



# ECHO NEWS

Honoring God Through Sustainable Hunger Solutions Volume 34 Issue 1

## ECHO AGRICULTURAL CONFERENCE 2010

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# YOUR GLOBAL IMPACT

*I am proud to say I've recently been reading a book on humility! Joking aside, this book defines pride as us taking credit for the things that God has done while humility is recognizing God's hand in every aspect of our lives and giving Him the credit.*

*Imagine being told that you can have a big piece of land, it's yours, just move in and start planting and building. You show up and find out that somebody else has claimed it already and built a fort to keep you out. You ask the one who promised you the land -- "What should I do?" You're told to gather all of your people and walk around the fort every day for a week. On the last day you are to walk around the fort seven times and then play really loud music. THAT'S THE PLAN??!*

*Some of you may recognize this story as the way in which God instructed the Israelites to defeat the people of Jericho (Joshua 6)...and it worked. I am convinced that this, and many other things that God did in the Bible, were done in such an unusual way in order to make it very clear that it was God's doing!*

*This aptly describes this past year at ECHO! We had a great year financially and we all know it isn't because the U.S. economy is skyrocketing. We also know that the growth in donations was not because of any brilliant strategies from our Development Department. This was clearly God's doing.*

*This past year we also formed some remarkable new partnerships, born of contacts well beyond our normal circle of friends. These new partnerships have resulted in unexpected growth in training opportunities, additional program funding, and expanded impact, all things that are a result of God's blessing ... opening new doors for ECHO.*

*2010 was an amazing year for us on virtually every level -- financial growth, staff development, Board unity, program expansion -- and all of this coming in ways that we could never have predicted or orchestrated. As we move into 2011, we want to be clear that the blessings of last year as well as the exciting things that will take place in 2011 are credited to the God that we serve.*

*Thank you for your faithfulness and for sharing God's blessings in your life with ECHO!*



**Stan Doerr**  
President, CEO

## WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM?



### **Mercy Ships Staff attend Independent Study**

Jean-Claude and Anastasie Mouditou are currently studying in ECHO's Independent Study Program through January. Missionaries with Mercy Ships, they serve together in Sierra Leone through ag and health related programs. Here at ECHO they are studying organic agricultural practices, nutrition and medicinal herbs. Jean-Claude said, "We have been praying for ten years that God would send us the opportunity to come to ECHO." When the time was right, He provided!



### **New Region of the Farm: Community Gardens!**

Active for nearly two years, ECHO's Community Garden initiative has seen great success! Schools from five counties have expressed interest in incorporating gardening principles into their curriculum. This year, Interns Katie Johnson and Karyn Traum have turned a small portion of the farm into our new Community Garden. Hand-painted plant markers and a "Stone Soup" cauldron create a welcoming environment for all guests. Stop by and see the Community Garden at ECHO.



Another successful conference has come and gone! The seventeenth annual ECHO Agricultural Conference hosted 230 delegates working in 33 countries! Though freezing temperatures threatened the comfort of many delegates, they did not stand in the way of almost 100 diverse workshops, tours and sessions.

Highlights of this year's conference were networking, learning new ideas/techniques and gathering resources and books. Some of our most valued topics were System of Rice Intensification (SRI), Multiplication of Bananas, Uses of Breadfruit, Mulching and Foundations for Farming.



One of our highest-rated workshops was the "Appropriate Technology Tour" led by ECHO staff member Beth Doerr. Pictured left, this tour introduced delegates to various methods of water purification, improved cook stoves, simple machines and hand-made tools. Introduction to these technologies, such as a bio-sand water filter, can have a life-changing impact on entire communities.

Conference delegates are an incredible mix of first time attendees and long-time network members. This year the majority of delegates, 53%, were first time attendees to the ECHO conference. We are excited about this group of young network members who left the conference

motivated to share the new knowledge they had gained with others in their areas of ministry around the world!

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## Delegate Profile

Rachel Brink, taking notes at right, not only attended sessions, but shared from her own experience. Her workshop entitled "Farmer Field Schools in Cambodia" was very popular because of it's experiential nature.

Rachel spent four weeks at ECHO last year preparing for her experience in Cambodia. "It was definitely worth coming back for conference this year," she says.



Rachel Brink  
Cambodia

## Inside the Conference

As if giving multiple workshops each day is not exhausting enough, many ECHO Staff Members and Interns had to take turns monitoring weather conditions to protect ECHO's tropical plants.

