



ECHO NEWS

Honoring God Through Sustainable Hunger Solutions Volume 33 Issue 3

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YOUR GLOBAL IMPACT

But how can people call for help if they don't know who to trust? And how can they know who to trust if they haven't heard of the One who can be trusted? And how can they hear if nobody tells them? Romans 10:14 (MSG)

The reference above is a Bible passage about how important it is that people hear the good news of what God has done for us through Jesus. In a different way, some of these same truths apply to ECHO; for example, the phrases "how can people call for help if they don't know who to trust?" and "how can they hear if nobody tells them?" Thankfully, ECHO is becoming widely known as a group that can be trusted – we're hearing this more and more. The challenge before us is how to expand our capacity to share the knowledge that ECHO has gained through the years.

This was brought home to me during our recent West Africa ECHO Networking Forum. We know how valuable biogas is as a way to provide inexpensive fuel while reducing the use of wood. So, we scheduled a training session on how to make a very simple biogas generator with water, manure, a 55 gallon drum, a car inner tube and a few fittings. Little did we know that most of West Africa would be going through a shortage of bottle gas for several months at the time of our Forum.

The workshop on building a simple biogas generator included the actual building of one in the courtyard of the hotel where our Forum was held. As the presenter began to explain and build the demonstration, the crowd began to press in around him, those that couldn't see climbed up a staircase to get a better look. When the stairs were full others climbed out on the roof to see the demonstration. The hunger of those who attended the forum to learn new things that could make such a significant difference in their lives and the lives of those they serve was stunning. We heard that the day after the Networking Forum finished several of the attendees began building their own biogas generators and teaching members of their community on this technology.

This is just one example of how ideas that ECHO is able to collect and verify can make such a significant difference once we have the opportunity to share them. You have been a major part of making this possible. **How will they know if someone doesn't tell them?**



Stan Doerr
President, CEO

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM?



AERDO Forum Held in Fort Myers

Seeking Affordable Hunger Solutions is the title of the workshop that will be offered at ECHO on November 17th as part of the Forum on Relief and Development sponsored by the Association of Evangelical Relief & Development Organizations (AERDO.) This full-day session will be offered to AERDO Partners with a specific focus on the six global agricultural zones of ECHO's Global Farm and appropriate technology display. ECHO is proud to host this event!

1000 Elementary Schoolers Invade ECHO

Nearly 1,000 students from eight elementary schools attended the ECHO Global Farm Tour this September, thanks to a pro-active Collier County Health Department Employee, Stacy Revay. School funding for field trips has been dwindling, but Stacy was passionate about helping the kids learn more about ECHO. "Finding docents to lead each group was challenging," said Tour Coordinator Cassie Moretz. "But it was worth it to see the kids get passionate about helping the poor!"





ECHO In The Community

This Fall, the Cape Coral Northwest Regional Library selected ECHO to present an interactive display demonstrating the realities of life in developing countries.

The ECHO exhibition features a life-size "shack" modeled after homes seen all over the developing world as well as simple gardens, tools, water purifiers and cooking implements. ECHO also presented weekly seminars on various topics throughout October and November 2010.

The Grand Opening presentation was hosted by ECHO staff with the ribbon cutting carried out by Cape Coral Mayor John Sullivan. The display was popular and garnered great interest from the community. School teachers learned about ECHO at the library and made plans to bring their classes to ECHO on a tour.

"The display was created at ECHO by agricultural consultants who have years of experience working in developing countries. Their goal is to help our community better understand world hunger. The exhibit includes "hands-on" pieces, like a working worm compost bin that is interesting and educational for both kids and adults," says Cassie Moretz, Tour Manager and Chairperson of the project.

Photos:

1. Bill Hooth shares about ECHO's ministry of sending seeds around the world with local children. 2. The interactive exhibits included a hands-on compost bin. 3. Mayor John Sullivan believes in organizations like ECHO who are helping the poor in the world and in our own communities!



