



A new day is dawning
Steve Vinton, February 7, 2008

A new day was dawning, and we were awake, out the door, and in the car long before the first light of the day. We got to watch the sun come up from a beautifully wooded piece of land on a hill in the village of Igoda about 5 miles from Madisi.

It was almost three years ago that we first travelled to Dodoma to discuss with the Minister of Education our dream that we would one day build a college here in Tanzania. It was nearly two years ago that we took title to that hill we were now standing on, and I remember us walking around through the forests and the meadows and pointing with excitement to the places where we would build the lecture halls, where the homes for the professors would go, where we would put in the administration building, the dorms, the soccer field, our chapel building. We were having fun mapping out in our minds where the roads would go, where there would be foot paths. We looked out and saw where we would dam up the creek and create a lake so that we would have water for all of those students and so that we could have a continuous source of fish. It was all such a beautiful dream.

Unlike all of our other projects where we seem to take off and go and begin building without two nickels to rub together, once word leaked out that we were planning to build the college, we were taken by surprise to see that there were quite a few people who gave money even before we could get around to asking for it -- and so we had some seed money to get the ball rolling! We've got tons and tons of foundation stones already at the building site, we have enough bricks to keep the builders busy for weeks, we've even cut out a road into the site.

The only thing that has kept us from actually starting to build for these last fourteen months has been our desire to somehow get our hands on a bulldozer. A bulldozer would save months of hard labor for a lot of people, and if we could level off the land where the buildings were to be built we would save we figured close to \$13,000 in foundation stones alone! We certainly tried, so many times we seemed incredibly close, and then surprisingly we even managed this past summer to get a bulldozer -- such as it was! It did a couple of days of work at Madisi and after dying one day it has been slowly sinking in the surrounding mud for the past seven months. Every lead we had turned out to be a blind alley, so I must admit that I had a healthy degree of skepticism when Godfrey told me two weeks ago that he was ready to sign a contract with the paper company because they actually had a bulldozer, it was only about 20 miles from our college land, it had been sitting around gathering rust for the last seven months, and we were going to get it for a great price. I remember rolling my eyes into the back of my head. Would Godfrey ever give up? I really wanted to get a bulldozer, I really wanted to build the college, but February is at the height of the rainy season and how we would manage to get that thing from where it was to the land on that hill was totally beyond me. No wonder it was cheap! No one had a clue how we could move the thing during this muddy rainy season. Of course if we waited until July, they'd have plenty of takers to rent it, the price would be more than we could afford, and we'd *never* get the college built. So the next thing I knew Emmanuel had convinced some guy with a huge tractor trailer truck to try to transport it. Godfrey and I were passing through Mafinga town around noon, Godfrey stuffed a bunch of

money in Emmanueli's pocket, we went on our merry way, half believing it might be true, half knowing it was impossible. By 11pm it was hopeless though, the guy dug his huge truck out of the mud, took Emmanueli's \$200 and said he was never coming back. One thing about Emmanueli though is that he's a lot like Godfrey -- he never gives up either. 19 hours later I got the message on my phone that the bulldozer was at the building site at the top of our hill and Emmanueli has made me promise that I'll not ask him how he did it. One thing I know -- the folks at the paper company are not coming anytime soon to haul their bulldozer away!

And so there we were watching the sun come up, reflecting its nice light off of that shiny yellow bulldozer as it began clearing off and leveling the first meadow where the lecture halls would one day be built. Totally surrounded by tall pines I could see in my mind the beauty of the campus when it will all be finished.

Some people might ask why when we've said our goal is to start secondary schools that we're working on building a college. Well the truth is that a quality education cannot be provided by simply having good teachers. Our schools also need good **leaders**. We need to have **principals** who will not only be trained in how to manage schools, but who will be taught how to lead schools and how to do so with Christian leadership principles and with

Christian ethics. We need to have **chaplains** who will not only be trained to lead our chapel services and to teach our Bible knowledge classes, but who will be trained to lead teachers and students spiritually and to initiate the kinds of activities in schools that will give opportunities for young people to accept Christ and to grow in their faith. We need to have **project managers** who will not only be trained in the principles of project management, but who will be taught how to be wise stewards of human and financial resources and to be challenged to do so with integrity. Teachers we can hire. Good quality Christian teachers we can challenge to come serve with us. But there is no college in Tanzania -- Christian or otherwise -- that trains principals for secondary schools, let alone the kind of chaplains and project managers that we need!

As we watched the bulldozer do its magic, we talked and schemed, we ate chicken and drank cokes, we laughed, we dreamed a little bit more, and we tried to figure out a name for this college. What after all do you call an institution is part business school, part theological college, part a center for training teachers and principals? It'll take us ten months more to build we figure, so I guess we've got time to figure that little detail out.

The name really matters little.

What does matter is that a new day is dawning.