

Helping Katrina Victims — Before FEMA and After Red Cross

LifeNets played an active role in directly helping victims in one of the worst natural disasters ever to befall the United States. Our program was composed of two parts.

First, we immediately helped evacuees who found themselves in Houston, Texas. LifeNets volunteers, led by United Church of God pastor Ken Giese and his wife, Kathy, stepped up to help some of these people. Mr. Giese heard that 15 adults and children from New Orleans moved into the apartment next door to a member in his congregation. They had very few clothes and really no other belongings. They were close to exceeding their spending limits on their credit cards and had spent most of their cash on hotels. They weren't sure when they would have insurance settlements or access to additional income. They prayed that Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) would grant them a free apartment soon. Our volunteers proceeded to go to Wal-Mart and Academy Sports to acquire linens, pillows, air mat-

tresses and personal care items for their new acquaintances. While at Wal-Mart our volunteers saw several clusters of family members searching for these same kinds of items. They were able to correctly identify folks from New Orleans either by observing the individuals or by noticing what was in their carts. After inquiring as to whether various individuals were indeed from New Orleans, and asking how they were coping emotionally, it was easy to determine that most could really use some help.

Over the course of two weekends, about \$8,500 worth of Wal-Mart gift certificates and/or air mattresses and bedding were contributed. The recipients were told that an organization named LifeNets was helping disaster survivors and was supported by contributions sent by various individuals.

We received this note from one of the evacuees: "My family and I evacuated to Houston, Texas, before Katrina hit. We were in such disbelief about the destruction that came over

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the city of New Orleans and surrounding areas. We rode an emotional roller coaster. We were welcomed with open arms by a local church. We received much needed encouragement and strength. One day while we were at our hotel, (see "Katrina," page 2)

Zambia — Cattle and Agricultural Support Through a Revolving Fund

From report by Kambani Banda



LifeNets Zambia Director
Kambani Banda

Our **cattle program** started with 22 heifers in 2001. Now the herd has grown to nearly 60! Our policy is to have the first calf given to another person in the community. This passes on the gift that has been given by LifeNets supporters and promotes goodwill. Pictured on the right is a family receiving heifers



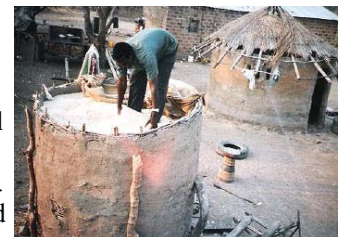
with Armstrong Maninga officiating. The next generation of heifers is all in good health. Some of the male calves should start work this year, while the heifers continue to produce milk. One important aspect to ensure the survival of the cattle is that we provide training in animal husbandry.

Since last year, we have set up the **agricultural support revolving fund** to improve harvest yields and income for the same families within the cattle restoration project in the Mumbwa area of Zambia. The broader solution was to first provide training from an expert at the ministry of agriculture

in land preparation, planting, weeding, etc. Then we oversaw the production by taking three trips to the Mumbwa area—a four-hour trip by truck. A \$2,000 loan divided among 10 families was given to buy good seed and fertilizer. Recycled seed from the previous year's crop often resulted in a poor germination rate.

In most of southern Africa this past year's agricultural season was a disaster due to drought conditions. Production in Mumbwa was also lower and families had acute food shortage, but the families that we supported still raised 32.6 tons of maize valued at \$6,000. This was a fine return on the LifeNets investment.

The crop is sold off-season, giving a better return on investment. The revolving fund is repaid and the process will begin again for the next planting season, which starts in November. An average family made \$400 and the top family made \$1,000, which is very good money in this part of the world. We want to repeat this program as last year with the same 10 families before considering adding more to the program.



Adding protection chemicals to maize

The Wheelchair Project Provides Mobility for Many

by Beverly Kubik

Since 1999, LifeNets has provided wheelchairs for those who could not afford them. Regularly we have chairs donated to us from around the United States. So far this year, we have had nearly 80 manual, power and pediatric chairs given to us from people who find

The Wheelchair Project on our Web site. By going to www.lifennets.org/wheelchair, you can see the complete history of how we work. We give special thanks to Wayne Stephens, our wheelchair coordinator from the Orlando, Florida, area, and Beverly Kubik, who have spent countless hours helping us communicate with donors and recipients alike. It is so heartwarming to hear of successful connections being made.

When a wheelchair is donated, we ask that it be kept in the part of the country where it was donated, and then we attempt to match it with a request in that area.



Below are some happy faces showing successful connections. Please go to our Web site to get the story behind each one of the photos.



We are looking for volunteers who can be LifeNets wheelchair drop-off centers to receive donated chairs and keep them until we have a request in that area. Volunteers should contact Beverly Kubik at bev@kubik.org or phone (888) 821-0095.

