

Keeping a Global Perspective

Through much of the past year, Americans have looked inwardly as we struggle to cope with economic crisis, conduct two wars, and fix a broken health care system. As Christians, let us not forget that poverty, war, ill health, and worse struggles were a way of life for millions of people around the world long before mortgage-backed securities became a household word.

According to Bread for the World, a Christian hunger-concerns organization, "This year 1.02 billion people will experience acute hunger every day. This represents an 11 percent increase over previous projections. The spike in world hunger is a result of a two-year period of sustained high food prices compounded by the global economic downturn.

The economic slump is now affecting developing countries severely. African economies, in particular, have been adversely affected by the global recession. The Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD) reports that unemployment has increased sharply across the continent, rising as high as 40 percent in Kenya and South Africa."

Requests for development assistance came to WHRI in the past year from Cuba, Ghana, Haiti, Malawi, Mexico, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, and Uganda. Whereas an important part of our mission statement is to "Participate in local and international sustainable development programs," I struggle to know how to respond to these inquiries.

Undoubtedly, our greatest historical impact has come about through our network of alumni. In the past month, I have enjoyed helping broker a conversation between *Water For All*, an organization started in Bolivia by former WHRI intern Terry Waller, and a fledgling Asian Rural Life Development Foundation project initiated in Pakistan by another former intern.

Water For All (waterforallinternational.org) has developed an innovative, low-cost, community-based approach to digging and managing water wells. Halfway across the world in Pakistan, ARLDF hopes to begin empowering communities using these same technologies.

Another recent networking success happened when our Education Director, Matt Hess, was asked to accompany a group of Verde Valley High School students from Sedona, AZ, on a two-week trip to Kamangilira, Malawi. The leader of the group recognized that such short-term efforts often overlook larger issues that require a longer-term perspective.



A Bolivian family rejoices in fresh water from a well provided through *Water for All*.

Having been impressed with WHRI's development philosophy during a week-long Alternative Spring Break experience, he asked Matt to join them on their Malawi trip to help them explore how the school might help the community address its agricultural needs. During two weeks in June, Matt conducted a community assessment and made recommendations for how Verde Valley might partner on a long-term basis with the people of Kamangilira.

In the coming year, I hope to follow up with requests for assistance with a coconut processing project initiated by recent Truett Seminary graduate (and former WHRI Board member) Vincent Asamoah. Bible Institute in Benin has asked for help equipping pastors with farming skills to supplement the theological education they already receive. And a church in Cuba wants to begin growing vegetables and goats on 300+ acres of government land to provide food for hungry parishioners.

... Perspective

Let's see ... then there's the orphanage in Haiti at which WHRI Farm Manager David Cole helped start a gardening project, and another Haitian orphanage which contacted us through former WHRI intern Lynn Rundle. Not to mention our long-standing involvement with World Hunger Relief - Haiti.

Opportunities for addressing international need abound, and whereas I feel blessed to have staff competent and willing to help respond to requests, the needs far outstrip our resources. A generous grant from Christian Missions Concerns has helped us fund travel and international partnership development over the past two years. We are also working with former WHRI interns to develop a network of consulting resources that may widen our resource base. You can find more about this Growers' Group at www.growersgroup.org.

Join us as we struggle to place local needs in the larger context of God's people around the world. Write your congressional representative and encourage him/her to support H.R. 2139, the "Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009," which directs the President to develop and implement a comprehensive national strategy to promote global development (for more information visit www.bread.org). Pray that, amidst the talk of government bailouts and toxic assets, we will not lose sight of the people around the world who have dealt with economic woes for decades.

Blessings,

Neil



Matt Hess and a Malawian villager construct a wood stove from mud bricks



Fall Farm Day
Saturday 7 November
9 am - 4 pm

Matching Grant Campaign

The J.E.S. Edwards Foundation in Ft. Worth, TX, will match financial contributions to WHRI in **August & September** up to a total of **\$30,000!**



In Memory of Ed Brentham

Ed Brentham died on June 1, 2009, at his home in Temple, Texas. Pictured here with his wife, Mary, in a 1982 photo, Ed and Mary served with WHRI in Ferrier, Haiti, in the early 1980s, where they were instrumental in developing the training facilities which have housed the Haiti ministry for the past 29 years. Ed and Mary visited us at WHRI in October 2007, when we hosted WHRI-Haiti president, Jackson Nelson. Please pray with us for Mary as she grieves for this loss. Memorials may be made to Hope for the Hungry for their Mission House.

The Long Flight Home

My name is Melody Kakunim. I am the third-born of a family of seven children. I come from a village of 700 people named Kobrenmin in the Teleformin District and Sanduan Province of Papua New Guinea (PNG). My tribe is Min, and my clan is Bogel. I am the first person from Kobrenmin to come to the United States.

