

*From the Helm – Friday, July 10, 2009*

**4:00 PM** – The team was at the airport and checked in by one yesterday afternoon. Everyone was ready to head home. By now, all should be pretty much there.

Anderson picked me up at the airport and we went straight down-town to begin knocking out some of our list for next trip's preparations. By 3 in the afternoon, I was settled in my room. I was more tired than I thought I was. After dinner, I settled with a book. Next thing I knew, it was 6 o'clock this morning.

– It's been a long but good day. I've been hit with a couple of things that have left me ill-at-ease. One of our employees has been caught (several times) taking supplies and shorting inventories. We've confronted him on two occasions about it – he'd repent then continue doing it. Yesterday, we terminated him.

Today he informed us he was taking us to "labor court" seeking 7 years worth of benefits. He's not due any at all. So, we'll just sit and see what comes of it. In cases such as these, not responding or reacting is my best reaction. Just let God deal with the deal. Any defense offered on my part will just lead to further irritation of the situation. We'll wait as the emotions settle.

- I just arrived from the street. Meds, lumber and water are on the way to the *Beatriz*. Ship's manifest and passenger lists are in for approval at the Captain of the Ports. Fueling was done yesterday morning before the team left for the airport. Most of the purchasing in done. Another half-day should find us ready to sail.

William has been out a good part of the day taking care of some things for us. I'm grateful to have him, Phillip and Matthew with me these days. Helps me on many different levels. Just grateful it's been possible.

- The Boy's, Jake and Chase have been catching up on their sleep. I guess they'll catch a movie this evening. Its fun to watch them from a distance. As they check out the stores and walk around the Mall, they seem oblivious to the fact that they turn the head of about every girl within a hundred yards of them, young and old alike. Cool to see. Cooler still to see them taking it all in stride...

- It's been a good day indeed. I look forward to a good bit of 'nothingness' going on til morning. This weekend will hopefully find our new email system set up and operating. I have high hopes our communications costs will be greatly reduces by the whole deal. I'm once again grateful for all the effort Mickey and Jacob have put in to it all. These guys are great. However, it's like having two "Einstein's" working on a simple addition problem - Greatly overqualified for the task...

*From the Helm – Saturday, July 11, 2009*

**Noon** - Chase and Jake just headed to the airport. They should be in Miami by early evening. These are fine young men. My Boys have been good to surround themselves with guys like these. I'm grateful, indeed...

**7:00 PM** - I've had to stop and be still this afternoon. I've created some trying times for myself these passed few days. Trying times because I've chosen to let my imagination run with a few assumptions and projections regarding people, places and things. I'm truly good at this deed when I stray from God's peace and comfort, subconsciously assuming I'm cured of all that once embodied me.

I've had to do some self-assessing. The root of most trials in my life lies within the confines of my own mind. My mind tells me of its great dreams and wisdom. It gives me direction in all situations, without hesitation. It lays out conversations that will never take place with people who are likely not to appear. It gives me scenarios for battles that will never occur. It defeats me against challenges that are non-existent.

I used to live in this realm of possibility and projection. It's a sad place, leading only to unrest of the soul. It produces unprovoked anger, resentment and anxiety. Left unchecked, it leads to unrealistic expectations and the ultimate incomprehensible demoralization of character and purpose. An unbridled mind is source enough for the destruction of a simple man like me.

From the mind comes plotting and desire. I need not a demon beneath my bed to entice me along an ill-fated path. All I need is a simple thought or occurrence to set me decidedly in error. Once I've caught myself in the beginnings of a rut such as this, its pitifully funny to see what led me to such a place in the first place.

As I review the past few days, I've recognized that my mind is tired. I've recognized that the maintenance required for peace of mind has been faulty, at best. I've been coasting along under the false assumption that I'll be ok anyway.

Well, I am indeed ok. It's just taken some time being still before my God. He has once again gently reminded me that those things of this world I insist upon conquering will never take place for the very reason of my insistent. He's reminded me that those I would desire to influence will only be influenced by His own touch, in His timing, at His discretion.

He's brought me back to the place of following only as He leads, not before. He's comforted me with the profound knowledge of His love and care for me. That He will provide any solution needed by His grace and mercy – not via my own infinite wisdom and self-righteous demands. He's further reminded me to seek solitude when these funks of the mind arise. In solitude, He whispers amidst the quiet...

