

Coping Devices

By Michael Sweeney



"Computer Sleuth"

One of the things that continue to set me apart as an "odddity" in Katiati is the fact that I own a machine that knows everything. At least, some people think that it does. My laptop computer is something of a mystery to most of the people around here, and I'm the only one that knows how to talk to it. One time it managed to solve a crime.

Several years ago, someone broke into a small trade store in a village about 30 minutes' walk from us. That night, a delegation from that village came knocking at my door. "Mike, someone broke into our store and stole the entire stock [which consisted of one box of canned fish, and two boxes of laundry soap]."

"Oh, I'm so sorry to hear that. Is there anything I can do?"

"Yes, we'd like you to ask your computer who did it so that we can go get them."

What followed was a lengthy, though fruitless, discussion in which I tried to

convince them that the computer doesn't know anything; it just stores whatever information I put in it for retrieval.

I believe it was at that time that I learned the vernacular phrase for "yeah, right."

Twenty minutes later they were still standing there, waiting for my laptop to point them to the rascals who had done this. When they finally accepted that I wasn't going to put the question to my computer, they asked if they could borrow my dog to track the villains down instead.

I loved my dog, and she was quite bright; but sniffing out crooks was a bit out of her league.

So the men went to Josephstaal, and brought back the entire police department, which was a guy named Michael. I heard the next day that all the goods were returned.

Later, when I spotted Michael coming through Katiati, I called him over and

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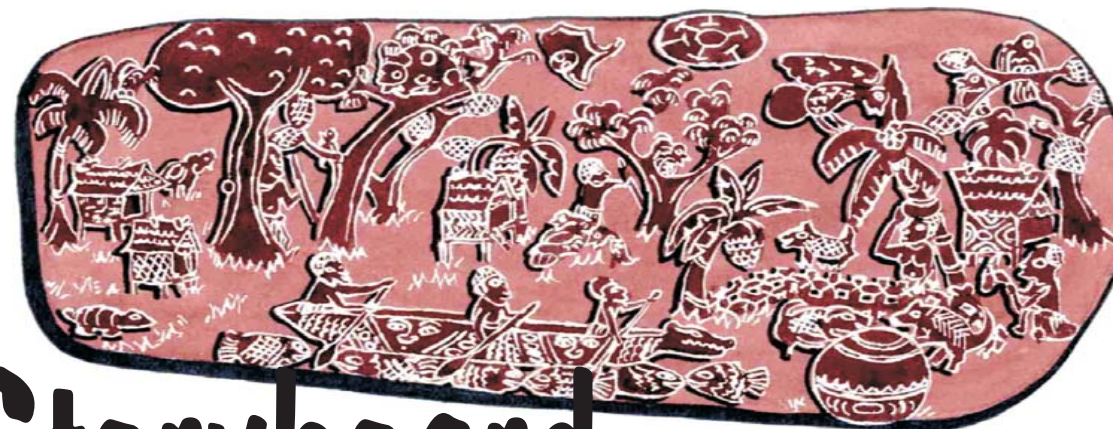


Bringing the Word to Life

asked him how he managed to get the stolen goods back so quickly.

"Easy," he said. "I gathered the entire village together and told them that I wanted the goods returned by the next morning. And I warned them that if it didn't happen, I would give the white man a court order demanding that he ask his computer who had done this. And when it told us the answer, we'd burn their house down. I guess they couldn't face the risk."

And to think that this was even before Microsoft came out with Windows!



The

Storyboard

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Life is full of problems! These problems can either drive you crazy or else drive you to work out a solution.

The problem of unreliable power was driving the PBT office staff crazy here in Madang. The town's power supply was being interrupted more and more frequently. A proposal to purchase a back-up generator was put before the entire Branch at our Annual General Meeting in January, and it was approved. Stepping out on faith, we made the order to a company in Australia (it was unavailable in this country), and we expected delivery and installation in April.

Then, on March 17th, flooding in the Eastern Highlands took down two massive power pylons between Yonki Dam and Madang. Since then, Madang has had to rely on two antiquated generators, one of which seems to constantly need

repair, for its entire supply. That has meant "time sharing": only two-thirds of the town can receive power at one time. We have tried to get used to a schedule of "two hours on, one hour off" these last three weeks, but even that schedule was not always a sure thing.

Well, praise God! He knew the extent of our need and was acting upon it even before it happened! The generator arrived on March 27th, at least two weeks before expected, and Jan Messersmith and Bob Harper, working tirelessly with the contractor and electricians all the next week, were able to get it installed and ready to be inspected by the PNG Power Commission on Friday, April 2nd.

