



Far Trekkin'



News from Rob and Eshinee Veith

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The big news!

Greetings friends,

Everyone has a few days in their lives which serve as milestones; things you've worked towards—sometimes for years—come to pass in a way you know will significantly change your future. College graduation. Marriage. I think we'll remember January 24, 2005 as one of those days in our lives. That's when we officially became a part of Lutheran Bible Translators.

Eshinee's interest in Bible translation and linguistics began while a YWAM missionary in 1997. This led to her earning a BA

in Linguistics from Trinity Western University in 2001.

When she married Rob that same year, part of the agreement was that Rob would accompany Eshinee wherever she went to translate the Bible and find "something useful" to do while there.

We originally planned to spend the first three years of our marriage in the Seattle area, where Rob had a good job with a software company. After three years, Rob's stock

options would mature; we'd cash them in for "millions" of dollars and that would cover overseas support for the first few years. Well, Rob got laid off and the company's stock tanked, but we still worked towards the goal of being in a Bible translation ministry.

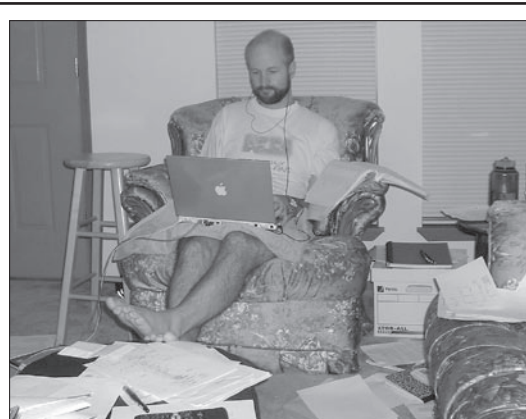
In the first part of 2003, we met a recruiter from Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT). We hit it off immediately with this recruiter, a fellow named Peter Slayton. Peter was the first to

suggest to Rob what it was that he could be in the mission field; "Vernacular Media Specialist," a vocation that Rob loves as much as

Eshinee loves linguistics.

We spent two weeks of the summer of 2003 in Aurora, IL where LBT is based, and in Guatemala on site with LBT missionaries, learning first hand about the organization. To make a long story short, we liked them and they liked us. We began the formal application process. The following year—June 2004—we moved to Dallas to attend classes at the Graduate

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Rob sits on the couch, analyzing the grammar of yet another minority language. He spent most of his waking hours in this position for five months.

The way we got out of GIAL

The Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics, or GIAL (pronounced like "jail" with a heavy Texan drawl), is the primary US training facility for Wycliffe, LBT and other Bible translation organizations. Rob was there to earn a certificate in applied linguistics (MOD20). MOD20 is an intensive five month course which gives a budding linguist the skills to learn foreign languages and cultures quickly. Each month covers the amount of material other universities would cover in a quarter or semester; it's that intense! Rob spent an average of six hours in class each day—Monday through Friday—while having approximately eight hours of homework for each evening. Here's what he learned:

- **Phonetics.** The ability (at least in theory) to identify, produce and transcribe every sound possible in human language, including pops and clicks and guttural noises.
- **Phonology.** An awareness of how language sounds affect other language sounds; what phonetic differences are

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Rob and Eshinee are now official Lutheran Bible Translators!

GIAL

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meaningful and which ones are variations of the same sound in the mind of a speaker.

- **Grammar.** How to discover and communicate the many ways that sentences can be structured in any given language.
- **Language and Society, Cultural Anthropology.** How people interact in social situations.
- **Second Language and Culture Acquisition.** The ability to be dropped into any culture and figure out “the code” of interaction and language without formal classroom instruction.

Meanwhile, Eshinee was taking grad courses geared towards her future plans with LBT. Having already taken most of the MOD20 courses as part of her BA Linguistics, she got to wade a little deeper into the translators’ pool of knowledge. Here’s what she learned:

- **Analysis of Non-Western Music.** The ability to analyze... um... non-Western music.
- **Religion & Worldview.** An overview of international religions and worldviews from an anthropological perspective.
- **Discourse Analysis.** How



Eshinee worked at the GIAL library every Thursday night and occasional Saturdays.

to apply grammatical method to units of discourse larger than the sentence and to find out what meanings are contained in these combinations in a given language.

- **Cultural Anthropology.** This was the only class where we got to be study buddies.
- **Semantics & Pragmatics.** Methods of determining and communicating what words and expressions mean, both in isolation (in a dictionary) and in context (in common use).
- **Biblical Backgrounds.** A historical and archaeological framework for Biblical writings through study of the culture and events of the Ancient Near East.

She also picked up some librarian skills, working at the school library on Thursday nights and occasional Saturdays.

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Institute of Applied Linguistics (GIAL). Rob took MOD20 courses which gave him a general background in linguistics, while Eshinee took courses towards a master’s degree in linguistics.

In January of 2005, MOD20 completed, our application for formal admission to LBT was presented to the board on January 22, and on January 24, we learned that it was approved.

What happens next?

We’re still a ways from being “on the field.” As I write this, we’re almost packed to move from GIAL in Dallas to JAARS in Waxhaw, North Carolina. JAARS handles technical training for missionaries and it is there that Rob will receive 14 weeks of formal training in vernacular media.

We aren’t entirely sure what happens when we finish at JAARS in May. One potential plan involves returning to Seattle. Others involve Eshinee working further towards her master’s degree in linguistics or Rob receiving training in ethnomusicology to compliment his vernacular media training. At any rate, we’ll be traveling again.

As most of you know, being with Lutheran Bible Translators, a faith mission, means putting together a team of prayer partners and financial supporters. When our pre-field training is complete in early fall, we hope to visit people and talk about the work God has placed before us. If you think your church or small group would be interested in an in-person visit from us, we’d love to come out and tell you about this whole thing. If you already know you want to support this ministry, funds can be sent to the address listed in “contributions,” below.

Grace and Peace to you,

ROB AND ESHINEE

Coming soon...

- Namibia or Cameroon? Learn about our two proposed assignment sites.
- More about Lutheran Bible Translators
- Rob’s vocation: Vernacular Media
- Eshinee’s vocation: Translation Advisor
- We answer your questions (ask them)

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