

Volunteer Spotlight

By: David Halterman

Ralph Fultz, a retired postal worker and an avid tennis player, has been volunteering at the PET Workshop for nearly 2 years. It is always a blessing watching him work with and supervise young volunteers regardless of their skill level. Whatever has to be done, it we know that we can "let Ralph do it" and it will be accomplished. His attention to detail and the standards that he sets for himself have earned him our deepest thanks and appreciation. In addition to volunteering twice a week at the PET Workshop, he also volunteers five days a week as a foster grandparent at Shaw Elementary School.



Two-year PET Workshop volunteer Ralph Fultz

“ Whatever has to be done, we know that we can ‘let Ralph do it.’ ”

Prayer & Praise

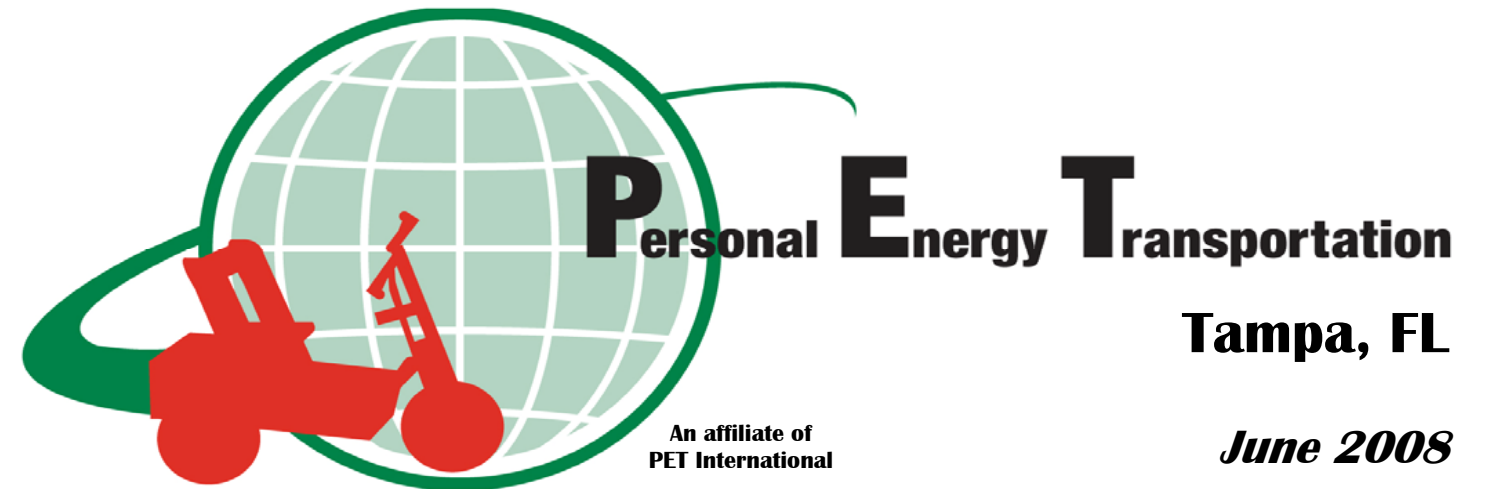
- Praise for the past volunteer and financial support that has made everything possible thus far! Please pray that this support would continue throughout the year and onward.
- Praise for the success in the setup of the Sierra Leone West Africa workshop! Please pray for its continued operation and success in reaching the disabled in this area of the world.
- Please pray that the destination of the boxed and ready-to-ship PET wheelchairs would become evident and made possible through funding and third-party contacts.
- Prayer for the continued safety and protection of all the volunteers.



PET Project

P.O. Box 2105

Tampa, FL 33601



PET Workshop Established in Sierra Leone, Africa

By: Jeff Sukup

During the first half of May, Jack Burk, from the Fernandino Beach metal workshop, and I traveled to Sierra Leone on the west coast of Africa. We went there to represent PET International in setting up the third workshop on that continent. Rotary International from the United Kingdom assisted us by providing funding, and Mercy Ships provided space at their New Steps center in Waterloo, which is an hour east outside of the capital of Freetown.