Since we have been using our new generator, we are all noticeably less crazy than before. It seems nearly miraculous that we could get this done so quickly in PNG. Now all we have to do is finish paying for it. Part of the miracle is the way the funds have already begun to come in. We have already been given about two-thirds of the money needed to pay for the generator, and we only need about \$10,000 more to pay it off completely. If you would be willing and able to help with this very important project, please send your checks payable to: Pioneer Bible Translators
7500 West Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas, Texas 75236.

Enclose a note in the envelope which designates that your gift is to be earmarked for the PNG Generator Fund. Then you too will be a part of the solution to the problem. *Dave Robinson, PNG Branch Director*



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Please Accept Our Sincere Apologies

We understand that many of you look forward to receiving the PNG stamps on the envelopes of our mailings. However, postage prices have so sharply risen in the last two years (nearly 800%) that we are forced to take cost-cutting measures. This issue is being mailed from the International Service Center at American first-class postal rates. Many thanks to our co-workers in the ISC for metering each piece and sending it on to your doorstep! If there are any address corrections, please direct them to the return address on the envelope, and the ISC will see that we get them. Otherwise, you may always contact me directly by using my email address listed on the back page of "The Storyboard." Ellen Rohrer, Editor

Notes

Editor's

Family. It's a great word, isn't it? A word that should evoke feelings of warm acceptance, unity of purpose, security and stability. The dictionary defines the family's principal function as "provision for its members." That makes sense, when one of the two Latin words from which it derives is famulus: "servant". (The other word is familia: "a household".)

It also makes a lot of sense to call the Church God's family. We family members who serve God overseas know that there are many of you brothers and sisters providing for us from one month to the next, some of you making the kinds of sacrifices that qualify you as true servants.

In this issue of "The Storyboard" we would like to acquaint you with our family members who work in supportive roles at PBT's International Service Center in Dallas, Texas. Some of these dedicated men and women are veteran foreign field missionaries, while others have always used their gifts and talents State-side. Looking back over the last twenty-five years, though, it is apparent that God has worked in the lives of each one, preparing them to serve together today.

By the way, membership in the PBT family isn't exclusive. We'd love to have you join us, if you hear God calling you to do so!

The PBT International Service Center: Sharing the Vision of Bibles for Bible-less Peoples

by Wes Beasley, Chief Operations Officer for PBT International

Twenty years ago, Dave and Alice Parrish, Mike and Eunice Herchenroeder, and Wes and Alta Beasley were co-workers in Pioneer Bible Translators' Papua New Guinea Branch. Today, these good friends are working together again as members of a team of dedicated servants in the International Service Center (ISC) of PBT in Dallas, Texas. When each family moved to Dallas, they carried with them the same zeal and commitment to Bible translation that had characterized their service in Papua New Guinea. All three couples continue to make a vital contribution through the strategy of evangelism by Bible translation and universal access to the Scriptures. Their roles and location have changed, but the goal is the same.



Rondal & Janice Smith

Pioneer Bible Translation and Recruiting Service was incorporated in Oregon in 1974 by Al Hamilton; in 1976 Pioneer Bible Translators incorporated in Texas, with Al Hamilton serving as president. Board members at that time included Dr. Rondal Smith, David Filbeck, Homer Murphy, and David Pryor. Rondal and Janice Smith (President and Director of Training, respectively) came to Dallas in 1988 in order to help provide the services needed to keep PBT missionaries on the field and to provide recruitment, training, and field operations services. Through efforts like these, PBT/PNG has grown, and sister branches have been founded in West and East Africa, Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia. PBT has grown from its initial one dozen families and singles to 90 career missionaries, plus 30 more Members-in-Training, Recruits, and volunteers, with a Canadian sister organization as part of PBT International.



Dave Parrish



Alice Parrish

Every PBT member in the ISC is a team player committed to the goal of Bibles for all language groups. We see each other in a way very similar to the Apostle Paul's analogy of the body for the church. We all have different roles, different tasks, even different locations, but we are all part of the body that is Pioneer Bible Translators. At times in the growth of PBT, we have learned what it means to be without a vital part, or to have to cover a vacancy in a role that is not our special gifting from God. It is difficult to do this job of Bible translation and Scripture use without all of the necessary team members; we all know that it is impossible to do the job well alone.



Wes Beasley



Alta Beasley

PBT members often refer to you – those who give financially and those who faithfully pray – as our partners in the translation ministry. You may never go to another country and translate the Bible, but because of your prayerful contributions to the task, you are our partners. The PBT support workers in Papua New Guinea, Ukraine, Tanzania, Guinea, and here in North America do not translate, but we all contribute to the team effort.

When the allied troops landed on Normandy's beaches during WWII, thousands gave their all to gain a beachhead and carry the fight to the enemy. What most people don't know is that for every soldier who walked through the surf onto those bloody beaches, six more were standing behind him, giving him aid and support in a myriad of ways. Like the Pentagon and West Point for the military, the International Service Center is a hub of activity supporting the advance of front-line missionaries to the villages and towns of Bible-less peoples all over the world.