I've needed these hours in Your comfort, my Lord. I'm grateful for Your indulgence of me. I'm grateful the memory of where I'm able to take myself is still fresh and sharp. Unattended by Your peace, wisdom and guidance, my best efforts are limited to great misery and destruction.

I thank You for the life You've allowed me to live. I thank You for revealing the path to a relationship with You. I thank You for continually matching any chaos with an equal measure of serenity. I thank You for relieving me of a once burdened soul. Thank You for the simple truth that all I need do is seek You in complete surrender. By my seeking, You will indeed unfold all the rest I am to see and experience...

***From the Helm – Sunday, July 12, 2009***

**6:00 AM** – A peaceful night of rest last night. Other than grumbling a bit at the Boys for “just being boys”, I rested well.

I've been considering the matter of “humility” vs. “humanity” this morning. I've always been master of the infrequently require kind of humility – the kind made possible through the distance I necessarily maintain from most I know in this world. Only those unfortunate enough to live within my reach actually see the true presence and effect of my pride and arrogance from time-to-time.

No matter how much I try and will to project what I feel in my heart, my humanity is ever present. My humanity tends to distort the knowledge within my soul. I'll find myself perfectly content with things then, suddenly, I will say something or do something totally out of context with contentment of *any* kind. My Boys lovingly refer to me in these moments as being an “ass face”. Their Mother frequently refers to me with this same term of endearment, only in Portuguese – somehow it sounds a *whole* lot worse when spoken with a “latin touch”, from across the ocean...

I spend a good bit of time surrendering my humanity (self) to the Lord each day. However, it's still alive and well. It's become clear that all I can do is continue to surrender. God created me both of flesh and spirit. The two are perpetually at odds within me. I'm convinced and comforted that it's possible only to *seek* perfection – never to attain it in this life.

I Know that as long as I strive to be the perfect person I try to project, I'll continue to fail miserably. My human nature dooms me to dependence upon the Creator of that nature. This “doom” is actually the paradox of a day well lived. It is indeed the nature of true humility...

Of myself I am, and will ever be, capable of great amounts of nothingness - futility. Anything produced of my own efforts yields little of eternal value. The days I feel I've accomplished anything other than communion with and obedience to my God, are those resulting in little more than a self-pat-on-the-back. It's on *these* days I usually live up to

the terms of endearment bestowed upon me by my Boys and their Mom. If I'm fortunate they just walk away, refraining from comment...

I'm just grateful the only day God's given me to live is the very one that I'm experiencing right now. I'm grateful he requires only that I walk through *this* day, as He unfolds it. I'm grateful He requires me to do nothing at all for the "rest of my life" – All He's given me as a task is to live out *these* hours as He desires – and that, under His care, direction and providence. Comforting thought for this old, occasional "ass-face", indeed...

**3:30 PM** – Just got back from the *Beatriz*. All paint touch-ups are complete and she is absolutely beautiful – ready for tomorrow's departure.

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***A little sideline...*** While out with the *Beatriz*, the Boys and I cruised over to look at an unbelievable vessel – just like the one I've thought, dreamed and prayed about. She belongs to the government and has been deactivated for five years. Luiza's sister, a lawyer, is beginning a petition of donation to the Director of the State Health Department of Amazonas here in Manaus. We'll just have to wait, pray and see...

The vessel is 9.25 meters wide and 37 meters long (30' X 120'). There is enough room between the two decks to accommodate 12, large suites, full crew's quarters, huge kitchen and full, onboard, medical and dental facilities and additional hammock space for 24. It has twin, MWM 72 hp, 50 kilowatt generators and a 12 cylinder, 766 CAT, main engine. The mechanical part is near-new. We could probably trade the main engine, even up, for twin 300's – far less diesel...

She would take a good bit to make new again, but about 2/3<sup>rd</sup>'s less than the 900K to build her from scratch. I'd attach some photos but have been asked not to publicize her current state of disrepair. I will be glad to share them on an individual basis to anyone interested in the whole deal.

***From the Helm – Monday, July 13, 2009***

**4:00 AM** – Well, it's about time to set sail. Anderson just took Filipino to the fruit and veggie market to pick up the perishables. Our staff should be onboard in a couple hours. I've got a morning's worth of stuff to take care of then, off to the airport.