PET wheelchairs have been sent to "Sielone," as the locals say it, since the year 2000, when the 10-year civil war was coming to an end. This war killed thousands of people and maimed thousands more, many from land mines. In addition, polio is widespread and entire communities of these victims live there.

PET International sent a container with parts such as tires, chains, and front forks, which would not be obtainable in this area. The metal, wood, and hardware would all have to be found within the country. The gauge of metal is not like anything we have here in the States, and the wood was rough-sawn and wet at an inch-plus thickness.

To make things even more challenging, the equipment we had to

Assembling our first wheel chair



work with was also not what we are

used to. Stick-welding, hand-sawing and hand-planing made things very interesting. It was a blessing to have skilled and willing carpenters and welders who weren't phased by the heat.

Each day at the center was started with a group prayer meeting and a devotion. People without the use of their legs, and some without any legs at all, arrived at the center every day. The center staff would evaluate them and determine if they would be best fitted with crutches, a walker, a standard wheelchair or a PET. We accomplished not only setting up



PET Recipient Alimamy Kanu goes to the Hasting Primary school thanks to his PET wheelchair. He is 13 years old.

Continued on next page ...

Newspaper Article Sparks Hope

By Teresa L. Nielsen

On May 2nd, an article about the PET Project was published in the St. Petersburg Times. The newspaper article shared about a retired gentleman in Florida who had read a previous article in the paper about PET and was motivated to help. He looked for donations and obtained a grant from his local community foundation, which he used to purchase the wood. He then motivated the members of his woodworking club to participate, and together they cut and prepared the necessary wood for the chairs. Over the past two years they have shipped 280 units to the Tampa workshop for assembly and painting.

The article highlighted exactly what PET wheelchairs are, who needs them, and where they are shipped overseas. The need is great, and when it is shared with others, it moves them to action. The response that's received confirms just how important it is to get the word out about this ministry. People's hearts are touched, and they are moved into action to actively participate and make a difference in the life of another person whom they may never even know. Such was the response of 18-year-old Corbin Hughes, who read this particular article that May morning.

Corbin wrote a letter to Jeff Sukup, telling him the impact the article made on him, even including a poem that he wrote. We would like to share with you Corbin's letter (below) and his poem (right). ■

Dear Mr. Sukup,

I strongly believe that your project is a very worthwhile cause and I would love to help in the construction and assembly of these carts. I woke up this morning mad at the world. As I sat down to read the paper, I saw the article in the St. Pete Times about the PET project carts and realized that this is what it is all about. If we do not reach out to others in their time of need, regardless of race, religion or whatever, who will? I wrote the following poem to say thank you and to let you know how much of an impact this has had on my life. Please, Mr. Sukup, if you need volunteers for the construction of these vehicles, please let me know. I would love to help. — Corbin Hughes, Age 18

Thank You, by Corbin Hughes

So much good within a world filled with bad
Coming from such a small place
Filling the void held by so many.
Insurmountable hurt lifted from their shoulders
And for this I say thank you.

Pain and suffering alleviated by a small group
Trying to make the world a better place.
Trying to help the disheartened.
For every soul who can not speak,
I say thank you.

So much love coming from these hearts.
So much compassion spilling out like a roaring river
Covering up the pain with a handmade cart
Doing so much for someone with so little
And for this I say thank you

You help the world see the good in all
Changing my outlook with a task carried out by
a group of four men
You are the heroes
The ones who do what's right
And for this I say thank you.

From a heart filled with hate for what I don't understand
Your project changed everything
From the way I look at life
To the way I feel for other people
People I don't know
People I've never seen
People I've never met
I feel love in my heart for them
And for this I say thank you

To say I have not cared
To say I have not turned away
To say they are not my problem
These all changed to feelings of compassion and understanding
Changed May 2, 2008 at 10:50 am
These are reasons I thank you
You have saved so many with what little you have
And for this I say thank you.

How you can help

This is a growing but daunting ministry due to the great need. There are many ways to help, as the many current volunteers and contributors have learned.

