



# Hope in Motion

Volume 11

Year-end Report 2013

## **Our Year of Jubilee** —by Patrick and Lynda Rimke



This year has seen a sharp reduction in donations of wheelchairs, the “wheels” of Wheels of Hope, due to the implementation of new FDA regulations that affect our corporate donors. Under the new regulations, wheelchairs have been reclassified into a more stringent category that requires greater oversight for consumer safety. “Classification is risk based ... Examples of medical devices include surgical lasers, wheelchairs, sutures, pacemakers, vascular grafts, intra-ocular lenses, and orthopedic pins.” [<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/RegulatoryInformation/Guidances/UCM127067.pdf>]

It has been dismaying to see valuable medical equipment diverted from those in need overseas because, at this point, “post market surveillance” in the new ruling assures defective items are destroyed so as not to be resold in the U.S. The good news is our corporate donors are working with our government to reopen overseas distribution channels. Please pray for their success.

We know that, in God’s design, He has created The Year of Jubilee. We have taken advantage of the reduced donation flow to turn our attention to our huge stockpile of equipment that has been building over the years; an abundant overstock in need of more intensive reconditioning and special TLC.

*Consecrate the year ... It shall be a jubilee for you... do not sow and do not reap ... eat only what is taken directly from the fields. —Leviticus 25:10-13*

We are happy to report that, after a solid year of hard work by our volunteers and staff, our back inventory wheelchairs and other equipment has been significantly freed up to bless those in need. From our inventory, we have shipped two containers, one to Thailand and one to Guatemala with extra-lovingly reconditioned medical equipment valuing approximately \$200,000. We also shipped a 53’ semi, packed with equipment to Hope Haven International (our partnering ministry in Iowa with Wheels of Hope Founder and friend, Mark Richard) estimated at \$100,000.

On August 2nd we loaded our first Jubilee container destined for Vine International in Guatemala.

Top: Russ and Jorge move pallets

Bottom: loading crew Patrick, Jorge, Russ and Ron

*You may ask, “What will we eat in the seventh year if we do not plant or harvest our crops?” I will send you such a blessing in the sixth year that the land will yield enough for three years. While you plant during the eighth year, you will eat from the old crop and will continue to eat from it until the harvest of the ninth year comes in.” —Leviticus 25:20-22*

In our 1997 Articles of Incorporation, our mission statement reads: “The purpose(s) for which this corporation is formed is: To collect, refurbish, and distribute used home medical equipment and wheelchairs for needy individuals outside the USA.”

Please pray for our Board of Directors, as we seek and sow new resources and directions for medical equipment for those in need in 2014, our year after Jubilee, “the eighth year.”

*“But my God shall abundantly supply all your need according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”*

—Philippians 4:19 (Darby)

## **Capability in Christ: Jen’s Story & Our Vision** —by Jen Gorman, acting President

In April 2000 I was blessed to be able to live a life long dream. Travel overseas. Using a wheelchair as a main means of mobility is quite scary on that subject. Leaving the comforts of one’s home area has a new meaning when you factor in accessibility. Will I be able to use the restrooms? Will I be able to sleep somewhere? Take a shower? How can I get around if there are no curb cuts and doors wide enough to fit my 30” wheelchair?

Patrick and Lynda Rimke approached me and asked if I’d like to join them on a mission’s trip to Thailand. Would I? Would I ever! I didn’t worry about what I’d eat or how I could financially get there. I knew those things would come, but I’d get a chance to experience life outside of my com-

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Jen, pictured with translator speaks at the very first Wheels of Hope wheelchair distribution in Chaing Mai, Thailand in 2000





Top left: a lottery ticket seller encounters the wheelchair distribution team with Jen

Top right: another Thai lady selling lottery tickets

Bottom: Jen giving an interview to TV news reporters



fort walls with people that I could depend on if I should get stuck.

Once I got there; however, it quickly became less about me and so much more about God's people who have disabilities and don't have the riches United States of America offers.

Curb cuts and doorways were not matters at hand. The single most heart breaking moment for me was experiencing the culture. On a particular day, I was restless

and didn't want to break the rest of the team needed. I had asked our driver if I could go see the Thai people. I didn't want to go to the commercialized tourist traps. I wanted to see where they lived, what their homes were like and how they grocery shop.

When we went to their grocery store – not known to Farangs (foreigners), I got caught up in the bustle of shopping. There were exotic animals to cook for your night's dinner table and trying the different samples.

Then there she was, the lady in the wheelchair. She was selling lottery tickets. Some form of gambling for the Thai folks, much like here. But these tickets didn't come with social statuses they have in the U.S. It was just shy of begging. She wasn't the only one. There were others. It seemed as if each corner I turned there was someone who used a wheelchair selling these lottery tickets. I asked our driver about this. He said that people who use wheelchairs don't get to work. This is their work.

The two weeks we were there people with disabilities were either being served, hidden or barely begging. The media were marveled at how a single young adult woman as myself had a job, drove and bought a

house. These were just rites of passage that I expected for myself. Not great feats of miracles. The only other person I saw that had a disability who didn't fit the above Thai mold, was a Farang (foreigner). Luc came from Belgium and now oversees our work in Thailand.

Fast forward over a decade. There is no escaping the Internet and the limitless possibilities. My husband and I have both left the brick and mortar jobs and we're currently working at home. I had attended a church service where a visiting missionary was speaking about how they take used laptops, refurbish them and train Africans how to use computers.

I got to thinking about Thai with disabilities and what are they doing now? They could support themselves (legally) with the skills of computer and Internet. I reached out to a missionary in Thailand, inquiring about the status of folks with disabilities today and their employment. I'm sad to say not much has really changed.

I've longed wanted to go back to "the land of smiles," but this time I want to have something for folks with disabilities to be truly smiling. You know that smile – the deep rooted one that comes from the heart.

1 Corinthians tells us we are all a part of the body of Christ:

*"On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unrepresentable are treated with special modesty."*

Those with disabilities are indispensable. We need to teach them skills, give them opportunities to help them to reach their potential. If we just gave them a fish, would they know how to get their next fish when we walk away? We know the answer to that. It's our time to teach them. Teach them how to get their next fish and the next and the next.

God continues to  
provide through your  
**prayers,**  
**volunteer efforts**  
and  
**financial giving.**

—Thank you!