AN UPDATE ON BLACK

I am sending this follow-up to every person or organization who has sent us food, relief aide or supported us through prayer or finances because this testimony is a thanks to YOU and what God has done through YOUR help:

I had previously shared that when we began to work in Cite Soleil in 2010, we had to be careful of a man named Black.

He rode a bike and carried a shotgun and did not like us. But...he saw the food and aide we provided to the groups there, and he wanted us to help his community, too. So, we began to include his community.

Then Christmas came---we included the children in his area in the toy and food distribution.

And so it was for five years...

He got to know us and trust us.

Two months ago he came and prayed with us to recommit his life to Christ.

Today Black came here at 8:00 am with his two soldiers. He brought us bananas and two chickens. We invited Black and his men to share breakfast with the six of us.

His soldiers told us how Black has LAID DOWN HIS GUNS & ONLY WANTS TO KNOW ABOUT THE LORD !!!!!

His top soldier said that the Lord is right on his own shoulder also, so he will be next to give his heart to Christ.

Black wants to be mentored and go to church. He has turned his life around and the root of this evolution was through YOUR DONATIONS.

The food & supplies & love BROKE through the BARRIER so the man wanted Jesus in his life.

Thank you for all you do,
Sandra Koch
Help For Haiti Inc.

**The Orphan Grain Train Wisconsin Branch Officer Contact information will now be found on page 10 of the quarterly newsletter.**
A partnership between two local groups resulted in 30 bicycles being shipped from Reedsburg to Moldova, a country located in Europe between Romania and Ukraine. The bikes, repaired into tiptop shape by fourth and fifth grade students in the after school bike repair program at Pineview School, will be distributed to children in Moldova.

Students in the bicycle program at Pineview, directed by Gary Williams, have been repairing bikes for the past several years and shipping them to places where the bikes will be welcomed by children in poverty or disaster-caused conditions. In his program students get to repair one bike for themselves to keep, and they get to donate a second bike to another child.

Finding places to ship repaired bikes and arranging for shipping has been a challenge for Williams through the years, making the partnership with Orphan Grain Train a good one, since Orphan Grain Train ships donations of all kinds to people in need in the United States and throughout the world.

Orphan Grain Train was started in 1992 with a program started locally by the late Dean Oetzman in LaValle in 1994. After his passing, the local program was moved to Reedsburg, where it is under the direction of Betty and Dennis Andreasen. Volunteers gather in the gym at St. Peter’s Lutheran school once a month to pack donations from the community for Orphan Grain Train.

The 30 bikes loaded up last week were trucked to Westfield, Wisconsin, where they will be part of a full shipping container that will be shipped to Moldova within the coming month. Orphan Grain Train is a Christian volunteer network that ships donated food, clothing, medical and other needed items to people in 68 different countries including the USA.

Local volunteer Dennis Andreasen gets ready to wheel out a bicycle for Orphan Grain Train. Thirty bicycles, repaired into top shape by students in the Pineview School bicycle repair program, are being shipped by Orphan Grain Train to Moldova, a country in southeastern Europe, where they will be distributed to children.
A fun project between Christmas and New Year's was packing OGT hygiene kits in memory of Rev. Ted Krueger of Portage. Items purchased over several months were arranged for an assembly line. Then, in less than an hour, eleven adults and two children from his family were able to wrap and tie 116 kits, which filled nine boxes.
Some of you might remember the devastating Hurricane Matthew that struck in 2017. Many homes were destroyed by the hurricane. Over several months, Orphan Grain Train partnered with GoServe Global and the Brakebush Family Foundation to help Sandra Koch and John Lafortune with Help For Haiti to provide new homes for those who lost theirs. Orphan Grain Train also sent mattresses, bedding for all the homes, Christmas Bibles, beans and rice meals. Pages 3-4 show some photos of the damaged homes as well as a letter from Sandra Koch. Check out pages 5-6 to see the new homes that were built for these sweet families.

Hello,
Cathy mentioned to me the concept of the round houses.
These photos are just some of the families who lost their homes in the recent hurricane.
The area is called Flurant L’Azile and is located in the high southern mountains just west of Cayes.
The residents have struggled for decades with drought, famine and SEVERE poverty.
Sister Joseph (Bethesda Ministries) is from this village, and we have worked with her for almost 20 years.
We provide 40-60 boxes of rice meals per month for the school for over 200 children.
We repaired the school roof after the hurricane destroyed it, but you can see, much more is needed.
Bless you,
Sandra
Dear Orphan Grain Train,

I have been sending sporadic photos of this wonderful project of constructing 10 houses for families who lost their homes in the October Hurricane Matthew, but I want to put them in sequence so you can see what you have done for the people of Flurant L’Azil, Haiti.

For the past 2 weeks, Les and Jimmy have had their crew in Flurant teaching the local men how to make the cement foundations and get ready for the houses.