All we know to do in preparation is now done. Time to settle and experience the days as God unfolds them. Lord, now comes the rest I cherish. The rest that comes when all things along the known path of duty have been tended to. This begins the time when any task to be performed can't be found on anyone's "to do" list. It now is a "to-do" list materializing as You choose to reveal. I've grown to love Your lists, Lord...

I have no idea what lies ahead. This is exactly the place I like to be. No undue expectations; No concerns; No demands whatever. A beautiful place for me to be, indeed...

*From the Helm – Tuesday, July 14, 2009*

**12:10 AM** – At the moment, we're tied off to the bank, waiting out a storm. The August storms are arriving early.

- The team arrived ahead of schedule. They were already through Immigration and Customs when I arrived at the airport at 1:45 yesterday afternoon. So good to see Jim, Jimbo, Robert and the rest. We headed for the *Beatriz*, which arrived about 15 minutes after we got to the Tropical port. We departed without incident at 3:40 PM.

- The day just past was among the most interesting I've experienced in a very long time. It started out all good and well then, things began to happen very quickly. Maybe a "time line" is appropriate:

4:00 AM – I woke up, had coffee and some quiet time.

7:00 AM – Anderson arrives and we hit the road with our final little list of things to do.

9:00 AM – Pedro calls with the news our gear box has blown a seal or something and must be torn down to fix.

10:30 AM – Our dispatcher calls with the news the Captain of the Port has refused us permission to travel.

10:31 AM – I email Jed Thompson in Dallas with the situation, requesting the loan of one of *Amazon Outreach's* vessels for our trip.

10:45 AM – Marco Rego calls me with the news *AO* can accommodate us with a vessel on Friday – all are traveling at the moment. Marco said he would have his dispatcher call me to see if he could help with the *Beatriz* in any way.

11:00 AM – I arrive at the Captain of the Port but could not enter because I was in shorts and flip-flops...

NOON – I meet with Marco's dispatcher and we call the Watch Commander at the Captain of the Port. The Commander says we may travel but will have to "re-categorize" the *Beatriz* immediately. A process requiring several months and a great deal of investment. No problem. The "you can travel" part was all that mattered to me at that moment...

12:40 PM – Picked up the boys and headed to the airport. On the way, we stopped and bought a battery charger, a couple of hoses and some clamps (all these, last minute generator blow-outs)

1:00 PM – While still picking up the hoses, Pedro calls saying the gear box is being put back together, but will take some time.

1:25 PM – Headed to the airport from downtown.

1:45 PM – Arrived at the airport to find the team waiting for us outside as the bus was pulling around to load them.

2:15 PM – Arrived at the hotel port and the group went to check out the zoo.

2:35 PM – The *Beatriz* arrives, is loaded and load balanced.

3:15 PM – Group is back from the zoo, settling in and enjoying pizza for a snack.

3:40 PM – All systems are "go" and we depart on schedule.

3:45 PM – Got word our bibles have arrived but were confiscated by Customs. Then immediately got another call saying the bibles have been released and will be delivered this evening.

4:20 PM – I go and sit in my cabin for awhile to simply breath...

- It been a day, indeed...

**2:00 AM** – We just eased away from shore. The storm has settled down enough to continue. I'm worn out and ready to settle in my hammock for what remains of the night.

It's good to be back on the *River*. Out here, the variables are gentler, more defined than in town. The "human" one (primary to most problematic interludes) is limited to those of great trust and loyalty, my crew and teams. If I could somehow manage to just *stay* out here, it'd sure be grand. Realistically though, it takes a bit of "all the above" to truly appreciate the freedom I experience underway in the *Valley*...

*"ETA in Maues is set for around Noon, today. Rendezvous with Pastor Moises, shortly thereafter"*.

**1:00 PM** – We've been in port here in Maues for about 30 minutes. Moises is nowhere in sight. We will catch up with him somewhere along the way.

- The team decided they wanted to get off the boat and walk around for an hour or so. Upon departure, we should be at anchor, off-shore of Esperanca in the Satere Nation within 5 hours.

- I called Tereza and have confirmed a visit with her on our way out next Wednesday. I look forward to seeing her and discussing the upcoming Middleburg team's trip. She didn't feel like coming down here now. Next Wednesday will do just fine.

- It's been a good day of sailing. All are well and rested. It's been good to visit around this morning, getting to know some of the "newcomers". It's good to be this close to the Satere's once again.

