



Global Health Ministries

Helping the hands that heal

Sharing news with our partners

Vol. 30 No. 2

Feb-March 2017

People with Vision

by Pastor Doug Cox

"I couldn't let it go..." Mary Jo said today, brimming with emotion as she visited Global Health Ministries. Mary Jo Mettler, a member of the Women of the ELCA at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Pine City, Minn., spent the last four years championing the cause of bringing solar energy to meet the needs of Phebe Hospital in Liberia. Today she helped pack solar equipment funded in part through WELCA groups across the nation. This is a project of RREAL, a Minnesota nonprofit dedicated to making solar energy accessible to communities of all income levels.

GHM kicked off 2017 by shipping solar equipment to Phebe Hospital in partnership with RREAL. Even as you read this newsletter two containers are at sea carrying this precious cargo. This March (2017)

RREAL plans to begin the installation in Liberia!

People with vision have been linking hands for 30 years in this network we call Global Health Ministries. Our vision is one of access to quality health care for even the most vulnerable people on earth. It's a matter of justice, which we see as a tangible witness to the love of God. "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8)

Throughout 2017, we will continue lifting up visions of projects that "help the hands that heal" in over a dozen countries. To help us meet these needs, Seeds of Change, a Sioux Falls nonprofit that supports our work, has generously made a pledge. We're calling it the "Seeds of Change Challenge," and together we believe it can build our capacity to make even more visions come true.

As we celebrate our 30th anniversary



Dr. Jefferson Sibley, Medical Director at Phebe Hospital

year, we build on visions that have moved people of faith to impact the world for thirty years. Thank you for being among those moved by God to link hands in this powerful network called Global Health Ministries. Together we are helping some of the world's most vulnerable people build a future with hope. In the words of Bishop Seyenkulo in Liberia to Mary Jo, "Thanks for the hard work that you continue to do to improve the healthcare delivery system of this country. We are so grateful and must truly admit that words are just inadequate to express this joy."



Seeds of Change Challenge

How does the Seeds of Change Challenge work? Every "new dollar" received by GHM in 2017 will be matched, up to \$100,000, by a grant from Seeds of Change. A "new dollar" is either a financial gift from someone who is giving to GHM for the first time, or a contribution from someone who gives more this year than last. Seeds of Change will match those "new dollars" above your 2016 total.

These matching dollars from Seeds of Change will help GHM create an "Angel Fund" for projects that are critically important but not fully funded, or need immediate response. The gifts you share with GHM can have even more impact in 2017. Your gifts are "seeds of change."

Shipping News

by Scott Lien

Fireworks! Party hats! Drum rolls! GHM's Shipping Ministry is celebrating Year 2016 with gusto as we record 9 containers, 9 trailers, and 140 suitcases to partners in 28 countries around the world. Over \$1.9 million worth of medical supplies and equipment. Praise God!

A huge thank you goes out to ALL who support GHM's Shipping Ministry by volunteering in the warehouse and collecting donated medical supplies and equipment. Thank you to those who contribute funds to help cover shipping costs, and most important, pray for this work and know that God is present and active as we faithfully continue His healing ministry so that ALL might have life in abundance in the name of Christ.

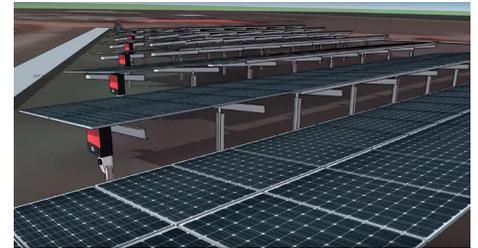
The last container shipped in 2016 was significant, not because it was the last, but because it was the first in support of PV for Phebe! The Women of the ELCA (spurred by the women of the Northeastern MN Synod) and RREAL (Rural Renewable Energy Alliance) are working with Phebe Hospital to construct a photovoltaic (PV) solar array that will provide renewable energy for this critical mission hospital in the heart of Liberia. A second 40' container is in process, loading January 23, and will include the balance of the items needed to complete this project plus medical supplies and equipment for Phebe and Curran Hospitals, and Kolahun District Hospital in Lofa County. God is good all the time!

Additional containers are planned this year to Tanzania, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Cameroon and Liberia.

Why PV for Phebe?

by Kim Dickey

*Let your light so shine before others
that they might see your good works
and glorify your Father in heaven.*



Drawing of Phebe's solar array

Imagine you're a surgeon performing an emergency appendectomy when suddenly the lights go out. The refrigerator keeping precious vaccines cold turns off. Patients on oxygen suddenly receive none – the oxygen concentrators stop working. Water pumps stop pumping so there's no fresh water - a special challenge for surgeons. If you're lucky, the back-up generator kicks in and the lights go back on, but meanwhile lives are jeopardized and indeed, sometimes patients die.

This is the reality at mission hospitals all over the world, including at Phebe Hospital in Bong County, Liberia. Like many mission hospitals, Phebe relies on diesel generators for power when electricity is interrupted, which happens almost every day. The cost of fuel is staggering for a resource-poor hospital like Phebe. More than \$30,000 is spent every month to keep the lights on. During the rainy season the road is often impassable, and delivery of fuel impossible.