INDIVIDUALS AND LOCAL CHURCHES

- Pray for the 21 million people in the world who have lost the use of their legs through polio, landmines, war amputations, crocodiles, etc.
- Give/raise funds: This is always basic. It takes money to buy metal and parts, to weld, to package, to ship, and to distribute. "Ask ... and you shall receive" -- is the message of Scripture. Be creative.
- Find people with welding, metalworking, or woodworking skills who can offer to help build PET parts. Help them with expenses — buy the metal, etc. Help them ship it to Tampa PET in Tampa, FL USA.
- Find businesses that sell or make "off the shelf" items needed for the PETs. Ask them to donate or sell to you at no profit. Send the items to The PET Place.
- Talk about the PET Project to others. Say in conversation, "Our church is doing a fascinating mission project ..." Tell the story. Word of mouth is the best advertisement!
- Ask your company if it provides matching funds for donations, volunteer service, or group projects. It is generally quite easy to qualify PET Tampa to receive these types of funds. Ask them if they would be interested in bringing a group to work at the PET workshop.

DONATIONS — To make a donation, please print out our donation form on the website, or use the one below, and send it along with your donation to: PET FLORIDA, P.O. Box 2105, Tampa, FL 33601.

GIFTS FROM THE HEART — Honor your loved ones while helping to provide another person with mobility. Two gifts in one, a Gift From the Heart celebrates a special occasion, in honor of, or in memory of, while supporting the work of The PET Project. A note will be sent to the person being honored. This gift information can be filled out on our donation form.

ESTATE PLANNING — As you do your estate planning, consider making the PET Project a part of those plans. The need for the GIFT OF MOBILITY is an ongoing need, with millions around the world awaiting it.

Volunteer information

The Tampa PET workshop is open every Saturday from 9 AM - 3 PM and Thursdays 1:30 - 4:30 PM. Volunteers are needed to assist with packing (each PET includes about 30 pounds of clothing, toys, supplies, etc. that serve as the packing material), sorting, painting, assembly, woodworking and metal work. No prior experience is necessary, training is provided, and volunteers of all ages are welcome. There is a particular need for experienced welders. The oldest volunteer is 90 years old, and teenagers can fulfill their community service hours as well! Please note that under age 15 requires adult supervision.

For more information, or to donate good used or new clothing, supplies, toiletries, etc., contact:

Jeff Sukup
webmaster@tampapet.com
813-625-7789

George Frazer
gmilo2@yahoo.com

Workshop Location:

1109 E Osborne Ave, Tampa, FL 33603
East of Nebraska on 12th Street at Osborne (just off I-275 in Tampa at the MLK exit). See map below.

Workshop times:

Saturday 9 AM - 3 PM
Thursday 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
Check the website for holiday hours.

Website:

www.tampapet.com



Sierra Leone, continued from front page ...

the workshop and training the workers, but also were able to produce four PET wheelchairs from the raw materials. ■



Joseph Bangura is 42 and a polio victim. His wife died and left him with 3 children. Here he is planing the wood for the PET carriage.

PET recipient Adama Koroma is 14 years old. The PET makes it possible for her to go to primary school. She is a polio victim.



Eddy Bangs, one of our carpenters, is back-sawing the rough-cut and green Yemani wood. He is 29 years old, married, and has 3 children.



Bending chain guards of sheet metal with a hammer

PET recipient and polio victim Thomas Bender, age 34, received his first PET in 2002. He turned it in to be refurbished.



PET Project Donation Slip

June 2008

Your donation to the PET ministry will provide someone with a whole new way of life.

Help raise a child or adult from the dirt to dignity with your gift.

The cost of each PET, including materials, assembly and shipment, is \$250.

Gifts of all amounts are accepted and appreciated! All donations are tax-deductible.

Please detach and return this form with your contribution.

Please accept my gift of \$ _____ to the PET Workshop.

(Make checks payable to "PET Tampa, Florida" and mail to:

P.O. Box 2105, Tampa, FL 33601)

Name _____

Address _____

Email Address _____