***From the Helm – Wednesday, July 15, 2009***

**5:30 AM** – Arrived in Esperanca at seven o'clock last night. Jimbo, Jim, William, Pedro and I went ashore to see what was going on. Moises and his family were waiting for us when we arrived.

Went straight up to Tuchaua Everisto's place. Even with the high water, the climb to his hut was grueling. I was ready and needing to sit down by the time we got there. He's doing better this year than last. Although he still has difficulty walking due to the stroke, he seems better accepting of his situation. We all shared in a couple rounds of "sapo" (powdered Guarana, hand-ground into cool water), visited and laughed a bunch. The

sapo, of course, was prepared by the oldest, dirtiest pair of female hands available at the moment – seems to be a requirement for this ceremonial drinking deal...

Everisto immediately developed a fixation on Jimbo's (Chi-Chi-Chi) well developed size. He would be talking along with one of us, then focus on Jim. "My, you sure are *much* larger than last year..."; "My goodness, you're a "five-chicken- man" to feed these days..."; "Give him lots of sapo so he won't eat all my oatmeal..." and on and on. Jim took it all well. It was great seeing Tuchau's sense of humor back to normal.

**9:30 AM** - All teams onshore and setting up by 8:30 this morning. Construction will build a couple of showers for the community. Medical and dental are being assisted by the FUNASA (Office of Indian Affairs) nurses. VBS is just about to begin the madness with an incredible number of excited children – the day has begun...

**5:30 PM** – All has gone well. After lunch and swim, many were treated and released from medical and dental. Construction has gotten a good start on the two shower houses they started this morning. I was able to secure all the Guarana around the village along with helping Jimbo with some shopping of his own.

It's taken me the better part of the day to readjust to the culture of the Satere-Maue. I've been away a year now and had forgotten their manner of asking for just about anything and everything – from food to watches to airplanes. So accustomed to having the government meet their needs, they've all but lost self-sufficiency in the process. Unfortunately, the government no longer provides as they used to. So, the people here just do without for the most part.

Our teams from Orlando have done a great service to this Nation in bringing fresh water systems to all the major communities. It was good to walk through Esperance with Jim today, watching as people made use of the showers and faucets that were provided a number of years ago. The sweat and toil was well worth while...

- Jim Chris and Roger, joined by Pedro, Moises and William, are conducting a Bible study with the men this afternoon. This activity is a continuation of the work begun last year by Jim, Silas, Doug and Greg introduced last year. It has proven to be a source of deep conversations and contemplation of the Word. I look forward to seeing even further blessings this trip.

- It's been good to sit with my friend Tuisa Everisto. Every year I come, he's of a different age. Last year, he was 56. This year, he's 88. He doesn't really know how old he is but it'll be fun to see what age he's reached by the next time we meet... He is a man who stuck his neck out for us to be permitted in to this Nation 10 years ago (wow, it's been that long...). Today, the relationship is a beautiful, transparent one. One of family – not one of occasional visitors. I'm grateful God has allowed me such relationships throughout the *Valley*. I'm humbled by the privilege. As I was about to leave, his son served me a snack of Sahaia and Cara (salted ants and manioc root). Perfect end to a relaxing visit...

***From the Helm – Thursday, July 16, 2009***

**6:00 AM** - With the dawn came a breathtaking sunrise. The kind that sets my heart and mind in a place of gratitude and awe. I'm truly grateful to see such things.

Last evening's service occurred in true Satere fashion. The people who directed it spoke in the familiar, odd mixture of Portuguese and Satere, making it virtually impossible to follow or comprehend. I just did a lot of "nodding and amen'ing". The final result was an older man coming to know Christ as his Savior – well worth the hour-and-a-half of my brain fog.

Pastor Moises is a good speaker. He relates well with his people. They appreciate his presence. The Tuchaua here has asked that he visit more often, bringing Bible studies to his people. I feel certain this will take place over the coming year. Moises obliges any and all requests for his presence. He wisely goes only where he's invited to stay. But, when invited, the results are beautiful to see. The evangelical work has grown *five-fold* in the 5 years since his arrival in the Marau side of the Nation. It's a privilege for us to be involved with such a man and his family.