Women of the ELCA from Northeastern Minnesota Synod who visited Phebe in 2012 were inspired to do something about this reality. What they put in motion is remarkable. The solar equipment on its way to Liberia has been made possible by partnerships they forged with the ELCA and WELCA, RREAL, GHM. Hundreds of donations, large and small, propelled the project forward. Soon, Phebe will be able to rely on renewable power to keep the lights on. We can all be inspired by these bold Women of the ELCA!



Mary Jo with husband Dave and volunteer Carol Harwood, packing items for Liberia

Visions for Justice from a Nigerian Scholar



Ibrahim and his family

Dr. Ibrahim Bitrus, a professor at Bronnum Seminary in Nigeria, is spending January as a resident scholar with GHM. Ibrahim was asked why healthcare is important in the ministry of the church. Here is part of his answer: "Preaching the Gospel without the work of love that liberates people from the bondage of disease is mere abstract exercise. It is an insensitive Gospel.

Such a gospel lacks transformative power. The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is no good news at all to those who are ill in body or mind when it ignores their suffering. Christians cannot ignore their needs without endangering the very essence of the Gospel itself."

The B-line



by Bea Haagenson

I have learned that GHM's many recent shipments have depleted our inventory of Kits. We are especially in need of Hospice Kits, but there are very few Newborn Kits left in the warehouse as well. These kits are sent in virtually every container at the request of our partners overseas. We hope you or your group can help. You can find information and instructions on our website under "Take Action" or call the office at 763-586-9590 and Wanda can help you.

Darlene, a regular volunteer in the warehouse, wanted to support our First Aid Kit program, a project we assemble in the warehouse for mission hospitals, clinics and village health workers. Darlene recently applied for a Thrivent Action Grant and was awarded a gift card that paid for First Aid Kit supplies like Ace bandages, thermometers, and ointment. If you're a Thrivent member, you may be eligible for a Thrivent Action Grant that you or your group could use to buy GHM kit supplies. Grants are usually for \$250, and you can see if you're eligible and apply online at thrivent.com.

Going forward in prayer,

Bea

The Hunt for Rotarians

by Stephanie Smith



Early this year, Scott Lien, GHM's Director of Operations, and I gratefully received a check for \$4,000 from the Rotary Club of Brooklyn Park. These funds helped cover costs to ship goods and materials

to the village of Foubarka, a leper community in Cameroon. We are pictured with fellow Rotarians Carol MacDonald, Larry Woelflin and Steve Laible, who is also a GHAP consultant to the health department of the Lutheran Church in Cameroon. I'm on the left, and Scott's in the middle.

As I near completing my second month as the new GHAP Director, I am growing more excited to be part of GHM as I'm learning more about the tremendous service being done around the world. Because I love helping to strategically "connect the dots," I want to especially reach out to all Rotarians who love GHM. As the past President for the Bloomington Daymakers Rotary Club (District 5950) and the International Service Chair for over 10 years, I have seen firsthand how Rotary clubs can leverage resources, build strong international partnerships, and be even better stewards. Dream with me about how we can create connections between GHM and your club and the possibility for matching grants.

To get started, please send me an email introduction (StephanieSmith@ghm.org) that has a subject line of "Rotary" and I'll send you information about next steps. Think about those people in your circle of connections including friends, family and colleagues who have a Rotary touchpoint. I would LOVE to create an affinity group of Rotarians to help support the good work of GHM... Let's dream big together!

Radikha & Mrs. Murma

by Kim Dickey

Last month I traveled to India with GHM's Executive Director, Pastor Doug, and Board member Dr. Nesa Joseph. Our travels took us across the country, from Bangalore and Vellore to Delhi and on to the very northern state of Assam.

At Parkijuli Christian Hospital in Assam we met village health workers who have been trained by the hospital to spot the possibility of tuberculosis in their community. If TB is suspected, they bring the person to Parkijuli Hospital for testing. In their village, VHWS monitor their patients' progress, teaching them and their families about TB, dispensing

medication they get from the hospital, helping them heal. Mrs. Murma is one of these VHWS. She came to meet us with Radhika, a young girl from her village. In Radhika's words, "I was very sick and couldn't even take my medicine. Mrs. Murma came to me every day and helped me. Now I'm ok. I can go to school again, and I'm happy."

For many years Parkijuli's VHWS distributed treated bednets and shared information about how to prevent malaria. For two years now there have been no cases of malaria in this area. Let's hope the same will come true for TB! You'll be hearing more about this amazing journey - a journey that opened up new possibilities for how we help the hands that heal around the world.



Mrs. Murma (left) and Radikha at Parkijuli



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



*Global Health Ministries is
turning 30, and
we're celebrating with a
special Spring Gala
Saturday, May 6, 2017!*

*Find out more at
www.ghm.org,
or call Wanda at
763-586-9590.*