

ghana rural integrated development GRID newsletter

November 27, 2008

Dear GRID Support Team:

As I begin our "Christmas" letter I am reminded that for our United States friends, Nov. 27th is Thanksgiving Day. Canada celebrates Thanksgiving earlier, and this year it was Oct. 13th. The simple meaning of Thanksgiving is our expression of gratitude and giving of thanks to Almighty God who has created us. In Psalm 95 we are told to **"come before His presence with thanksgiving...for the Lord is the great God"**. Our GRID Board has so much to be thankful for. We are thankful to God for the Medical/Surgical/Dental Volunteer Teams who worked on our sites during October. There are not words to adequately describe the level of help and healing, both physically and spiritually that were given by these teams. They brought relief to large numbers of people—people who I am sure would like to have the opportunity to live in a land such as ours where in our state of "recession" we live lives which would be considered by them to be "extremely wealthy"! Our Director's wife, Brenda, sent along up-to-date information, which I will share, in part, so that you might have a better understanding of another phase of our work, caring for the Health of the people. To begin, the container of operating equipment and medical supplies was supposed to arrive at our site before the medical team arrived. It did not! a lot of "red tape" was involved in getting it cleared and the Agent kept promising "tomorrow"! It finally arrived 5 days after the team got there. within 3 hours, 3 surgeons were operating. On that Sunday, after a 3 hour church service, a school girl shared with one of the team members that she had been fasting and praying for the surgical container to arrive and that she couldn't understand why God would allow it to be delayed. When the container drove past their school the children cheered and thanked God for delivering it. In addition, there had also been a one day delay in the Medical Teams arrival. That was because the Canadian team started their work on the airplane from Canada when a passenger had a heart attack. We are happy to tell you the passenger survived but in the process,

the airplane had to return to Canada which caused the delay. The Canadian group of 30 was joined by 2 British MD's, a Dentist and a volunteer, and despite their delay, serious lack of sleep, etc., they started their first clinic the next morning. They had used their "waiting time" well. The 4 "hernia nurses" and the Anesthetist went out to the village clinics and were a great help to the Medical team. Two of the surgeons accompanied the Medical Team to the outreach clinics at Yambol and Yaara to assess hernia patients and they did the assessments on the first 30 patients that had been listed for surgery so that once the equipment was there they could begin operating immediately. Prior to the arrival of the Medical/Surgical teams they had asked the community based volunteers to get a list of people suffering from hernias. Within a few days they had a list of 700 names and only 100 repairs were targeted for this trip. They knew of the need but not that it was that great!! The medical staff working at the Bamboi Clinic found those in greatest need and got the list down to 218 who then had blood tests requested by the surgeons. In the end, they were able to operate on 79 patients doing 93 procedures (some had double and triple hernias). Again, Brenda said it was hard to describe the joy and appreciation of the patients that were treated as many had suffered for several years. The surgeons on this team had many years of experience and they said they saw the largest hernias they had ever seen... Yaa Ajara came as part of the first group of 30. When they did her assessment they were surprised to find 3 hernias. She was sleeping, with other patients, at the local school and that evening complained of a lot of pain. The doctors examined her again. Her situation had become very serious. They were able to get the hernia back in place to prevent strangulation and the next day got enough sterile equipment together to operate on her. Interestingly, all of their "mesh" was in the container but the surgeon that had come from the US "happened" to put some in his luggage—more than enough to treat the woman. The doctors felt that had there not been medical attention the night she experienced the pain, she would have been dead in 24 hours. Once again, God was at work. Had the container Agent not promised the equipment container would be there on Monday, they would not have brought in the first 30 patients and she probably would have died in her village as a result!

Picture yourself in one of these villages. Imagine a bus, van, pick up truck, and large truck pulling into the village and setting up. Canopies are put up, chairs lined up, suitcases, boxes, tables, medications to stock the make-shift pharmacy shelves. Look closely and see in these group 4 pharmacists, 6 doctors, 2 dentists, and the sweltering sun. Watch Director David as he moves among them making sure that the more seriously ill are registered first. The total Medical Ministry team numbered 44. We are thankful that these people used their talents for the Lord. It is estimated that about 9000 people attended the 8 day clinics. During a ceremony which was in honor of the Medical Team and a "thank you" from the people, two men came, individually, to

the leaders at the end of the Day. They said they had heard about God's love over the past few years, but seeing God's love in action through the team made them want to accept Christ into their lives. Pastor Dale Dawson from Uxbridge Baptist Church in Ontario was able to minister to them. As Dec. 25th approaches—the day we set aside to mark and honor the birth of Jesus, God's Son given for our redemption, let us make it a day of great rejoicing. What greater Gift could God have given? We need everyone's prayer support and financial support to continue the work in Northern Ghana. Could we consider giving sacrificially? Just as Jesus blessed the loaves and fishes from one small boy and multiplied them for the benefit of many, so God will bless our gifts. Little is much when God is in it. This Christmas, could we consider asking God to make us a blessing to those in need—on the mission fields, where we work, to our neighbors and friends? We trust you will enjoy a wonderful time of celebration and that His light might shine through our lives, reaching out to those in darkness.

Please remember in your prayers:

- ❖ Both our GRID and NEA Boards and their families.
- ❖ That the healing process might continue in the bodies of those in Ghana who had treatment or surgery.
- ❖ For all of you, our support team, who may have illness, or family problems, or may be experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one.
- ❖ For Director David and Brenda who continue to labor faithfully.
- ❖ For Elizabeth Mensah as she continues to study and to prepare for her wedding in August!
- ❖ For Deborah and her husband Henry and their little new born daughter Oleyaa (Brenda and David are now grand-parents-Congratulations)
- ❖ For Carole Mensah who is now in her fourth year of study at the University of Toronto
- ❖ For the Medical Teams who have returned home
- ❖ For the Stovell's who present our work in their area and our Webmaster-Steve.
- ❖ And for all of the dear people on our project sites and for the many villages in Northern Ghana for which we have concern.

Ella J. Porter

GRID Public Relations.

"He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" – Romans 8:32

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