Because of the positive influence of Baptist missionaries, I became a Christian when I was 10 years old and was baptized when I was fourteen. My Sunday School teachers were pilots and missionaries, and I grew up in a God-fearing family. I always believed that one day God would open doors for me to be a blessing to others in a bigger way.

A three-day walk from my village took me to the city, where I completed a Bachelors degree in Agriculture Science in 2001 at the University of Technology. During the course of my degree program, I was employed with the Tedi Mining Limited Agriculture Section in the Community Relations Department.

After graduation, I taught in a newly-established, remote high school for two years. Creative improvisation, dedication, and commitment to work helped me be successful. I moved to a town school in Tabubil in 2005 and worked without pay for one year. It was quite challenging, and God helped me flourish in a difficult environment. In 2006, I completed my postgraduate diploma in education at the University of Goroka.

I come from a life filled with struggle, raising my young niece and nephew after my mother died. However, being an active member of the church, I have desired to be a part of physical and spiritual change in the lives of my people in the Star Mountains of Teleformin. Our only link to the outside world is

through the Missionary Aviation Fellowship planes that provide the means to our basic services and supplies.

I first heard about WHRI through my classmate Lena Yual, who traveled to Waco in 2006 to train at the Farm, and John Pumbala, my professor who was a visiting engineering lecturer at Baylor University. I became excited about acquiring the basic training skills and knowledge of holistic approaches to the use of agricultural resources. I knew that I wanted to teach people basic ways of improving their lifestyles and health through food production and human development. I also believed that the WHRI internship would extend the borders of my vision beyond my little island country and toward the world as a whole.



Melody Kakunim has brought a world of experience to WHRI

Since my arrival here in January, I can see that it is possible for me to manage a herd of animals through rotational grazing, grow a wide variety of vegetables, incorporate simple irrigation techniques, and recycle and reuse "trash" to make something productive. Along with common sense and traditional values, these elements should allow me to be a part of improvements in the lives of my people.

After my time at WHRI, I would like to be a part of revitalizing my district's livestock and agriculture efforts, as I feel a strong connection to my homeland and people. I also dream of obtaining a pilot's license, a path from which I departed to help with family responsibilities. God has taken me out of my country so I could have another chance to pursue these goals, and I see the WHRI training as a great opportunity to learn the skills and techniques I need to reach them.

WHRI Alumni & Intern Updates

◆ Meredith Mayrand (2005)

Still working diligently with Mennonite Central Committee in Mexico, Meredith is involved in a three-year project working with communities to build 200 cisterns, 200 dry latrines and start 100 family gardens. She has been consulting with WHRI, asking questions about how best to proceed and how to work together with others as a healthy team focused on a common goal.

◆ Kathy Politowski (1982)

This message from Brazil: "... Two more churches were officially organized in Petrolina. There are now 11 Baptist churches in the city as well as a number of Missions. Thank God for the ordination of Joilson, the pastor of the Hope Baptist Church ... and for the translation of three more booklets for the Missionary Institutes ... in this region. Now there is enough material for students to earn the Certificate of Studies. During the second week of March, I went to the city of Salgueiro and trained the leaders from an established church and a new mission point. Later that same week I went to the city of Floresta to train leaders from nine churches and missions; all of these are involved in training others in their churches. Many non-Christians are now studying the Bible in their homes as a result of these trainings."

◆ Zachary & Robin Heppner Entz (2006)

"We are doing well (here in Africa). We have had a son, Elijah Peter Entz ... We are here in the capital city, busy with bookwork and office work until the end of rainy season, when we will try to spend more time in the village. Previously to his birth, we had been spending time in the Fulani village, learning language and meeting with community groups. We continue to be involved in advocacy, helping some of these Fulani villages get their voice heard in the bureaucracy of the national irrigation authority. Within the next year, we anticipate building a few dome-roofed adobe buildings and moving with the other Fulani villages as part of the resettlement for the US-funded irrigation development project."

◆ Terry & Kathy Waller (1983)

Split their time between San Julian, Bolivia and San Angelo, TX where they purchased a home and are schooling their youngest children. Water For All (www.waterforallinternational.org) has helped communities obtain clean well water in the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nicaragua, Togo, etc. In Bolivia, they also nurture an emerging church movement and promote appropriate technologies for small-scale no-till agriculture.

World Hunger Relief, Inc. is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation registered with the State of Texas under the 501(c)(3) IRS status.

Mission Statement

World Hunger Relief, Inc. is a Christian organization committed to the alleviation of hunger around the world.

God calls us to:

- Train** individuals in holistic ministry that equips them to work with communities in developing sustainable farming techniques
- Educate** those with an economic abundance on methods of conserving and sharing resources
- Participate** in local and international sustainable development programs

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