What does the ISC team do? A description of our job here in the ISC constitutes an answer to the questions that our translators ask when they initially decide to work within the context of the PBT team: Why should I do translation as part of a team? What could a team do that I cannot easily do for myself from Papua New Guinea (or from other foreign fields)?

Recruiting and Training the Next Generation of Bible Translators

When you live in the jungle and work full time on a translation of the Bible, you do not lose your ache for other ethnic groups who still do not have the Bible in their own languages. Yet, because of distance and time, it is extremely difficult to share the challenge with young men and women who live back in North America. While you are on the front lines, you need help to locate, recruit, train and send re-enforcements. We here at the PBT International Service Center make sure the message continues to go out to dedicated Christians all over the North American continent. We visit Christian colleges, universities, churches, and conventions to promote the ministry of Bible translation and to recruit



Mike Herchenroeder



Eunice Herchenroeder



Scott Graves



Kathy Graves



Rachel Craft



Jonathan Craft

the next generation of PBT workers. As these new recruits gather their own teams together, the ISC directs their training so they are thoroughly prepared for their specific role (Scott and Kathy Graves, Rachel Craft: Recruitment; Janice Smith, Diane Shreve, and Laura Wilhoit: Training).

Providing Administrative Services for All Members

Living abroad complicates things. For example, in some places, absentee ballots for PBT members have arrived the day after the election. We can't help the overseas members vote, but we do help in other ways. Jack Straus, our legal representative, makes sure that the members are in compliance with our country's laws regarding finances and labor issues. Our ISC Finance Department (Nancy Drescher, Lynda Alderson, Nancy Ann Wilt, and Luann Worley) deposits all contributions from donors, distributes the operating funds to all the overseas branches, transfers salaries to members' personal accounts, and does a long list of activities designed to ensure a good fiscal accounting. Mike Herchenroeder and Mark Wilt provide computer support directly to the translation task and in several other areas. PBT also develops and maintains relationships with other organizations with similar goals to avoid duplication of work (Eunice Herchenroeder: Media Advisor/Editor/Secretarial Services; Naomi Dobbins: General Secretary). The PBT Board of Directors offers guidance and wisdom for the entire process.

Providing Pastoral Care and Intercessory Prayer for the Whole Team

When veteran PBT missionaries return to the USA, they are leaving their home and returning to a culture that is less Christian than when they first went abroad. To help with the cultural adjustments, PBT welcomes them with tender, loving care. Our Missionary Care personnel (Gerald and Ruth Denny, Naomi Rice) greet all returning members with compassion and counsel. Janice Smith has designed a curriculum for families preparing their children to adjust both to the new field conditions and to return to the changing home culture after time on the field. In the event of overseas



Mark, Diane & Noah Shreve



Jeff, Laura & Kayla Wilhoit



Jack Straus



Nancy Drescher



Lynda Alderson



Mark & Nancy Ann Wilt family

emergencies, ISC personnel are ready to respond with compassionate, well-planned action. Although we all accomplish important tasks, the PBT support team recognizes that our most important means of support for the team is through our intercessory prayer. We pray daily for our PBT family in other countries, and we actively recruit additional prayer warriors.

Developing the Vision

The vision for the future of Pioneer Bible Translators is not set in stone, but instead is directed by the Spirit of God. Our top priority is to give glory to God through our service and within our strategy of Bible translation. Rondal Smith travels for PBT in many other countries to open new fields and to establish relationships with other organizations that promote vernacular Bible translation. The leadership of Pioneer Bible Translators is daily seeking God's guidance and vision. We here at the International Service Center work to implement the vision and share it with God's people, the Church (Dr. Rondal Smith and Wendy Beerbower).

The leadership team of the ISC – just like the leadership of each branch – prays for willing workers to join the harvest. Our greatest need in the ISC is for qualified professionals to fill strategic roles in training, development, logistics, human resources, media design, writing, and accounting. (Sandra Schofield, former Logistics and Human Resources Director, will soon be working with the Crafts in Southeast Asia.) Of course, the ISC has projects that require financial resources: a permanent, multi-purpose building is becoming more and more urgent; our displays for promotion need to be replaced periodically, etc. We here in the ISC want to be God's servants, calling and equipping those whom God has prepared for the translation ministry, but also informing and mobilizing His people who stay here and send them out with prayers and funds. We work to achieve a balance between adequately equipping the new workers and sending them onto the field quickly. Our desire is the same as that expressed by the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians: "Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you" (2 Thessalonians 3:1, NIV).



Luann Worley



Naomi Dobbins



Gerald & Ruth Denny



Naomi Rice



Alan & Wendy Beerbower



Sandra Schofield