

Carol Witthun's Guam Chronicle – March 2021 Edition

Hafa Adai from Guam!

Then...

What a difference a year can make. I looked back at my March 2020 prayer letter to see what I had written. COVID-19 was starting to make its presence known in Asia, primarily in China, but had not touched Guam yet. Franklin Graham led an evangelistic crusade in Guam. We had recently hired two locals to work our night shift (overseeing our transmitters broadcasting to Asia). There were changes in responsibility and leadership amongst the Guam staff. There were plans of traveling to Cary in June 2020 to assist the finance team with Budget 2021 work.

...and Now

COVID-19 has become a worldwide pandemic. Since its arrival on Guam (just after I had written my March 2020 prayer letter), there have been 7,699 cases and 130 deaths. The spread of COVID has definitely slowed down over the last couple of months. 41,672 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered here in Guam. The Governor of Guam would like to see over 50% of Guam's population vaccinated by mid-July. This is dependent upon the monthly allotment of vaccines sent to Guam. Except for a few hiccups, the vaccine process has gone quite smoothly. I received my first Moderna vaccine in mid-January and my second shot in mid-February. I had mild flu-like symptoms with the 2nd shot, which I had anticipated. I'm glad I had the weekend to recover. I don't anticipate travelling for at least a few months. The goal is for me to travel in November when the Global Finance Team conference is scheduled in NC (that would mean I could have Thanksgiving in the States with some dear friends 😊). There will be changes in the coming months with Guam's leadership and personnel (rest assured this does not include me).

Despite the unsettling times we live in, there is one thing that has remained true through the ages - God's Word. The hope of the Gospel has not changed, and we get to broadcast that hope to people throughout Asia from Guam. People are asking questions to understand what is happening in the world today, and many of them are trying to find answers by listening to programs on their radio. In January, our Asia Broadcast Monitoring Team on Guam processed 191 reception reports (primarily for English-speaking programs) from people in our target area: China, India, Japan, Philippines, Pakistan but also many countries in Europe, Canada, and the US.

Have you ever heard of the "Chhattisgarhi" language? It is spoken in a state in central India with a population of over 32 million people (see the area outlined in red on the map to the right). Ananya called our TWR response team in India to share how *Thru the Bible* (TTB), broadcasted in her native language, changed her life as well as her entire family. Her family was experiencing a lot of turmoil, and her husband was an alcoholic. Ananya was longing for peace and turned to her radio looking for programs that might help her. She came across the TTB program and heard that the God of the Bible could give her peace and satisfaction in her life. She began praying to God as suggested in the radio program. After time, she began to see positive results in her life and family. Her husband stopped drinking. Eventually, Ananya and her entire family came to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior. Because Ananya is illiterate, being able to hear the Word of God daily on the radio is critical for her spiritual growth. She has even been able to learn to read a little bit from the Bible. Radio broadcasts into India, including where Ananya lives, have become more critical today for believers due to many churches being shut down during the pandemic.



I anticipate that over the next few months, I will be busier than normal (I don't like it when things get slow). Due to finance personnel changes (people leaving and another person going on maternity leave), I've been asked to help out our global finance team over the next few months. Because of modern technology, I can still be sitting at my desk in Guam, but help the finance team in Africa and Cary, NC. Also, budget season is fast approaching for preparing the 2022 budget (October 2021 thru September 2022). In addition to assisting the Guam team in planning their 2022 budget, I will be working on a global level in the budget process in various ways.

Guam will be having two interns this summer, with the possibility of a third. The two that are coming are Makenna, studying engineering, and Selena, studying music and finance in college. Yes, that's right - a finance intern. It will be exciting for these young women to see how their college learning can be used for God's kingdom work. I did get to be a part of the interview with Selena via video, and she seemed like a great fit for the work here. I will definitely have pictures of us "hard at work" in upcoming prayer letters. As so many countries have closed their borders because of the pandemic, Guam is one of the few "overseas" assignments an intern can go to this year.

Prayer Items

- Continued good health of our TWR Guam staff: a praise for those who have been able to be vaccinated (50% of our staff who meet the eligibility requirements)
- Ministry partnership of prayer and financial support for Makenna and Selena, as they prepare to come to Guam this summer.
- Transitions happening amongst Guam staff: there are two families leaving over the next few months, and one new family hopefully arriving in less than six months. Pray for those of us who will be taking on extra responsibilities until suitable replacements can be found and brought to Guam.
- Guam's generator project: we have raised the funds to replace our 750,000-watt Detroit diesel, which has outlived its life expectancy. Due to the pandemic, the replacement was put on hold, but things are ramping back up again. Before typhoon season "arrives" on Guam, we need to have this purchased and installed.
- Guam's tower restoration project: our towers, that support the vast array of antennas, are over 40 years old and need to be updated. Praise for the funds already received, over \$156,000 in just a few months, but we need a lot more. This is a major fund-raising project for TWR in 2021.
- Guam's broadcast into Asia: that the three transmitters would continue to run well, people would be blessed and encouraged while listening to the programs, and that people would come to know Jesus as Savior while growing in their faith.

Guam has some of the best sunsets, as you can see pictured to the right. This view is from our antenna field in Merizo, on the southern tip of Guam. Wishing you a blessed Easter.

In His Service,



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