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August 18, 1988

Dear Dr. Swaminathan:

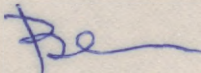
Belated happy birthday!

MSS Well #6 was inaugurated two weeks ago. This is located near Block E just outside the fence of IRRI. The well serves only around 10 families but we decided to do something about it since it is very near IRRI and it is the area where Tissue Culture and Plant Physiology people bring their Christmas bags. The AFSTRI officials came to inaugurate the well together with Dr. Pathak. It is actually an existing well but it was almost delapidated and the people had difficulty pumping water. We reconditioned the well and changed the pump. The people requested that the pump should have a gadget so that they can use the well for irrigating their plots of vegetables and ornamental plants.

MSS Well #7 was finished yesterday and we will inaugurate it sometime middle of September since we are very busy with the coming meetings for the China-IRRI and the Think Tank first week of September. I am in charge of both meetings and we are very busy preparing for it. The MSS Well #7 is quite far from the main road. You have to walk across the town cemetery, cross a small river and walk for another half a kilometer. The area has around 20 families. On the way to the area we met an old couple and the man was carrying two empty plastic bottles. We stopped them to inquire about the dead well we heard in their community. The old man happened to be on his way to go to the cemetery to fetch drinking water which is more than a kilometer from their house and he also happened to be the headman in that community. He told us that the community contributes monthly for the maintenance of the well that they have. Unfortunately the well went dry and the contribution was not sufficient to put up a new well. The people there have to get their drinking water in the cemetery and use the river water for their washing purposes. This is okay during the rainy season but during the dry season the river dries up. We had to dig a new well and deeper than the old one to get water. Fortunately in Los Banos it is not difficult to get water if we dig deep enough.

This is probably the last well. Both Bill and I were very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work on these wells in your name and also to serve the community.

Sincerely yours,



B.S. Vergara
Plant Physiologist

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cc: Bill Smith