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someone from LifeNets walked up and starting talking with us. When he found out that we were from Louisiana, he gave us Wal-Mart gift cards. We were so grateful. On the gift card there was a note that read, ‘A Gift for You From LifeNets.org.’ I want you to know that we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Since then we have returned to Louisiana to make repairs to our home. We have not only received blessings, but we have blessed other families in need. Thank you again and again.”

LifeNets also shipped wheelchairs from Indianapolis and other parts of the country to a makeshift clinic at the Houston Astrodome, which housed thousands of evacuees.

Part two of our aiding victims was at ground zero where the devastation took place. Red Cross had been there, but after the Red Cross leaves, there is still a lot that has to be done to help victims. Our volunteers were on the spot to make certain that we would aid directly. Here is some of what was done. A widow not only had to pull up all of her carpet because of flooding, but also needed to fell five large pine trees on her property—one of which was resting on the back corner of her home. LifeNets was able to pay for the safe removal of trees that would have further damaged her home. Another family saw their household grow from two to 12

immediately after Katrina. Ten of their immediate and extended family had lost homes in the New Orleans area and had no place to go. LifeNets provided them with \$1,800 to pay for food, housing, and other incidentals that involved looking after 10 people. Presently, now two and a half months later, they are still housing a few of their family. LifeNets funds were a support to help them provide for their extended family’s needs.

A similar situation occurred with a family living in Biloxi, Mississippi. Even though the back half of her house was roofless and the contents under that part of the house ruined, she still took in several people as well. LifeNets gave her approximately \$1,650 to cover similar expenses incurred by opening up her home to so many who had nowhere else to go.

A retired octogenarian who lives about 20 miles west of New Orleans, took in an elderly widow and her disabled brother after their home was damaged by Katrina. Their roof caved in in several places causing the ceiling to give way. Mold-filled insulation was exposed in several rooms of the house making it uninhabitable. He appreciated the \$500 that LifeNets gave him to offset his expenses. These are just a very few of the stories of people helping one another. Altogether, the LifeNets mission provided more than \$25,000 in aid. For the full story, please go to www.lifennets.org/katrina/blog.htm.

LifeNets Now in Jordan

by Cory Erickson

In 2005 LifeNets provided financial support, supplies and training for physically and mentally challenged children in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. These efforts were spearheaded by Cory Erickson and have focused on the Bunyat Centre for Special Education and the Al Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation/Habilitation of the Physically Challenged. These are centers that were served for nearly 15 years by Ambassador Foundation volunteers from the early 1980s to the mid-1990s.



From left: Princess Majda al Ra'ad, her assistant Amira Juma, Victor Kubik, Prince Ra'ad bin Zeid (the lord chamberlain to the king of Jordan), Cory Erickson and Annie Medzhagopian Abu Hanna (executive director of the Al Hussein Society)

On March 20, a very successful LifeNets-sponsored fundraiser in Oakdale, Minnesota, more than doubled the campaign goal of \$5,000, by raising \$11,207 for the Bunyat Centre! These funds are being used for a much-needed upgrade of the wood-working area's exhaust system in the center's vocational section.

In late July and early August, Victor Kubik and Cory Erickson visited Jordan in order to review activities. The trip was a big success, and meetings were conducted with leaders in the fields of rehabilitation of the mentally and physically challenged. Numerous meetings took place discussing ongoing mutual cooperation. In addition, Mr. Kubik and Mr. Erickson had the

opportunity to meet members of the royal family in Jordan who support the initiatives for the disadvantaged in Jordanian society.

One special opportunity was a lunch hosted on July 30 (see photo at left) by Prince Ra'ad bin Zeid and his wife Princess Majda al Ra'ad. Prince Ra'ad is lord chamberlain to King Abdullah II. The lunch provided an opportunity for Mr. Kubik to meet the husband-wife team that has spent decades supporting the disadvantaged of Jordanian society in a very direct and personal way.

It was also a renewal of a relationship that Mr. Erickson has had with the Ra'ads since 1989. Many items were discussed, including how LifeNets can further cooperate with the Al Hussein Society, which is patronized by Princess Majda.

LifeNets is currently committed to various projects for serving the disadvantaged. Objectives in 2006, for which we need your support, include:

- Fundraising campaigns, including the YMWA campaign with a goal of \$7,500 and the first-ever Al Hussein campaign with a goal of \$5,000. Cory Erickson will lead the YMWA campaign and William Stetter of Cleveland, Ohio, will lead the Al Hussein campaign.
- A training cooperation between Damar, a private, not-for-profit provider of residential services to children with developmental disabilities based in Indianapolis, and leaders of the two centers we work with.
- The donation of over 200 school chairs and at least two dozen tables for a new addition at the Al Hussein Society. These will be used for a recently constructed second floor to the Al Hussein Center that will allow for training of other people in the field of rehabilitation of the physically challenged. This program will be led by Theresa Luginbill of Pine City, Minnesota.



