

## 2006 Cameroon Mission Team News

Ron Amberg, Communications

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North Texas Volunteers In Mission (VIM) Team to Cameroon



This initial report provides the background for the North Texas Volunteers In Mission (VIM) Team to Cameroon, Africa. Jo and Roger Martens are representing Spring Valley United Methodist Church, Dallas. In this report, Jo tells the story of the formation of the Team in February of this year. Updates are included for May and June. The June update was written only a few days before the mission trip actually got underway.

### Jo Martens:

#### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2006

Roger and I are investigating the possibilities of another mission trip, this time to Cameroon, Africa. There is a team going from North Texas in June which is made up of 3 clergy and up to 20 students from the University of North Texas who will be working with a Youth Camp in the town of Douala which is where the Magruders\* live and work. We have been in touch with the Magruders and they are thinking that if we join the team that there would be work for us at the orphanage but we have yet to learn the specifics. We are meeting with the team on Saturday, February 18 in Denton to get more specific information so we can make our decision.

### *Jo Martens*

- \* On July 25, 2004, Wesley and Leah Magruder, the new missionaries to the Cameroon, were guest speakers in the Aldersgate Class at Spring Valley United Methodist Church, Dallas. They told about their upcoming ministry as they were preparing to go into the field in Western Africa.
- On August 22, 2004, Wesley and Leah Magruder were commissioned as Missionaries by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. This was the beginning of a whole new kind of ministry for the Magruders, who were married seventeen years ago in Plano, Texas.

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2006

Roger and I attended a mission meeting at the Wesley Foundation at the University of North Texas in Denton to further investigate the possibility of joining a team of University students and 3 clergy to Cameroon in June. It was a great meeting! The students (mostly upperclassmen) are bright, fun, committed and welcoming. We learned a bit more about what the team would be doing. Leaving on June 16, we would arrive in Douala on June 17 and spend the first two days building a single rest room facility for the main church of the Magruders in Douala. Then on Monday afternoon, we would travel to Limbe to set up the "youth camp" which will operate Tuesday through Friday. Cameroon is a bilingual French/English speaking country, so the University students are trying to learn at least some elementary, polite conversational French. The Youth attending the camp will be both francophone and anglophone. Then it's back to Douala on Saturday to prepare for Sunday Services there. Roger and I may do some other work at the orphanage in Yaoundé if needed. Otherwise we'll work where we can essentially "mentor" the students.



### *Jo Martens*

**SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2006**

We have learned that the “youth camp” in Limbe will be without electricity and without running water. Limbe is right next to the ocean. 16 college students will be going on this mission trip. ... At the end of the day, everyone will likely just go to bed—for the simple reason that there is no electricity; hence, no light to see doing anything after dark.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2006**

We have recently found some changes to the itinerary. On Sunday, June 18th we will spend the day in Douala, attending church services, etc. but will head to the campsite in Limbe that night. Monday we will be setting up camp because the campers will be arriving all afternoon. We will have meeting and greeting, dinner and worship before the sun goes down. Then Tuesday through Friday will be regular camp hours.

*Jo Martens*

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 2006**

There are a few informational changes that have happened even in this last week. ... We will definitely arrive in Douala on June 17 at 4:20 p.m. but will leave for the campsite in Limbe on Sunday afternoon, June 18. We're hoping to send an email to you before we leave. Then we will start camp on Monday, instead of Tuesday and the “campers” will leave camp on Friday before noon so we can debrief and clean up. The plan now is to stay in the camp area until Sunday to go back to Douala. At least three of us—Pastor Joe Zinser, Roger and I—will travel to nearby Buea to worship, have communion and present our new covenant church with a small gift for each member. That will clearly be one of the highlights.

Now about the daily “blogs.” Our hopes are that we will have 2 or 3 of the team each day share their journaling with you (and the others), not just Roger and I. We'll just have to wait and see how that works.

We recently learned that a few of the students are NOT from UNT but from A&M, Commerce. So we are calling ourselves just North Texas VIM team to Cameroon. By the way, because the missionaries and the 3 clergy are all from the North Texas Conference, we will be commissioned before being driven to the airport Friday [June 16<sup>th</sup>] at First Church Flower Mound and Larry George [Former Senior Pastor of Spring Valley United Methodist Church, Dallas] will be doing the commissioning.

You know the mission in Cameroon is brand new. We are only the third mission team to go there. There is just the Magruder family and a recent college graduate, Ginger Cooper, who is spending a year there to help to put together all the details of this trip. We are definitely going to have to be flexible...which, apparently is never a problem in Africa. 😊

*Au 'voir*

*Jo Martens*