**1:30 PM** – The team is back ashore for the final afternoon in Esperanca. Last night, Tuchaua Everisto was unable to attend the services because of darkness. He is no longer able to get out at night due to his eyesight and physical frailty. We will knock off our activities at 4 o'clock this afternoon and, for his benefit, have a closing service at five.

- The continuation of yesterday's Bible Study went well this morning. Most of the same men showed up to learn more. This is an interesting idea Jim as brought to us here. The Satere have no "written" Old Testament. So, the OT must be taught much as it was in the old days, via oral tradition. Very effective, indeed.

- Medical and dental continue to be busy, as usual. Construction will hopefully be finished with their shower projects by day's end. VBS has been every bit as healthy and exited as yesterday! Our folks are beginning to tire and we are only in our second day on location. The pace will assume a more manageable level as the team's adrenaline wanes and "normal" energy takes its place...

- We plan to anchor after the services this evening and head deeper in to the Nation at first light. As we go deeper, the communities grow more pagan in their beliefs and mannerisms, adding to the intrigue of the venture. The deeper God allows us to travel, the more excited my spirit becomes. Difficult to adequately describe. It's just all good...

***From the Helm – Friday, July 17, 2009***

**10:00 AM** – Several people were up at 4 this morning when I was having my coffee. The common denominator was it being "too cold to sleep" upstairs. The thermostats

were set on 65 instead of 72. After installing some circulating fans, it really *does* get too cold if we forget to turn the thermostats up higher. Such problems we face...

- The day ended with us at anchor by 7 o'clock last night. The closing service was a time used mostly by the Tuchaua's and other authorities to express gratitude for the work that was done by the Team. When all the formalities were finished, I walked Everisto back to his house. The good-bye was a tearful one. Each passing year, we both know either of us may be absent the next time around. But, we both have good blood around us, ready and able to carry on if and as God may lead. God's will and work is never hindered by our physical changes of the guard...

- Underway a six this morning. We were a little late getting underway. Filipino ran another assistant chef off last night. The poor guy wanted off the *Beatriz* at any cost. Filipino is evidently hard to work for over any length of time. He's gone through 4 assistants in 6 trips. I stay out of the whole deal. He does a tremendous job of delivering healthy, delicious meals of a continuous basis. He'd just be better off with a staff of drones and robots.

- Arrived in Vila Nova a little over an hour ago. All teams are set up and working. Construction will take these days to help out with VBS. Many children here.

This is the Capitol of the Satere Nation. The Grand Tuchaua is out of town leaving us to deal with the more amicable, Tuchaua Joaquin. This has been a tough stop over the years. It's where we were first refused entry some 10 years ago. My, how things have changed over time. God has opened wide the doors to this Nation. It has been an incredible ride to watch it all unfold...

**1:45 PM** – The day has been very hot. We had a few of the team take the afternoon off. The heat is intense.

- I feel a little tired myself today. Nothing a good night's rest won't remedy. The Boys have been absolutely fantastic all through the summer. They've worked hard and have been good company to me. Although I'll see them again in early August, I'll miss them when they leave for Minas next week.

It's been good to sit and listen in on their hopes and dreams - To see their imaginations run in healthy directions. I've often wondered what effect my own wandering nature would have on their lives. In following me all around this *Valley*, I see a certain courage and boldness in them – an inherent comfort in the face of the unknown. I have *no* idea what God has in store for them. I *do* know they will put no limits on the “where's” and “when's” of the deal. By God's grace, they're becoming extraordinary young men...

**4:45 PM** – Just returned from visiting my old friend Kazuza over in Nova Esperanca. He's the former Grand Chief who granted us access prior to being deposed in 1999 by Antonio, who ultimately denied us that initial access. Kazuza's had a trying year. His wife died back in April leaving him depressed and lonely. Jim and I remember how she

was by his side day and night. He misses her profoundly. Tomorrow, William will take our pastors over to have Bible Study among the men of his village. I hope to be there myself if it works out in that way.

- Our team is now coming aboard for dinner before the evening services. I feel rested after the visit with Kazuza. Thank You, Lord, for leading me out this afternoon. You used a visit with an old friend to renew my energies. Thank You, indeed...

***From the Helm – Saturday, July 18, 2009***

**9:30 AM** - It has been a morning of tremendous blessings. As the team went up to work, I stayed back to visit a bit with those remaining aboard. Lord, thank You for ministering to me in such a beautiful way...

