

HOPE

Acres of Hope Newsletter January 2010

HOPE. It's a word that inspires and brings about many positive feelings. It whispers of better



days to come and shines light in dark situations. It is something that everyone in the world appreciates, but some cling to it desperately. When Jesus Christ came to the world over 2000 years ago, he was the fulfillment of the ***HOPE*** of thousands of people. His life, death, and resurrection provided the solution to the desperate condition of sin in which mankind suffered. This ***HOPE*** is eternal and is free to anyone who is willing to receive it. And it is because of Christ's ***HOPE***, that Acres of Hope is able to help the needy children in the world today. We are privileged to not only claim this ***HOPE*** as our own,

but to be able to share it with those that God brings our way.

This past year, those connected with Acres of Hope have become especially acquainted with this word. Adoptions were suspended in Liberia over a year ago due to the government reforming the laws on adoption. We ***HOPED*** that they would reopen in a short amount of time, and the children would soon be united with their adoptive parents. Because of the suspension and a failed economy we faced additional challenges as an organization with financial constraints, and we clung to the ***HOPE*** that somehow we would still be able to care for the children and meet the tremendous needs of those we serve. Despite this disappointment, and the year turning out quite differently than many of us had imagined, God still gave us several stories of ***HOPE***, amazing stories that could be considered miracles. We still saw ***HOPE*** in the darkness.

HOPE came in the form of several beautiful babies, who were placed with Acres of Hope by the Ministry of Health during this challenging time. The Ministry of Health has continuously relied on AOH for our high quality of care for needy children. Recently AOH was commended by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice for our professionalism and exceptional care given to the children of Liberia.



One of our greatest stories of ***HOPE*** this year was Alvin, a 13-year-old boy who lay dying in a tuberculosis sanitarium when AOH found him. He had suffered numerous injuries due to a car accident which led to paralysis. Misdiagnosed with tuberculosis Alvin developed bedsores that had eaten away his flesh to the point that his bones and internal organs were visible. He could no longer walk, use the bathroom, roll over, or lay in any comfortable position. Alvin's future seemed hopeless, and death was just around the corner.

On one of my first visits to Alvin I thought he would die within a few days. Alvin asked me to sleep near him in the sanitarium (on the floor beside the bed) so that if Jesus came, and saw a white person, He would be inclined to stop and see him. I explained to Alvin that Jesus showed

no preference for black or white skin, and then led Alvin through the plan of salvation, so that if Alvin were to pass away in the night, Jesus would indeed bring him home with Him to Heaven. Alvin accepted Jesus as his Savior that night and I stayed close to him throughout the night sleeping on the hard cement floor beside his bed.

Alvin and his birth mom had been praying a long time for some way that Alvin's life could be spared. Some way for him to live the future he dreamed of and recover from his constant suffering. Through the ministry of Acres of Hope, and a loving Christian family in America extending their hearts and home through adoption, the present day hands of Christ reached out to Alvin to save his precious life and bring him to a place where he can receive the most physical recovery possible on earth. A plea was made known and people responded to help get Alvin to the States for medical care. With the generous financial donations, and the prayers of thousands of people, God worked a modern day miracle in the life of a little child who thought he had been forgotten. Who thought Jesus only came to white people. Who thought his dreams to see life and a future in America would never come true. Today Alvin has undergone many surgeries and is healing physically and emotionally. He is doing well with his new family and is looking forward to a long, full life.



After Alvin was safely home, I was able to dive head first into preparations for the new Extreme Humanitarian Expeditions AOH will be leading. Each expedition will be filled with exciting fun adventures in the back country, and featuring a spellbinding fusion of humanitarian projects, Liberian culture, and relationships with locals. Participants will engage in some of the complex issues facing developing nations and learn how one can truly make a difference. These trips are designed to bridge the gap between the vision to help and the ability to experience first hand making a difference in the lives of the Liberian people. The Extreme Humanitarian Expeditions and projects will help to provide sustainability for villages and projects throughout Liberia.



You can read more about the Extreme Humanitarian Expedition by visiting our website at www.acresofhope.org and download the Humanitarian Expedition informational packet for cost, scheduled dates of expeditions and details of the trips.



During one of my survey trips for the expeditions, a young man approached me about his brand-new daughter who was born with a double cleft palate. Blessing's health was in jeopardy so the family asked me to take her. Despite a hospital stay and a lot of coaching, with the biological family, Blessing was rejected by her family and village who feared she was bewitched because of her physical deformities. So we welcomed this little Blessing into the AOH family and she is now thriving in a foster home. For Blessing, there is **HOPE**. She will be undergoing surgery in February then attempts will be made to reunite her with her biological family.



The AOH family suffered two devastating losses when Lawrence and Levi, two of our beautiful but medically fragile children, passed away very unexpectedly. None of us had anticipated that in August Lawrence would still be in Liberia (and not with his adoptive family in the US) and certainly none of us anticipated his death or Little Levi who still waited for a family. We are comforted by the **HOPE** of Jesus Christ and the life we know Lawrence and Levi are enjoying with Him in Heaven.