This way when the container arrived Thursday and was unloaded early Friday, by the END OF FRIDAY, the two teams of men had finished two houses and on their way to completing number three. The men learned quickly and did an excellent job.

The houses are roomy and have a great feature: an UPPER LOFT which gives another large area for a family to sleep or store things.

The photos show three houses that will be on the side of Bethesda Hospital to use for Elderly Housing.

The final seven houses should be completed in under two weeks. The time will be in having to hand carry the heavy tin pieces a mile down the road or across the mountain and brook, to reach the final location to build that house.

The last procedure will be to put a smooth concrete finish floor inside each home.

I will be sending additional photos of the families who will have a new house and their stories, but I wanted you to see how this project successfully progressed.

We thank you, on behalf of the people of Flurant, Sandra

Sandra Koch
Help For Haiti Inc
I like what a comedian once observed about New Year's Eve. He said, "I love it when they drop the ball in Times Square. It's a nice reminder of what I did all year." Well, if we are honest with ourselves and with God, we all dropped the ball last year, we made mistakes and sinned. Thankfully however, in Christ, God has wiped clean the slate of our failures in past, so that we can enter the New Year with hope for a fresh start.

St. Paul says in 2 Cor. 5:17, "If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come. All this is from God who has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation." This verse speaks of our salvation and how, having been saved by God's grace through faith in Christ, our sins are gone and we have a new beginning. In Baptism, our sins are washed away and we receive the Holy Spirit to empower us to live a new life.

But will we drop the ball again in the New Year and sin? No matter how hard we try, we will drop the ball again, that's a give-in. So we need to look to the Spirit to help us as we seek to live godly lives and follow the Spirit's leading as He guides us in God's Word not to drop the ball.

Our Lord has given us a mission to do until He returns. We who have been reconciled or been "made friends" with God are given the job to share His reconciling love with others. Jesus bids us to stay alert in our faith, but just like we often fall asleep waiting for the ball to drop on New Year's Eve, so also we miss opportunities to share the good news of His reconciling love with others. May our efforts in Orphan Grain Train help in the mission our Lord has given us, so that when others see our good deeds of caring and support, they will be pointed to praise the Lord and look for Him to make a new beginning in their life. Let's not drop the ball in the New Year but keep awake as Christ's ambassadors!

Have a happy and blessed New Year!

Your friend in Christ,
Pastor Bruce Lamont
The Quilting Ladies of St. Martin Lutheran school assisted the students in making four quilts for the orphanage children. In October St. Martin chose OGT shipping for the school chapel offerings. The 2nd graders made Mercy Kits, and the 5th graders made quilts. Greetings to everyone!

With you in Jesus' Love,

Meta Krueger
RECEIVING NEW CHAIRS
MEXICO MISSIONS

The first photo (below) shows that it was a chilly morning but good for unloading the trailer.
The second photo (right) shows Pastor Cristian and his wife receiving the chairs.
Thank you,
Pastor Gary Martin
Mexico Mission

**Folding chairs donated by Jim and Sonja Flynn**
THE TARP

I am sorry I did not take a photo, but yesterday we were doing our Wednesday distribution for the elderly.

One lady told us that her roof had a leak. When it rains the water comes in and floods her floor (of her little house).

The water makes her legs hurt......she must have arthritis.

So, I went into the OGT container. I had 2 tarps left from a Wisconsin shipment.

I came back with a tarp for her roof.

She began to shout and PRAISE GOD for the tarp.

It was very humbling of what we take for granted, and this lady's life changed because of a tarp OGT had put into a shipment.

Thank you,
Sandra Koch, Help For Haiti Inc.
I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. -John 14:18

ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN MISSION STATEMENT

In loving response to Christ, the Servant, the Orphan Grain Train movement encourages and enables God's people to share personal and material resources in bringing Christ's name and character to needy people both far and near. Sometimes that character expresses itself as a word well spoken, sometimes as a bandage well applied, and sometimes as a child well fed.

If someone you know would like to receive this newsletter, and is not on our address list, please let Linda Isberner know. You can receive by mail or e-mail. If you prefer e-mail, just give us call, or send a message. If you wish to have your name removed from the address list, please let us know. Thanks!

If you have an article or picture you would like to include in the next newsletter, please contact Allie Sherron by phone or e-mail. If you prefer to send by mail, please contact Linda Isberner.

Allie Sherron
608-617-9125
ansherron@gmail.com

Brakebush Brothers, Inc.
Attn: Linda Isberner
N4993 6th Drive
Westfield, WI 53964-9511
800-933-2121 ext.1202
lisberner@brakebush.com

WISCONSIN - ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN

Is an option for your THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS!
Thrivent Choice Dollars need to be designated by March 31st on a yearly basis.