Rotary Foundation Provides \$12,216 Grant for Equipment and Medicine at the "Revival" Centre in the Chernobyl Area

As in past years, the Rotary Foundation has been good to LifeNets international projects by giving a grant of \$12,216 to the "Revival" Centre for the Medical-Social Rehabilitation of Disabled Children. The grant paid for a Russian-language Montessori Program, rehabilitation equipment, an ultrasound inhalator and medicine for nerve-based diseases. All the items have been purchased and

have been put to good use.

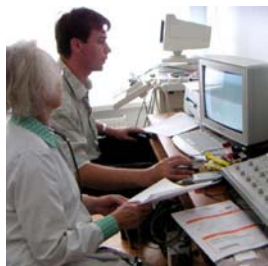
We have been working with the center since just before its opening in 1996. Starting with the humblest of beginnings, it treated 30 children mostly with cerebral palsy. In 10 years it

has become a model center for medically and socially rehabilitating 220 children with a wide range of disabilities. The center is located in Chernihev, 40 miles due east of Chernobyl. Effects of the nuclear disaster abound in the lives of children of the generation following the victims of the accident.

The center was founded by Dr. Vasyl Pasechnik. Along with two other doctors, he established a means to treat

many children who were victims of Chernobyl when neither the government nor anyone else was doing so. For this he was awarded

Ukraine's highest citizen award by President Victor Yushchenko on August 24, 2005. See more at www.lifenets.org/chernobyl.





LifeNets is a 501(c)(3) corporation that helps people in need and promotes self-sufficiency. Contributions to LifeNets are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

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How to Effortlessly Double or Triple Your LifeNets Donation

Many companies will match their employees' and retirees' charitable contributions. Check with your personnel office, and they will provide the necessary forms and instructions. Then send LifeNets the completed form. Thank you very much!

Donations to LifeNets are tax-deductible in the United States. If you would like for us to put a friend on the mailing list, please let us know via email at newsletter@lifenets.org or write us at the address above.

What Is Needed?

Every day LifeNets transforms individuals and communities as you see in this newsletter. We count on the continual support of our friends to keep all of our programs going. We CAN make a difference in bringing people from subsistence poverty, unsanitary living conditions and lack of medicines that many of us take for granted. With your help we will continue our ongoing projects, some of which include:

- **Developing Nations Scholarship Program**, providing life-changing opportunities for employment and self-worth.
- **Livelihood development projects**, helping people start small businesses so they can provide for their families.
- **Building a security wall** at the LifeNets Chizeni Clinic in Balaka, Malawi.

If there are any projects that you would like to give special support to, call us at (888) 821-0095 or email us.

Thanks again to those who have made LifeNets their charity of choice.

Phase Two of Sri Lanka Tsunami Reconstruction Project

by Sonali Fiske

To date, we are building eight houses, which are at various stages of construction. Four of these structures are near completion with the roofs currently being installed. Two houses, within our second phase, are well into their final stages of production with their walls installed in preparation for placing the roof-braces.

Soon we will take part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony on at least four of the houses, in order to hand over the homeowners' keys and welcome them into their new dwellings. It will be a wonderful moment for all of us—to be able to watch our beneficiaries walk into what will finally be their “home,” a stable roof over their heads instead of the temporary wooden shacks they've endured for nearly a year now.

With any remaining funds that continue to trickle in to support our Tsunami project, we hope to continue our successful livelihood development programs. Many rural folk lost their means of income and are sadly living a hand-to-mouth existence until they receive outside help. For instance, some families we know cannot afford to purchase milk powder needed to nourish their children. Some men suffer various disabilities because of the tsunami and are unable to return to their former occupations. In some cases, it can take as little as \$500 to help generate income for a family of four.

Besides the obvious benefits our recipients acquire, our project is of great value to those participating as well. Currently, we have two youth from our local church in Garden Grove, California, lending a hand towards our project in Sri Lanka.



Derek Weis and Anya Marcum, aged 18, were eager to volunteer towards the rebuilding effort from the moment our project commenced. Their passion to help the devastated families of the tsunami brought them to Sri Lanka. They have experienced firsthand the great difficulties faced by many tsunami-affected families, those who have been subsequently left homeless, starving and orphaned by this horrible tragedy.

With our housing project slowly coming to a close, we're mindful of what's ahead for the tsunami reconstruction project here. While many victims have been housed and cared for, there is yet much to

be accomplished in Sri Lanka. Over 600,000 remain homeless and 42,000 orphaned by the tsunami.

As we approach the one-year mark of that fateful day, it is sobering to note that we cannot turn our backs on the countless men, women and children who cry out for help from within the secluded relief camps.