



Orphan Grain Train +

Maryland Branch

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Friends of OGT,

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" - 2020

These famous words from the Charles Dicken's novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, seem to eerily define the year 2020. The *worst of times* included a worldwide pandemic, rioting and looting in major cities, high unemployment, and political turmoil - with a major portion of the populous hunkering down amid a rise in depression, suicide and alcoholism.

In the face of these formidable headwinds, volunteers of the Maryland Branch of Orphan Grain Train stayed true to their mission with courage, dedication, and perseverance as evidenced by the following major activities.

In MASK MAKING national Shipments in 2019

Deprived of their ability to ship humanitarian aid because of COVID-19 and the closing of the warehouse, the response of the volunteers was to develop a mask-making operation with patterns, supply sources, and a network for distribution. At the suggestion of healthcare providers, scrub caps and headbands were added to the repertoire.

The recipients included five hospitals, Fort Meade, senior facilities, day care centers, assisted living facilities, and various businesses such as grocery stores and restaurants. In addition, county agencies were included such as the Foster Children's Program, food pantries and communities where resources were in short supply. The total number of masks produced was over 5,500, along with 630 scrub caps and 800 headbands. All of this was accomplished with only one casualty - one volunteer jammed a sewing needle through her thumb!

Here is one response from a person in an assisted living facility. *"I cannot explain what a blessing you are! Thank you so much for the masks. It is absolutely a gift of God that you called me. I have goosebumps telling you this but we were just discussing 'what are we going to do?' I have no idea how to tell you Thank You enough!"*





COAT DRIVE AND WINTER CLOTHING



This year's coat drive was again a success with a distribution of 806 winter coats during the two months prior to Christmas. These coats were donated by a variety of sources, including organizations, small businesses, church groups, and individuals. In addition to providing coats to churches in the Baltimore area, coats were given to Linda's Legacy, Helping Up Mission, and an elementary school.

Addressing the need wherever it exists, two volunteers drove a truck 325 miles full of 250 coats and 500 boxes of winter clothing to Braxton County in West Virginia in Appalachia. The clothing was distributed by Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services. Children removed from their homes by these agencies often have only the clothing they are wearing at the time and are in need of additional items quickly.

INTERNATIONAL SHIPMENTS



Even though the warehouse was locked down for some time because of the pandemic, our resilient volunteers still managed to ship seven containers overseas - among the highest yearly number of shipments since our branch started.

One shipment each went to Nicaragua, Cameroon, and Liberia. The other four went to South Sudan, a country that is experiencing excruciating devastation.



The area in South Sudan to which we shipped contains about a half-million people and lies along the Nile River, which had unusual flooding. People who have lost their homes were congregating in schools, churches, and public squares. Adding to their misery, COVID-19 closed down the schools for months. Pastor Stephen of the Mission Gardens of Christ reports that as the flood waters subside, he will be able to distribute our aid. It is anticipated that we will continue to provide humanitarian aid to these people this year. Special thanks are extended to Bay Area Community Church for their substantial contribution of funds.

With particular joy, it is good to report that band uniforms donated by Severna Park High School arrived in the township of Bor. The chapel youth, donned in the colorful uniforms marched around the town with a drum major on Christmas Eve!

The shipment to the Lutheran Orphanage of Cameroon along with a medical clinic involved a great many players. Joy Reigns Lutheran Church contributed an altar, baptismal font, and a crucifix. The Annapolis Evangelical Church donated 100 children's quilts and many students from Archbishop Spalding High School offered their brains and brawn to load the container full of humanitarian aid.

LUCI LIGHTS (solar lights)

Some of the African countries to which we ship have an unreliable electric grid or no electric grid. Because of their proximity to the equator, there are about 12 hours of darkness each day, which makes it difficult for children to do homework or play. Two teenage brothers, Trey and Travis, saw an opportunity to respond by raising money for Luci Lights - solar powered lights that can be recharged daily. Each charge provides about 12 hours of light.

OGT has already shipped over 5,000 of these lights and hopes to send 5,000 more. The brothers have partnered with a local auto and body shop. For every donation of \$10 for a Luci Light, the shop will



provide a vehicle cabin sterilization service free of charge, a \$50 value. To date, the brothers have raised \$6,107.51.

SHUNTS



We are continuing to supply any hospital in a third world country with the appropriate surgical skill with shunts (hydrocephalic valve units). Each shunt saves one life! To date, we have shipped close to 3,000 shunts to hospitals in Nicaragua, Panama, and Kyrgyzstan, valued at \$2 million. Special thanks to Integra Life Sciences who generously donates the shunts to us.

MEDICAL WALKOUT PROGRAM

The walkout program is a service to the surrounding community to provide medical equipment such as wheelchairs, crutches, rollators, hospital beds, etc. to folks who have an immediate need. The equipment is given to them and they may return it when it is not needed or give it to someone else in need.



We have been given the opportunity to partner with the Maryland Department of Aging, Durable Medical Equipment Program (DME). This program takes used medical equipment to their warehouse in Brandywine, Prince Georges County, where it is washed and sanitized in HubScrub machines. Once it is cleaned, dried, and repaired if needed, it is placed in their warehouse for distribution to those in need. They are setting up collection centers around the state.

Cooperation with the DME program will allow us to swap medical equipment to mutually benefit both of the initiatives. By sharing our resources, this partnership can serve as a "force multiplier" which will enable us to provide more effective and efficient service to the community.

BOMBAS SOCKS

The Bombas sock company again donated 3,000 socks especially manufactured for the homeless. Bombas donates one pair of these socks for every pair sold from their standard line. The socks are black and have a thickly padded sole with the fabric impregnated with an antibacterial substance. They are perfect for the homeless who cannot wash their socks every night. It is not surprising that socks are the single most important items for the homeless. These 3,000 socks were received shortly before Christmas and distributed to the homeless by the Wyneken Project in Baltimore as well as churches in Annapolis. We receive this blessing with great joy annually.

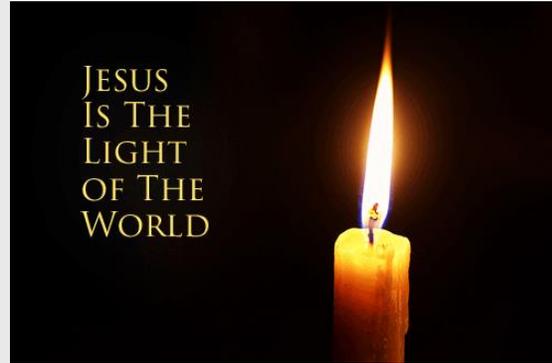


SUMMARY

If you asked people about the year 2020, it is safe to say that many would say that it was wretched and ugly. The volunteers of Orphan Grain Train, however saw it as an opportunity to serve our Lord and we should celebrate that. The activities shown above provide testimony that as servants of Christ, our dedicated volunteers have the ability to shine light in the darkness, and in many respects, it was indeed *the best of times*. *God bless our volunteers.*

It is fitting to end with Paul's letter to the Colossians when he wrote: "*And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God*" (Col: 1:10)

Amen



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LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021
SAVE THESE DATES FOR OUR UPCOMING
RESTAURANT FUND RAISERS (click for details)
February 25th - 4-9 p.m. at Garry's Grill
April 7th - 12 noon -9 p.m. at Brian Boru

Orphan Grain Train

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