

VILLAGE OF HOPE JULY 2007 EXPEDITION

The participants for the July expedition led by DeAnna, were: Dan, Lita, and Morgan Alger; Joe Bingham, M.D.; Lyndsy Ekstrand; Jaelyn Jensen, R.N.; Jimmy Munson; Matt Parsons, M.D.; Michael Parsons; Veronica Sucher, R.N.; Victoria Sucher, M.D.

The new Foresight Program was presented to the Kersa Illala Village Chairman by Dan. Lita, Morgan and in-country directors Faiyessa and Steffanie, put in many hours working to assist the new operation set-up. It has continued to be a tremendous success and has been warmly welcomed by the Village Chairman, Elders and villagers. See accompanying report.

The medical group treated between 750-800 patients during six days of operating the clinic. It was impossible to keep an accurate record because the doctors also ended up treating ill siblings who came with registered children, but needed to be seen as well. On Sunday afternoon, we toured the village and the doctors made several "house calls," too.

We hired Dr. Ndala, an OB/GYN from the hospital in Awasa, to work with us for five days. Our medical team enjoyed his assistance and exchanging knowledge with him. He took Drs. Bingham, Parsons, and DeAnna to the government hospital in Awasa, where we were introduced to the medical director and given a tour of the facility. We were impressed with the cleanliness and order of the hospital and concluded that it would be worth the the travel to Awasa, approximately 45 minutes, for many VOH referrals, rather than sending them to the hospital in Shashemene. We learned that with a letter from the Kebele Elders, a villager can usually receive many free health services provided by the government.

Several minor surgeries were performed, including removal of two tumors, and it was very helpful to have the services of Veronica, who is a surgical nurse. At least three lives were saved, that would have surely been lost without the expertise of our medical group being there. One stroke victim was brought by donkey cart and Dr. Victoria taught his family specific exercises to help loosen atrophied muscles. She was kept busy in her lab, identifying many cases of parasites, malaria, infections, etc. A scabies clinic was headed by Hamid, the R.N. who has been so helpful in directing this station before. Here, the mothers received hygiene instruction as well as a hygiene kit. Additional training was given to VOH R.N., Bonso, and our medical group was impressed with his knowledge as well as his enthusiasm and ability to learn quickly. Jaelyn got amazingly adept at starting IV's in dehydrated patients, and she and Lyndsy were a great help in the pharmacy. Michael and Jimmy kept the distribution of over 200 donated eyeglasses under control. Dr. Parsons noted that most sight problems resulted from a need for reading glasses, and collecting these will become our main focus now. (No pun intended.)

Morgan, Jimmy and Michael were eager assistants wherever needed, but enjoyed dressing the newly bathed children most of all. What a treat this always is, and I can't thank everyone enough for your generous donations of infant, girls' & boys' clothing. Many hundred children, from newborns up, received new clothes, and many were also given blankets and shoes. The last day, we ran out of

boys' pants, but thanks to a donation headed by Jan Brown, of over 200 new blue or orange tee shirts from a school in Sacramento, every single child, as well as all interpreters and employees, received at least a new shirt.

Specifically, two mothers each were given a goat to assist in income. One mother has a beautiful little girl with diabetes and no money for insulin. She was given a letter asking her Kabele Chairmen in Turge to give her a certificate for government assistance, and we also arranged for her to have a goat so she could feed her family the milk, cheese and eventually, offspring meat. Another mother from Kuyera was disowned by her husband and family because she has AIDS. She and her infant had no place to live and no way to care for themselves. She, too, was given a goat and arrangements were being made for her to have a house in Kersa where she could help VOH, if she decides to move there.

Several cases of asthma were diagnosed and the patients were placed on a list for a smokeless stove. Building these stoves for villagers is a service project of the youth group Steffanie has organized. This group has been extremely successful and is very coveted and popular with the youth members. It is patterned after the youth program of the LDS Church, without specific religious doctrine. The members meet weekly to enjoy service projects, sports and cultural activities, and spiritual, social and academic growth. They just recently performed a program for the villagers with 400 to 500 attending.

We sincerely appreciate the services of our interns, Jenelle Tittelfitz, who arrived in May and returned home in August, and Alyssa Berrett, who just arrived and will be there for about 3 months.

Once again, we gave love and service to many, but we gained the most. Thank you for your contributions in every way!