

In His Hands

(Isaiah 49:16)



September 2014

Rob & Bintou Peterson
robert_peterson@sil.org
bintougpeterson@yahoo.fr

Dear Friends and Family,

Bintou recently wrote the testimony below for the Air Calvary team that provided the airplane serving the Bongolo hospital that I, Rob, now fly. We thought you might also enjoy reading it as it provides a glimpse into the aviation program as well as Bintou's ministry at the hospital.

Thank you for your prayers and support!

Rob & Bintou



A Testimony to God's Amazing Love

In Lebamba, January 26, 2014, deep in the forest of Gabon, Africa two young high school students were preparing to leave for school. Yann's friend, Jessy, owned a motorbike, a great luxury for any young man in the African bush! His father had bought it for him as a way to earn money by transporting people from the village to a nearby town. But this morning, Jessy was using it to go to school and to pick up his friend, Yann, who needed a ride. As the boys confidently rode off on the bike from Yann's house, they smiled and waved good-bye to Yann's mom, unaware that their lives would be irrevocably changed in the next few minutes.

They were not far away from their house when a car driving in the opposite direction collided hard with them, throwing them from the bike. The noise of the collision was so loud that people living in the area ran from their houses to see what happened. None were prepared as they came upon the scene of a mangled motorbike and two boys bleeding profusely. Yann's mom was called. She burst into tears when she saw her child. Just a few minutes before she had said goodbye to a son who was fully alive. Now it seemed he might not live!

Everyone was in a state of shock and confusion but they knew that they needed to get the critically injured boys to Bongolo hospital. A family relative who owns a bush taxi was called and he took them to the Bongolo Hospital. The family followed on foot.

When the boys arrived, Dr. Bintou Peterson, the wife of Air Calvary pilot, Rob Peterson, along with the other medical staff recognized they had a very serious medical emergency that would stretch their skills and experience to the limit. The boys were hooked up to IV lines, put on oxygen and the surgeons called in to assess their injuries. It was not looking good! The "Glasgow indicator" for evaluating brain injury extent was not encouraging. The injuries would require a trauma surgeon, an orthopedic surgeon, an eye surgeon and an anesthesiologist specialist.

But as the medical team evaluated their options and the family waited for news, the staff could already see God at work before their very eyes! Among the visiting doctors who had come to train in the PAACS program, there was an anesthesiologist, two orthopedic doctors and a general surgeon experience in trauma. The Bongolo doctors, Dr. Thelander, the chief of surgery, and Dr. Hofman, the chief of the eye department assembled the team, *knowing that this could only have been orchestrated by God!*



With Dr. Lane managing the very delicate anesthesiology, given the extent of the trauma, Dr Thelander and Dr. Snell performed an immediate craniotomy on Jessy's head to relieve fluid that was putting dangerously high pressure on the brain while doctors Mike and Dave Welker, worked at the same time to implant a bar to set a severe leg fracture. Shortly afterwards, Yann was also taken into surgery. Dr. Hofman joined the team to intervene to save his eye while the other doctors again set several severe fractures. Two days later the boys began to communicate with doctors and family! In the days that followed there were other critical moments, but God continued to provide in miraculous ways to preserve the life of these two young men!

Both of them gave their life to Jesus in the months that followed. Yann, with the help of crutches, and his friend Jessy stood in front of the local evangelical church at Bongolo to testify to God's grace, not only in sparing their life, but also bringing them to salvation!



Jann & Jessy after the surgery with the PAACS residences

All of these visiting doctors had one thing in common - they had arrived at Bongolo hospital in the remote southern corner of Gabon by the [Air Calvary](#) airplane. In spite of the heavy heat, humidity and jetlag, these doctors were at Bongolo and ready to serve, thanks to the service of the airplane.



Dr. Ewig, Dr. Lane, Dr. Neni and Laundry, a patient.

Today Yann and Jessy are alive and overflowing with gratitude for God's amazing grace. They, along with countless others, have witnessed God's miraculous intervention! God brought together visiting doctors from the other side of the world, a hospital dedicated to providing physical and spiritual care to African people *and an airplane and pilot* to save the life of two boys! Now if that isn't a testimony to God's amazing love, what is?