The children at the AOH Children Home want each of you to know that life is good at the home. We have been blessed to have the Lairds, foster and adoptive parents with AOH and missionaries with SIM missions in Liberia visit the orphanage almost every Saturday. They along with their children play games and usually bring treats for the kids. Holiday events like Easter and Christmas are always made special. Melodie Sheppard has been a constant blessing as well as she serves the Lord in her ministry with the children and women.



Circle of Love



Fun with bubbles!

Shortly after Alvin went home Acres of Hope began another story of **HOPE**, one we trust will continue to become even more inspiring. The Ministry of Health had approached Acres of Hope several months earlier about a beautiful baby boy named Jeremiah that desperately needed care. At the time Acres of Hope just couldn't handle another child (as no income was coming in because of adoption being on hold), but with the passing of Lawrence and Levi...well, there was now room. Jeremiah was abandoned in a local hospital due to his hydrocephaly. Jeremiah is about a year and a half now and has spent almost the first year of his life in the hospital. He was abandoned by his family after receiving surgery. While the hospital had tried their best to care for him, the staff simply did not have the time or resources to care for this little one and his very special needs. Jeremiah began to really go downhill and with nowhere else to turn, the Ministry of Health asked AOH once more if they could take him. We were ready this time and he was welcomed into the special needs room with open arms. His condition was deplorable. Though at least a year old, he was thin enough to wear newborn clothing, and his large, misshapen head was covered with terrible bedsores.



Little Jeremiah is finally receiving the long overdue tender loving care he so deserves. AOH nannies have given special attention to this sweet angel who had been forgotten....

AOH has established a sponsorship program for our special needs children. For information about this program visit our website at www.acresofhope.org



Jeremiah's condition upon arriving at Acres of Hope Children's Home.

Perhaps you might like to give **HOPE** to a little child like Jeremiah.

“When a poor person dies of hunger, it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed.”

- Mother Teresa-



Jeremiah immediately began to improve in our care and has already become a treasured member of the AOH family. Though Jeremiah has faced a lot of heartaches in his young life, he has become a child of **HOPE**. Acres of Hope has been given the privilege to care for this special child, giving him **HOPE** when no one else was able to, and we pray his story does not end in Liberia. We pray that somewhere in a country with medical resources more advanced than Liberia, there is a family who would be willing to bring Jeremiah home and call him their own. That this child who has been uncomfortable for the majority of his life, who has felt the sting of abandonment and rejection, through the arms of a loving family these wounds will heal, and he will experience the greatest **HOPE** this young one can see on this earth.

ROCK HILL PROJECT

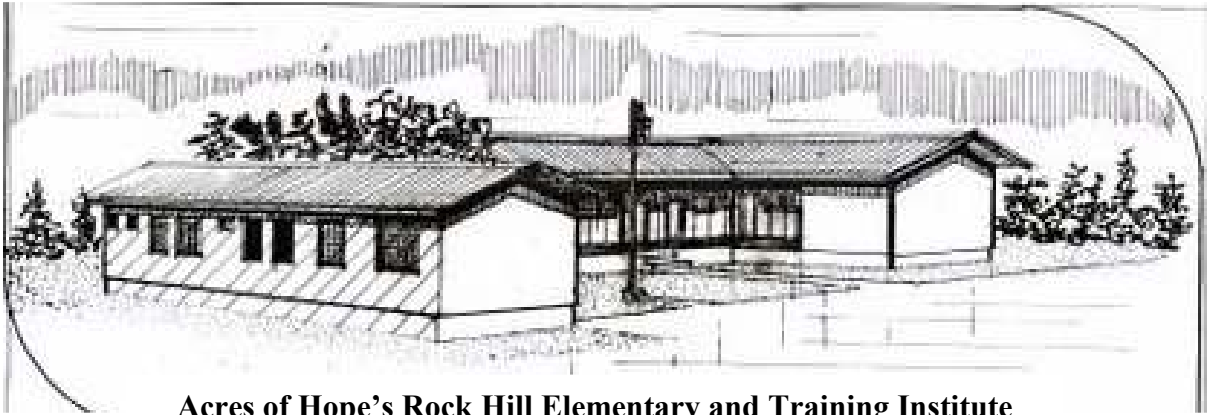
Rock Hill is a community of more than 30,000 residents who mainly crush rock by hand for a living. It is heart breaking to walk through this community and see young children, pregnant women and elderly people pounding rocks into gravel by hand in **HOPE**s of making enough money to buy a bowl of rice at the end of the day. AOH partnered with AOH-Belgium to bring **HOPE** to the children and their families by installing 2 hand pumps providing clean drinking water which continues to save lives.