- VBS continues in the blessing of touching and being touch by the children. Dental and medical have embarked on the endless task of seeing all possible in the last hours here in Vila Nova. Our pastors have headed off with William to share with Kazuza and his people. I'm simply grateful to be witness to it all.

Our plans are fluid up to the point of departure at 3 this afternoon. This day God has blessed us to live, is now in full swing. Lord, slow me to take in all You've in mind for me to see...

**12:20 PM** – Over lunch we received an email from 1<sup>st</sup> Orlando committing to meet some basic needs involving Moises' vessel and other pressing obligations. I continue to be amazed at how God matches all needs with the resources required. Moises will sit in Maues over the next weeks as funds already in hand join with the new finances to make a marked difference in his ability to minister. I've prayed God to provide and He has done so beyond any expectations I dared have. Thank You, my Lord, for Your provision...

- The pastors had a great morning with Kazuza. They studied in the Book of Romans. Much was said and heard. The people there are hungry for what the Word has to say. This hunger for Truth is inherent in all, sought by many and followed by few. It encourages me to see a people such as these seek so openly and honestly. This is tangible evidence of the work of the Spirit. Just an added pleasure for me to experience today. It's all been quite good, indeed...

**5:45 PM** – After 2 hours negotiating hairpin curves through the brush and overhang, we've just arrived and dropped anchor off Aldeia Nova. The setting is like something out of "Apocalypse Now". The water is freezing cold. We are near the headwaters of the Marau, headed ashore for the formalities with the Tuchaua...

*From the Helm – Sunday, July 19, 2009*

**10:00 AM** - Awoke early this morning to the sound of splashing and laughter around the *Beatriz*. The crew was ceremonially throwing each other in to the frigid waters as each got out of their hammocks! It's become a tradition, of sorts, here in Aldeia Nova. I'm glad there's still enough respect around to exclude the "bosses" from the ordeal...

- First on the schedule today was to go see how a patient we saw last night was doing this morning. She's had a sustained, low-grade fever for the past 23 days. Barbara conducted some tests that indicated a bladder infection. The lady was better this morning. We'll see how the day goes before determining whether or not to send her on to Maues.

- The Tuchaua isn't here today. However, the Captain has been left in charge and is receptive to all areas off ministry. A Bible Q&A will begin in a few minutes. Construction is erecting an outhouse for the "city" nurse. VBS is in full swing. Medical and dental have had their day pretty much mapped out for them – lots of people...

- I've enjoyed the devotionals onboard each morning. Team members have alternated each day. It's been good to hear the things from each one's heart. The romance of the *Valley* tends to simplify God's Truths. For me, it is here I'm able to more easily grow, unencumbered as God chooses to reveal Himself. I'd wish such times upon everyone though I recognize the hurdles required for most to reach my *Valley*. The good news is: He's just as gracious and faithful to lead and teach regardless of where we may find ourselves along the way. I humbly recognize the privilege I've been granted and am grateful for it - profoundly grateful, indeed.

**12:40 PM** – At the moment, we're anchored for lunch. The morning was full. Dental saw 22 patients with that many again, waiting for them on shore. Medical finished with all who were waiting to be seen. VBS was, well, busy...

I was able to take some time to listen in again during the Study. I've never heard the steps leading to Christ explained so well. Chris and William did a beautiful job. The Captain asked that we hold services this evening so the rest of the community might here what he heard this morning. I look forward to it very much.

- Since seeing the "barge" back in Manaus, I've paid close attention to where we've travelled. Close attention to the often difficult passages we must forge along the way. The areas of "sticks" we must pass through here in the Nation are among the worst we've encountered anywhere. In talking with the crew and the Boys, we'd have no problem with the barge. As a matter of fact, due to it's lesser draft and prop cages, we'd actually make better time by cutting across some to the brush instead of having to go around it. Anyway, it's fun to imagine what it would be like. Our needs are more than met with the *Beatriz*. Anything other than her would simply be something other than her.

**4:00 PM** – The rain is pouring down – a much needed reprieve from the heat and humidity. Jim and I took the *AMOR/TT* up the river a bit to check out a collapse of the

embankment that's blocked the way. The river becomes immediately smaller past our anchor. We're at the furthest point the *Beatriz* is able to navigate. Years ago, we went to the end of this river in our secondary vessels – a community by the name of Nazare. Maybe someday, I'll be blessed to return there once again.

