

## Wish You Could See This | Dec 2014



by [David](#) on December 4, 2014

Many times while biking or walking around our city of Grenoble something really stands out and I think to myself (or say to Rachel): “Man! I really wish [insert someone’s name, usually my sister] could see this!” Whether it’s the majestic mountains that turn my often downward gaze needfully upwards, the river Isère relentlessly rushing under old city bridges, or a sculpture with historical significance but hidden spiritual realities for those whose eyes have been opened. Sometimes I take a picture and send it to someone but many times I just take a mental snapshot and keep it to myself.

Time has been moving like the river Isère . . . very quickly! We’ve been here for about 2.5 months yet it feels like we have just arrived. With the help of others on our team (thanks Nick, Aurélien & Matt to name a few!) we’ve sorted out many of the “getting settled” things like opening a bank account, getting internet and phone cards, and buying a car (a blue 1998 VW Polo Wagon) and insurance. These are relatively simple things to take care of in the States but they’re a totally different story when you don’t know how the system works (VERY differently = slowly) or speak the language.

Last weekend was a city-wide food drive to help fill the city food bank for the coming winter months. Roughly 3,000 people volunteered their time passing out flyers in grocery stores, collecting donated items, transporting them to the food bank, sorting everything and preparing it for storage. A number of individuals

connected with the FEU gave of their time in various capacities and we helped with a few shifts of driving the large van around the city to transport the abundant donations. Some of that food is distributed at the bi-weekly FEU “Panier Partage”. It has been going well with almost 70 international students last week who came to receive a large bag full of food. Many stayed to hangout, play games and talk afterwards and a few have returned for the weekly dinners and Bible studies!

David has already completed one month of intensive language study (20 hours per week) and is well into his second. He has met many students from around the world and has enjoyed getting to know a few of them well. Each month some students leave and others join so it is always changing. He has also been helping out (whenever Matt drops by) with the large Roma population that is settling in for the cold and wet winter ahead. They go around the city looking for work-site dumpsters full of pallets and project cut-offs to use as building materials for rough but solid small “cabins” for families of up to 10 or more! The pallets are used as floors and walls and sometimes they find sheets of glass or transparent plastic that function as windows. Layers of tarps and plastic sheets cover the roofs and old oil drums are converted into wood stoves for warmth and cooking inside each cabin. Everything is built without power tools or proper hardware. The Roma are very friendly and welcoming and even prepared a nice dinner for us one evening.

Rachel has been putting her amazing cooking skills to great use around the FEU. Last Sunday was the FEU Thanksgiving. Rachel & Annie, with the help of a few other girls, made salad, rice, turkey chili, apple crisp and pumpkin pie for over 50 people with plenty of leftovers. Everyone enjoyed the food, festivities and explanation of why (and to Whom) we give thanks on that day and every day. We played a number of competitive group games like cornhole and apple bobbing after an exciting game of ragball (baseball with a very soft ball) and everyone had a great time. Rachel has been meeting with a few students and exchanging French and English skills and she has recently joined Alliance Française to broaden her language abilities and to meet other students in Grenoble. She also put together some flyers and information to raise funds for and awareness of the FEU for a few of the local churches. One church has already responded with a generous donation that will help purchase a much

needed industrial kitchen stove. All of the knobs on the current one are broken or lost and it randomly shuts off in the middle of cooking large meals for the students. This generous gift will mean a lot!

The weather has recently gotten colder and we are quickly headed into the Christmas season during which we have a number of events planned. The FEU will be hosting another open invitation dinner event (like the Thanksgiving dinner) on the 10th that the student volunteers are fully responsible for planning and executing. It should be fun! Later, on the 17th, the FEU will be hosting a more formal Christmas dinner and outreach event.

Pray that all of these events and activities would only lead others towards Jesus Christ!

Many times while biking or walking around our city of Grenoble, I see people distracted by the business and fleeting pleasures of this world, I see people who are living on far less than you would think possible, I see little kids looking for their parents' love and attention, and I see other students struggling to figure things out in this sometimes overwhelming city. As much as I want to help them out, love them, give to them, or straighten out their priorities, the greatest things I want them to see are the awesome wonders and glory of our God and His love for them through Jesus Christ. Sometimes I seize the opportunity to share that good news with them but many times I keep it to myself. As with a photo of a Masterfully orchestrated sunset, may we all desire to share Wonderful things with those around us!