AOH has supported the Wilbel Foundation School which has been a make shift school in an abandoned building in the community. The building is in need of extensive repair. AOH has sponsored numerous students and help to supplement the teacher's salary to this school. With the involvement in the community to bring **HOPE** to the residents there Acres of Hope stepped out in Faith and committed to bring quality education to the children. This last year AOH in partnership with our sister organization AOH-Belgium has raised \$60,000 for the construction of the new Acres of Hope Rock Hill Elementary/Training Institute which will open her doors in September 2010. We **HOPE** to educate a minimum of 500 students per year with the addition of adult education training classes in the late afternoon and evenings. A teacher sponsorship program has been established to offset tuition fees for students. The adult education program will include literacy and skills training such as sewing, soap making, and classes on independent business success. If you would like to be a part of this exciting program to give **HOPE** to hundreds of kids, please visit www.acresofhope.org or email us aoh.savinglives@gmail.com



Students look forward to their new school complete with uniforms



Acres of Hope's Rock Hill Elementary and Training Institute

Area behind the children is the new site for the school



“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

Nelson Mandela

In 2005 Acres of Hope revitalized the Kparblee Community Clinic in Nimba County. The services that were provided were life saving and gave **HOPE** to the community and surrounding areas. Word spread of the clinic even into Ivory Coast and soon it became apparent that we would have to expand the existing clinic or build a new one. This last year has been exciting with the construction of the new AOH 35 bed Clinic in Kparblee which will serve hundreds of people in the surrounding area. Below is the construction of the clinic.



Deep in the interior of Nimba
County there is now
HOPE

HOPE comes in many forms, Orphan Rescue, Education, and Medical Outreach, but none so important than meeting the Spiritual needs of a nation hurt by years of war and dysfunction. Acres of Hope recognizes that without the Spiritual foundation and commitment to serve the Lord, none of what we do has much meaning. Recently I was appointed to develop a ministry in Robertsport which is about 2 hours from the Capital in Cape Mount County. This community is about 70% Muslim, but back in 1834 the Mt. Zion Baptist Church was founded in Robertsport. Today this church building sits on 10 acres overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. With only 15 members in the congregation, but a heart to grow, I have made a personal commitment to develop and support this vital ministry. Our Christian presence is a testimony in the community. Plans are in progress to restore the historical church building, build an elementary school and construct 2 missionary houses on the property. Total project cost is \$250,000



The MT. Zion Baptist Church



Members of the church



Bullet hole from the war



Repairs are needed

Consider becoming a partner in this important ministry. Or perhaps your church would like to “adopt” the Mt. Zion Community Church. Your involvement will not only bless this ministry, but will be a testimony to an entire community that needs desperately to hear of **HOPE** through Jesus Christ. Mt. Zion is committed to Romans which states:

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love: give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord: rejoicing in HOPE, persevering in tribulation and devoted to prayer.” Romans 12:10-12

AOH expanded our services this past year to include The Democratic Republic of Congo! We now are doing Orphan Rescue and adoptions from the Congo-DRC. Our trip in September of 2009 to Congo proved to be successful in many ways. We spent time with government officials sharing with them our commitment to the children of Congo. Great relationships were established, and we were blessed to experience the Ministries endorsing our efforts to provide humanitarian relief and work along side the different branches of government to accomplish our goals.

I was particularly touched to visit mission stations where my parents served as medical missionaries when I was a child. Things had CHANGED in 40 years, but our house was still there and it was great to walk the halls of my father's hospital. It brought back many wonderful memories of my childhood and also reminded me of how much work there is still to do. Another blessing came our way when the very dorm I grew up in at boarding school, became the new AOH Orphanage Children's Home! Talk about coming full circle!



AOH Orphanage Children's Home



Patty's Home as a child



AOH Staff with the Minister of Health and Social Welfare



AOH Staff with the first group of children adopted from Congo

We look forward to many years in the Congo and bringing **HOPE** to those we serve there. Acres of Hope USA has been busy with domestic adoptions and coordinating all international activities with our sister organizations. Acres of Hope USA became a fully licensed Child Placing Agency licensed by the State of Wisconsin in 2008. Tim Faust, Director of Adoptions-USA and I have attended state wide conferences on adoption issues as many changes are constantly occurring. I have had numerous speaking engagements across the country and traveled to Belgium for 2 separate fund raisers this last year. We have been on several radio programs, television, and had numerous newspaper articles written.

The week of March 12-21, 2010 we will be celebrating the ground breaking of the Rock Hill School project and the Dedication Program of the Clinic in Kparblee. In addition we will be kicking off our Extreme Humanitarian Expeditions. This will be an exciting week filled with opportunities to be a part of what Acres of Hope is doing in Liberia. Our AOH-Belgium team will be on the ground that week and we want to extend an invitation to all our supporters to come and see first hand the life-saving work AOH is doing. We will be touring a variety of projects and sites giving all those in attendance an insider view of what makes Acres of Hope uniquely effective. Please contact our office at [715-765-4118](tel:715-765-4118) if you would like to be a participant.

We want to thank all our families, friends, volunteers and contributors for the wonderful support and prayers you have given to Acres of Hope this last year. Each of you have given us the encouragement to continue giving the **HOPE** to others who are in need. AOH whether USA, Belgium, Liberia, Ghana or Congo are the hands and feet to accomplish the work, but through your Spirit of generosity and support our mission is accomplished.

May the coming year bring **HOPE** to the world and to each of you. Many Blessings,

Patty Anglin, Executive Director
And the entire Staff of AOH

www.acresofhope.org email: aoh.savinglives@gmail.com
acresofhopeblog.blogspot.com