- Aldeia Nova is a primitive settlement of people with little contact with so much as the rest of the Satere Nation. They are kind and generous. I sense no malice in their mannerisms or spirit. A people who are not demanding in any way. We are to “love, regardless of response”. These have made it easy to do so...

Services are set for seven this evening. Our team is well, tired, in good spirits. Thank You, Lord, for this day you've given me to live. It's been a pleasure walking through it in Your care...

### ***From the Helm – Monday, July 20, 2009***

**4:00 AM** – I woke up a bit ago. I walked out of my cabin in to a swirling mist of fog. It slowly danced through the *Beatriz*, carried by the breeze. It was beautiful to sit and watch. The shapes created would bring envy to the mind of Vincent. “Starry Night” could only hope to capture the sight I beheld...

The service last night was beautiful to me. We met in the Tuchaua's hut – sitting around much like while in a private meeting with the Chief. Moises spoke from 2 Corinthians – the crowd was attentive, mumbling in agreement. The message was well received. In the end, both the Tuchaua and Capataz gave lengthy discourses in gratitude for our presence and the teaching of the Word.

The people of this Nation are truly hungry for God's presence in their lives. Although they may not fully realize the nature of their hunger, it's quite obvious to me. I pray God's gentle touch of Self-revelation upon the hearts and minds of this people. Our charge is but to present His Word – He's the only One capable of affecting it. This, He is doing through His Spirit. How grateful I am to be witness to it all...

**9:30 AM** – All teams ashore and working for more than an hour now. Soon, dental and medical should be finished with all who are waiting. VBS will work with the children until departure time. Construction is putting the finishing touches on a set of stairs for the local nurse's house. We should be underway to Kazuza's community within a few hours. I've sent William, Phillip and Moises ahead to let them know of our unscheduled visit. I love the “unscheduled”...

**1:00 PM** – About an hour ago we pulled away from shore, headed to Kazuza's. At the last moment, Matthew came aboard with a baby Cutia and Paca. I guess we have us a couple of glorified rats as new mascots...

The “sticks” have been easier than expected. Our pilot, Naldo, is handling the *Beatriz* smoothly, even headed downstream. Only about an hour left before we hit open channel.

- My “secret” plan is to sink a well for Kazuza. I’ve wanted to do so for several years now. I’ve not had all the pieces of the puzzle together before today. If it be God’s will we reach water for him, it will be done. The crew is ready for the effort. I’m excited by the possibilities. We’ll see what happens.

**3:15 PM** – The team is onshore visiting the huts. VBS is holding an abbreviated session with the children. Our equipment has been set up and the drilling has begun...

***From the Helm – Tuesday, July 21, 2009***

**7:00 AM** - Our final day on location has begun. The well flushed throughout the night. The drilling resumed earlier this morning. I pray we find water within 80’. We have a number of rods that have become bent and bare-threaded during the course of the summer. Our capability for depth is limited. Just have to drill on and see what happens...

- I went and spent some time with Kazuza at his hut. He’s a gentle and wise man. His only concern is for the leadership that will follow when he is gone. Pride and greed have led his younger brothers and sons to start clans of their own, leaving him to select from outside the family line. With the death of his wife in April, the certainty of his mortality has come to rest heavily on his mind and heart. I reassured him he’s led well throughout his life. God will show him to whom he should pass his leadership when the time comes.

The clans are totally dependant upon their Tuchaua. The absence of his wisdom leads to drifting and chaos. I know God’s direction for Kazuza’s succession will become clear as he seeks such direction. He need not fret, only seek selflessly and follow the clarity that will ensue...

**9:30 AM** – All teams are in full swing. Bible Study begins in a few minutes. We’ve reached 65’ in the drilling process. A very fine sand is slowing down progress a bit. We’ve only 3 more rods to either hit good water or stop entirely. Lord, it’d be grand to hit water. However, if our preparation had been better, we’d be able to drill on. Human error, as usual...

**3:30 PM** – Our teams have just shut down and bagged out to the boat. Our crew and Jimbo have been toiling with the well dig all day long. The bit is bound 70 feet below. They’ll do everything possible to free it and raise the rods. If unsuccessful, it’s just the way things go sometimes. We’re grateful, anyway, for the opportunity to try. There will be another day to dig if God so allows.

