the pantry door only to see a rat scurry across the shelves, knocking over a can of peaches.

For pity’s sake.

At least this gives me an opportunity to prove myself to my wife as a Great White Hunter. They may still get in, but after all these years I’ve become quite adept at catching them.

Now here it is, years later, and they’re still getting in. I just spent two hours going around the house for the twelve-hundredth time, plugging all possible entrances; and as I sat down to type this, I heard one of the little beggars in the ceiling right above my head. I could swear he was laughing.

But hey, I’m sure I’ll get him tonight, and with all the work I did sealing up the house today, he should be the last one that ever gets in. After all, I’m a man, and they’re just a bunch of dumb mice.

Mike is Bible translator for the Mumlan language group. He is also currently PBT’s Assistant Director of Language Affairs. He and his wife Linda live in the village of Katiati. Their two boys, Christopher and Ryan are attending the Ukarumpa International High School.

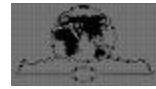
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Bringing the Word to Life

Answers to language puzzle, page 3

gumaziba - “men”
darning - “two pigs”
daba - “pigs”
afiam - “dog”
avimning - “two fires”
aviba - “fires”

. . . Hey, you’re good! Maybe you should look into becoming a Bible translator!



The Sweeneys’ residence ... almost ratproof

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