



Dear Family & Friends~

We just returned from another fascinating trip to Ethiopia, this time around it was Dan, Morgan & Lita that traveled with a Village of Hope expedition. We went along with founder DeAnna Kennard and a group of nine others including doctors, medical personnel, a college freshman and a recent university graduate, on a medical expedition. While the medical group set up in the clinic building, we were in the offices located in an out-building near the gate of the compound.

Our focus was on the Foresight “Dagoo Harawaa” Program, an innovative plan to encourage fathers to build a better future for the village of Kersa Illala by providing a work requirement for the father (an opportunity for paid employment/training) tied to an educational opportunity for his children and a component that educates both he and his wife as well. Your \$150.00 donation becomes \$300.00 when matched by Foresight Management and pays for a sponsorship.

This sponsorship and the father’s commitment to work four hours per week per child for up to two children (at a competitive wage of 3 Birr per hour) assures his child will also receive a year’s education, including books; he and his wife also commit to attending life skills classes to increase their opportunities.

The manpower of the fathers working just four hours per week per child may not seem like much, but it will be quite significant. As community and service projects are identified and completed, unity and hope will be rekindled.

Thanks to a generous donation by Foresight Management and another by the St. John’s Volunteers, lives will be changed in this remote village. We had the opportunity to meet with a local micro-finance bank to discuss possibilities in Kersa only to find that there is a small but strong group of women currently participating in such a program. We had the good fortune to observe one of their meetings during our stay. We updated the program so that those items the local

villagers most often request small loans for will now be included as “employee bonus” for our working fathers.

We learned about the importance of educating those in this farming community. You have to remember the vast majority of these people live much as they did thousands of years ago, without running water, electricity or machinery. Plowing a field means by hand or with the help of an ox. There is no automatic irrigation, they depend on rainfall. This time of year the landscape was lush and green; nine months ago it was dry and dusty.



Morgan takes a photo with two of the Foresight applicants.



These two photos demonstrate the difference between the public and private schools. On the left is a public school classroom (70-90 students per class). On right is the Adventist High School with 25-30 students per class.

We toured the local schools where the children that will receive sponsorship will attend. Public school classes average between seventy and ninety pupils per class in a very primitive building. Our students will have the benefit of attending the Ethiopian Adventist School, which has the luxury of electricity, proper lighting, individual desks and a class size of thirty students per class.

We want to be sure that we are supporting improvement in the community so a portion of each sponsorship donation will go to improving the public schools and hopefully help to bring a high school into the village very soon. It is important not to neglect the community school where so many struggle to receive their education. You may notice that students of varying ages are in the same grade. This is not unusual as some children do not have the opportunity to attend school until they are older; many drop out to help support their families.

We met with the local Kabelli, the governing board of the village in their small and humble office, a small one room space framed from sticks and 'plastered' with mud, with a thatched roof and wood framed window opening and a wooded door without electricity. It began to rain while we met. Lita can attest that the thatching on the roofs is not completely waterproof!

The governing board was grateful for all the work the Village of Hope has done to bring clean water and good health to the area. Cholera has been eliminated, they said, due to the efforts of Lon & Deanna to bring a well and water stations to the village. We learned that Kersa Illala enjoys the reputation of being a place to shower for travelers traveling from Addis Ababa south. Think of it; that is something we all take for granted as we travel!

The Kabelli were supportive of Dagoo Harawaa, stating that the practice of "Dagoo" had been lost over the past few decades and that by bringing back the practice of serving and helping one another the village of Kersa Illala will become stronger. They were grateful that the fathers would be taught strong work practices and learn how to use their resources to their advantage. The Kabelli offered assistance in the application process because they know the motivated men of the village and want this program to succeed.



Above: Foresight Program Director Fayisa meets with families and outlines the Foresight program criteria. We were unable to process the applications for all those who came to apply



Right: On the land donated by the Kabelli stands a large Acacia tree that has been the "Gathering Tree" for the village. Plans are to have this tree continue to be a focal point in the new Education and Cultural Center.

It was during our stay, that we learned the Kabelli has donated a rather large part of land to the Village of Hope for the purpose of recreation and building unity. We were able to work with wonderful, motivated and dedicated VOH staffers, Stephanie and Fayisa in developing a preliminary plan for this land which includes meeting and educational buildings, soccer, track and sports courts, an area to show farmers the way to irrigate using a water tank and how to grow more crops as well as an area to instruct the villagers in ways to produce healthier and 'fatter' livestock. A water station inside this complex will yet again instruct those that visit the importance of clean water, sanitation and proper cleaning techniques. The jewel of this project though we hope will be cultural center, a gathering place for many that will teach of the rich Ethiopian history so that the culture of Kersa Illala and surrounding areas will not be lost. Though the completion of this project will largely depend on individual donations and grants over the next few years, it is our hope that an outdoor pavilion for the community youth group to use will begin construction soon and that the required fencing for the property will be underway shortly.

It was truly an exciting visit; we were able to accept applications for our program on Wednesday and Thursday. We were hopeful to have a few dozen applicants. We accepted 140 applicants and had to turn at least that many away for the time was short. Morgan took photos of each family and Lita worked with staffers Fayisa and Stephanie and

translators to fill out the applications. Dan gathered the information and formatted it so that it is accessible on the VOH website. It was a very humbling experience, and very gratifying.



Each evening we gathered for dinner and shared experiences of the day with the others; the doctors and nurses treated hundreds of sick and offered medicine and education for sustained health. Our small group likewise touched many lives offering hope for a brighter future!

Won't you join us and consider sponsoring a father/child through the Dago Harawaa Program? Maybe even consider a trip out with us next summer, where you can meet and work alongside those sponsored. Or perhaps you may be touched to make a donation toward the building fund of the future Kersa Illala Education, Recreation & Cultural Center. Please visit the website to learn all the details and meet the people that we visited with that now have hope for a brighter future because of friends and family like you!

Left: Hussen, the current President of the Youth Service Group. Center; Steffanie: HRCC Director and Youth Group advisor. Right: Foresight Program Director Fayisa.

Dan, Lita and Morgan Alger

TO SPONSOR A FAMILY GO TO: www.villageofhope-ethiopia.org/foresight.html

YES. I / We are interested in sponsoring a family for one year. Enclosed is my/our check payable to: "Village of Hope" in the amount of \$150.00. Be sure to note "FORESIGHT PROGRAM" on the memo section of your check.

I/We are interested in sponsoring the following family: _____
Enter Name of Family (from web site)

Donor Contact information:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-Mail: _____

Mail to:

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