



PO Box 1765, Grass Valley, CA 95945
530-272-8170
www.piministries.info piministries@ncws.com

December 2015

Dear Co-worker:

One of the chapters in *Heroes at the Ends of the Earth* is titled, "Know Your Boat." Since the chapter is too long for this newsletter, I have deleted considerable material without losing the basic sense.

Not knowing his craft, a driver can have serious trouble on the Sepik. Once a missionary was assigned to transport a refrigerator on his river truck from Ambunti to Pagwi down river. He managed to place the refrigerator crosswise on his boat then slowly made his way out into the river. Now a river truck is made for the river and does not have a large bow to ward off large waves like boats for the ocean, or large lakes. Normally, big waves do not form on the Sepik River as they do on the sea, so it is not necessary to have a bow on the craft to ward off waves.

Soon the missionary was speeding down the Sepik to Pagwi. However, a large ship was coming up the river, and usually these ships create a large bow wave that trails in a "V" after the ship. Evidently the missionary was not aware of this condition because he didn't take any precautions to slow down and move far away from the ship. As he kept speeding along he met the wave. The bow of the river truck dropped down into the hollow created by the swell and then it squarely hit into the wave. With nothing to help ward off the wave the boat dove straight into it. The craft, refrigerator, and the missionary went into the Sepik. Soon, however, he came to the surface along with the river truck. The seats have built-in flotation tanks designed for such incidents, but the refrigerator went to the bottom. Somehow he managed to get back to Ambunti and tell his sad tale. But we can be sure that he learned something about his river truck as well as the big ships that ply the Sepik River. The lesson to learn here is that when one is not familiar in a new situation, he should always approach the new venture with caution.



Some 2015 Highlights

We are very grateful for how the Lord has used PIM in PNG in 2015:

The 30 PIM elementary schools with a total enrollment of 1242 completed their school year the last week of November. The Yataom school, deep in the interior, functioned for the first time in three years.

Friedemann and his three friends (Leibenzell Mission in Austria) installed two water systems, one in the village of Yamanambu and another in Moropote village.

Eric and David Wakuri conducted two pastors' courses, one in Ambunti, the other in Goroka in the highlands.

Religious Instruction is a wide open door for ministry being mandated for all government schools in the country, both on the primary and high school levels. By God's grace PIM is providing materials for an increasing number of pastors and volunteers teaching RI.

Another leadership workshop for government officials was conducted in April in the city of Lae. Presenters were Eric and Bihoro, a government official.

Doug and Leah served with PIM in PNG for 32 years. Leah. Doug's wife, passed away in early August from complications from MS. Please pray for an extra measure of strength for Doug as he returns to PNG for two months the end of January 2016.

Another time a missionary and I were travelling on the river and he was driving. Those who know the river understand that often debris and huge trees that float down from the mountains and out to the Bismarck Sea. As we sped along I saw the branches of a large tree to the left and then I also saw something that could have been its roots to the right. But I could not make it out for sure. The driver did not seem concerned, and I was not close to the throttle, so though I was aware of a possible danger I said nothing thinking the driver knew what he was doing. Thinking about it later, of course, I should have reached over, grabbed the throttle, and pushed it back to slow the boat.

What was ahead of us was actually a tree, but its trunk was under water. And since the boat was an inboard-outboard, the outboard structure struck the tree. It broke off and went to the bottom. We floated down river and spent a cheerless night at a village and eventually returned to Ambunti. Considerable trouble and expense followed for the owner of the boat.

There are also cases that cause trouble for outboard operators who don't know the river. Debris and floating objects should be approached with caution. Also, mud banks are common and cause problems. Once a large loaded dugout canoe was heading up river and the driver was not aware that a large mud bank had formed to one side. The water covering it was less than a foot deep. In his ignorance, he did not keep to the channel in the middle of the river but took a short cut and go over the mud bank. His canoe plowed into it and stuck. It took several hours for him and his crew to dig out the canoe.

Once a double canoe that was converted from a houseboat was going up river with many tourists on board and approached the Yambon gate. Yambon Village is a little upriver from Ambunti and you can locate it on the map. Near Yambon the river narrows and the water is 200 feet (60 meters) deep as it rushes through the gap. Tourists come to the Sepik to see crocodiles, and the Sepik offers a home for them. The story goes that one of the tourists on the double canoe pointed to something in the floating debris and yelled, "Isn't that a crocodile?" Quickly all the tourists rushed to his side of the craft which caused the craft to tip over and into the water and all the tourists went with it.

Fortunately people in Yambon Village saw what happened. Those who witnessed the accident called out and men from the village quickly paddled out to pick up the tourists scattered about in the water and clinging to the canoe. The Yambon men did a great job picking up all the tourists but when one of the men came up to a tourist, he first handed up to the man an artificial leg. You can imagine his surprise. Fortunately, all the tourists were brought to the village and were very grateful for the villagers' help. They finally all got back to Ambunti. As you can see, the canoe operator and the tourists did not know their boat.

There's another area that outboard (OB) operators should be aware of and know about. It concerns the type of propeller on their OB. It is well operators know their canoe, their boat, the river, and the sea, but they should also know about the right kind of propeller for the motor they operate. One can destroy an OB if he doesn't have the right type propeller on his motor. If a high pitched propeller that is used on speed boats is used on a slowly moving craft, pre-ignition occurs. I have repaired many outboard motors and have seen the destruction caused by this condition.

What's the lesson we can learn from "knowing your boat?" Whatever one operates, be it a canoe with an outboard, a ship, a boat, a vehicle, an appliance, a tool, something new, one must learn how to properly operate it. If he doesn't know he should ask or have someone help him learn.

Knowledge is power. The book of Proverbs urges one to obtain knowledge and wisdom. The smart Christian reads several verses in the Book of Proverbs every day. The more you know and are able to apply knowledge wisely, the easier and richer life becomes. The world grows more complicated with each passing day. New things are brought forth almost every month. And when one is responsible for the lives of others it is especially important for him to learn how to operate any new machinery. One can learn to save himself much sorrow and grief.

The staff of PIM wishes you all a merry, merry Christmas,

Orneal Kooyers .