**5:50 PM** – Well, God truly knows how to end a day in beautiful fashion. We just held a baptismal service for a gentleman that was saved last night. As the service began, Matthew came up to me and asked if he too could be baptized. What welled up in me, only a father can comprehend. Pastor Moises, in Satere and Portuguese, baptized my youngest in the heart of the Satere-Maue Nation. Something I will never forget. First

came Phillip and William along the Araria River of the Mundurucu Nation. Now, Matthew here in this Nation. A beautiful ending to an already perfect day. Thank You, Lord...

- We're about to set sail for Manaus. ETA is set for 38 hours from pulling anchor. I look forward to the cruise. It's a welcomed time to quietly reflect on the days. Much for me to reflect upon, indeed...

*From the Helm – Wednesday, July 22, 2009*

**4:00 AM** – I got up a few hours ago. We've been on a slow cruise with Moises' *AMOR/Patrice* in tow. There's been no moon – the stars are magnificent. I've been sitting at my table taking it all in.

- These days have been good. Several of our team rotated through a 24 hour bug. But, all bounced back quickly. None have missed much along the way. For the most part, they are an older crowd, the youngest being Josh Nassar and my Boys. There's been a mellow atmosphere throughout the trip.

I've been grateful to have Robert, Candas, Terri, Ronnie, Barbara and Darlene aboard. They allowed me to be detached from dental and medical completely. It's a privilege to work these facets of the ministry when no one else is available but, it leads to my missing the rest of the deal to some extent. I miss seeing the whole picture...

It will be interesting to hear everyone's stories in the hours remaining. Some will be eager to share. Others will simply reflect within the confines of the heart and mind. I enjoy observing the whole gamut of responses.

- With the privilege of being free from specific duties came a whole range of opportunities to observe and learn. I've had the opportunity to sit and visit with the Tuchauas and Moises. I've come to better understand the dynamics of their culture. I've been humbled by their need and lack of need. These are a people who live a life specific to meeting their basic instincts – no frivolous extras. The only element lacking for most of them is that of spiritual completion.

All humanity is born with the same basic need and desire for spiritual peace. Regardless of our awareness of the fact, we seek it with every ounce of our being. God made us that way. It's the way it is.

I sought this peace all my life. Tried every avenue my imagination could generate until all avenues collapsed beneath the weight of their insufficiency. Upon discovering this, all efforts ceased - I'd become teachable.

In my own life, this was the point of discovery and enlightenment. This point of surrender making possible the life I desired. By God's grace, the peace of mind and soul

I robbed of others while attempting to find it for myself was finally irrefutably mine – free and abundant...

This peace only God can author is what I pray for the Satere's and all others alike. All else merely benefits the flesh in some way or other, keeping the body comfortable while the spirit remains undeniably lost and miserable. Most every day, God leads people my way with physical needs to be met. Through the meeting of these needs, the healing of the soul becomes possible. I'm grateful to God for allowing me even a small part in His workings. To watch a person come to know Him is worth any perceived cost or discomfort. It's a beautiful thing to behold. It is worth my life itself...

– Departure from Maues is scheduled after dropping off Kazuza and Moises at 8 this morning. We'll be underway toward Manaus at last...

### *From the Helm – Thursday, July 23, 2009*

**2:30 AM** - I've had a rough 24 hours. A battery burst in the hold night before last. By the time I woke up with the smell seeping up to my cabin, I'd already inhaled enough to do some damage. My chest and throat were a mess all day yesterday. Hard to talk and breathe. I feel weak but much better this morning. Just kind of yucky...

We just came through the Eva. About 8 hours from Manaus. The day promises to be full. Purchasing for the Middleburg team begins the minute we hit the "floating mall". I left Little Charlie back this trip to prepare the *AMOR/Lori* for departure.

The Boys fly at midnight tonight. It's going to be a long day indeed. I need to lie down again and finish out the night. The stars are so pretty right now – hard to not just sit and gaze...

**5:00 AM** – Barbara has been up all night with one of our team members who passes out when she gets sick. This makes for a long night of constant observation. Barbara is obviously called of God to be a nurse. Those of us who "pitch in" when needed are far different from ladies like her. Her compassion and dedication goes beyond anything I'd be capable of. I'm so grateful for her presence, love and professionalism. She's been, and continues to be, an inspiration to me...