INTERN SPOTLIGHT

My name is Karyn Traum and I came to ECHO in November 2009 to be the Community Garden Intern. I am originally from a very small Illinois town, Hartsburg, and attended the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign where I received my Bachelors in Horticulture.

You might be familiar with the phrase "all in God's time". This is a phrase that can bring peace when you can see the "big picture" but restlessness when you only see small pieces of the picture. Coming to study at ECHO has allowed me to see part of "MY" big picture. I am seeing how the pieces of college and post-college experiences are all coming together. My desire to love people, help others, grow plants and share the love of Christ all comes together here at ECHO.



*Karyn Traum
From: Hartsburg, Illinois
Responsibilities:
Community Gardening*

Being at ECHO has allowed me to learn much more about tropical agriculture but also allowed my faith to grow as it never has before. Nearly every day I am challenged by the unknowns of the future. I am learning how to slow down and keep trusting, working and waiting on God. The internship program gives us a great variety of experiences and information to take with us but still there is no way to be 100% prepared to handle what might come our way in the future. I have to have faith that God will provide the skills and tools I need, when I need them, wherever I am working.

My time at ECHO has been invaluable. To be surrounded by so many resources and knowledgeable people is a rare opportunity. I will forever be grateful for the past year here and plan to stay connected with ECHO for many years to come.

Remembering Cheryl

Cheryl Beckett was a much loved former ECHO intern (2001 Semi Arid Tropics zone) and ECHO Staff member (2005 Seedbank Assistant Manager.) Tragically, Cheryl was killed on Friday, August 6th, 2010. She was returning from serving with a medical and community health mobile clinic in the mountains of Northern Afghanistan along with nine other aid workers when the group was attacked by armed men. Cheryl had been working with Afghan women for five years, teaching nutritional garden projects and mother and child health.

Cheryl wrote about the challenges of life in Afghanistan but always with a perspective focused on the needs of the people she served and the personal growth she experienced through those challenges. Cheryl's life, as well as her radiant smile and sweet spirit, will be deeply missed by her friends and family. Sadly, the people of Afghanistan have also been denied the gift of her knowledge, experience and passion to improve their lives. Her life was not wasted but certainly cut short by this senseless and tragic violence.



*Cheryl Marie Beckett
June 26, 1978 - August 6, 2010*

Many individuals are finding it harder and harder to provide healthy food options for their families. Jessica, on the other hand, is harvesting ripe zucchini from her schoolyard garden in Bonita Springs Middle School thanks to ECHO.

The good news for those struggling to afford food is that local organizations are stepping in to help. The first question that they ask when they are looking to support their local community with fresh fruits and vegetables from a garden is "Where do we start?"

ECHO is meeting this need through our Community Garden Programs. Our Second Community Garden Training Day was offered on October 26, 2010 to local non-profit organizations such as schools, Lee County Healthy Start Program, PACE Center for Girls, Boys & Girls Club and others.

This initiative has supported various organizations across Florida with the resources and skills that ECHO shares throughout the world. To learn more about ECHO's community garden programs visit echonet.org.



BUILDING ON THE PAST... MOVING TOWARD THE FUTURE INCOMING BOARD MEMBERS

"I can tell that you really love your work!"

This is the comment that ECHO staff members hear most often when we give a tour of the ECHO Farm to someone new. We are excited about what we are doing and cannot help but share the joy of being part of a team that is working to sharing sustainable hunger solutions around the world.

ECHO's recent Board orientation was a perfect example of the ECHO Team working and growing together. Incoming Board Members gathered at ECHO's North Fort Myers campus for two days of introduction to the many facets of ECHO's ministry. Building on the strong base that has allowed ECHO to develop over the years, various staff members shared about their roles and vision for the future. The highlight for the staff, though, was a picnic that we shared with new Board members and volunteers.

These special people who choose to give their time, talents, financial resources and influence to ECHO share a great commitment to help the poor around the world through ECHO. We all do. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership in the mission of equipping and training others to reduce hunger around the world!



Chuso shows one of his few plentiful millet heads

On a warm August morning, Chuso (CHEW-so) picks up his walking stick and hoe and heads out to his field. He thinks about the weeding that he needs to do to make sure that his millet crop is as healthy as possible. Unfortunately, before he finishes weeding he will be too tired and will have to put the rest off for another day. Many other days pass with the same result. At harvest time, Chuso finds that his millet harvest will not be quite enough to feed his family for the coming year. *If only* he could have hired workers to help him weed. *If only* he could have purchased more manure for his field. *If only* he could have harvested all the grain before the birds and other pests got to them. *If only...*

This is the harsh reality for many farmers around the world. The specifics change, but the daily struggle to provide enough food is the same.

ECHO Interns and Staff members visited with Chuso in his field in September as part of the preparation for ECHO's First West Africa Networking Forum. Enlarging our understanding of the realities of those that ECHO serves is part of the goal of the internship program. Talking to Chuso brought these realities home!

ECHO's First West Africa Forum was a great success, with 120 attendees from 15 countries, all eager to learn new agricultural knowledge that could greatly improve the conditions of those they serve. Highlights were sessions taught by ECHO Staff Members Beth Doerr, Andy Cotarelo and Dr. Tim Motis and Peace Corp Volunteer Ben Doerr.

Delegates were hungry for handouts to take home, thirsty for resources and very enthusiastic about information being shared. Many delegates took digital photos of slides from various presentations so that they could have a personal copy of the information.

The overwhelming answer to the question, "Is an ECHO presence needed in West Africa?" was YES! On a visit to the Institute for Crop Research of the Semi-Arid Tropics, in Niamey, Niger the researcher was introducing ECHO Staff and interns to improved varieties of diverse food plants as well as interesting techniques that are being developed to produce more food. He was very excited about all they had learned, but his closing comment was, "The only difficulty we have is getting this information out to farmers and agricultural workers in these countries that need it. That is what ECHO can do."

A BEQUEST LAUNCHES ECHO'S ASIA REGIONAL OFFICE



She had often wished that she could do more to support ECHO. During her life, she gave as she was able. She also named ECHO in her will. Now her giving is having an impact all across Southeast Asia.

When word of this "bequest" came to ECHO, Stan gathered the leadership team to discuss how this woman's generosity could best be honored and the mission of ECHO advanced. The conclusion? Use this legacy gift to launch ECHO's new Asia Regional Office. The need was clear and deeply felt within ECHO, but the required funding was not "in the budget." Now the funds necessary to launch this Asian outreach had been provided.

Many years earlier, this Godly woman (*her name has been withheld to protect her anonymity*) had decided to honor the Lord and the dedicated work of ECHO by including ECHO in her will. At that time, the needs and opportunities for ECHO's work in Southeast Asia were not yet recognized. Yet she entrusted some of her modest estate to ECHO and trusted its leadership to make wisely appropriate decisions about how best to use this special gift.

What a wonderful cause for celebration -- here at ECHO, for struggling farmers in Southeast Asia and perhaps in heaven as well!



This Hilltribe farmer now has greater access to ECHO through the Asia Regional Office!



Gift Annuity Rates Are Going Up ...and this is a good thing!

A **Gift Annuity** is a great way to achieve two goals that matter to you:

- Receive income now; AND,
- Leave a legacy that advances the mission of ECHO.

Recently the rates on Gift Annuities went up -- this means that you can receive more income, from the same annuity, than you could have received last year. So, this is the time to act and create a Gift Annuity to benefit ECHO. In exchange, you will receive guaranteed payments and put in place a legacy that you can celebrate right now.

For more information just go to www.echonet.org, click "Give", click "Planned Giving", click "Create Your Plan" in left-hand column, click "Gift Annuity" and review how a gift annuity will benefit you. For more information call Orlando at 239-567-3343 or email ologelin@echonet.org.

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Doors open at 11:30 am for lunch . Please select your choice(s) below or receive a discount by ordering the entire series.:

_____ Friday, Jan 21, Burma & Cambodia
 _____ Friday, Feb 19, Inside the Tuscan Hills
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