"Freeze protection is part of every winter," says Farm Manager Andy Cotarelo. "This year it just came early, and during an already very busy time."



Tim Wills,  
Past ECHO Intern  
pitches in to cover  
plants with frost cloth

# INTERN SPOTLIGHT

Hello there! My name is Kate Myers and I have been working in the Tropical Lowlands at ECHO since July. I hail from Yaoundé, Cameroun where my parents worked with the International Linguistic Society (SIL), and home in the US is St. Louis, MO. I graduated from Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, GA with a Bachelors in International Community Development.

One of my favorite activities as a kid was to climb a tree near my house with my best friend. We would race up the steep red dirt road to a tree with the juiciest fruits we had ever seen. We would eat them until our mouths tingled from the tangy sweet and the stomachs underneath our juice-stained shirts begged us to stop...

Within my first few weeks at ECHO, I was offered a fruit I had never heard of before. The small, plump cherry looked familiar, yet I couldn't place it until I tasted it. Not even 10 years away can erase the taste of a perfectly ripe Surinam Cherry at its optimal sweetness!

What an invigorating experience it has been for me to dive into tropical agriculture at ECHO! In many ways, ECHO has provided me with a knowledge base for the eagerness to experience agriculture which God has

given me. During my time here, I have felt awe, time and again, at the abundance and riches God provides through His creation. However, I have also been confronted with the reality that so many in our world do not have nutritious food to eat. I have benefited from a wealth of information on a wide range of topics from the crude protein content of different animal forages, to the decomposition within the gut of an earthworm and I have gained a voracious appetite to learn more.

Following my time at ECHO, I hope to spend 2 – 3 years working in a French speaking country in West Africa.



## Remembering Cheryl

For many delegates at the 2010 ECHO Conference, and even for those who did not have the privilege of knowing Cheryl Beckett, the presentation in her honor was a special time. Her passion and sacrifice were not only a testimony to the mission of her life, but an example of the emotional investment that ECHO network members make each day as they toil to improve the lives of the poor.

Cheryl's father, Charles Beckett, pictured right, spoke at the ECHO conference in her memory. He recounted that his first introduction to ECHO was through Cheryl and he expressed how happy she was serving the poor in Afghanistan. "Passionate... sacrifice... That was Cheryl," he concluded.

In Cheryl's honor, a scholarship fund has been established to support the education of other passionate young people at ECHO. The funds will be directed towards the semi-arid intern in memory of Cheryl's time on the ECHO Farm. Donations are now being accepted and can be made by designating your donation "Cheryl Beckett Memorial Scholarship Fund."



Here at ECHO we are proud of small beginnings and humble roots. It is amazing to think that some of the world's grandest trees start as tiny, unimpressive seeds. With fruits merely the size of cherries, the Banyan tree is capable of growing to enormous proportions. A famous Banyan near ECHO is located at the Edison & Ford Winter Estates and occupies an acre of land!

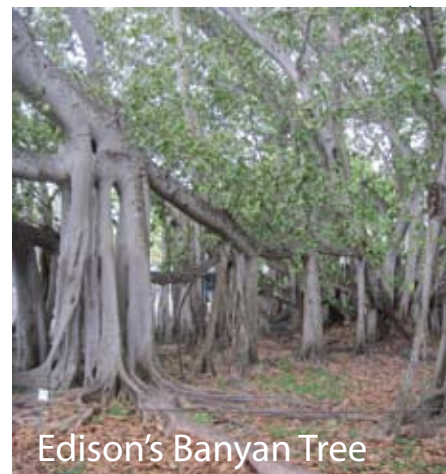
The ECHO Propagation Area is an example of a humble beginning. It consists mostly of two small greenhouses linked together by a covered walkway, a humid, algae-covered misting house for rooting cuttings, a series of dingy storage sheds, and a cramped work area. It is surrounded by shade covered benches made of pipes, wood and cinder blocks. Remarkably, this humble plant factory has cranked out thousands of plants for the Global Farm year after year. Numerous intern trainings, workshops, community and college classes have relied on this facility to gain skills in plant propagation, grafting, and nursery management. Our Propagation Area has served us well!

However, like that banyan tree, ECHO is growing and moving ahead into new territory that will demand more from our staff and facilities than ever before. With an expanding internship program, more demand for training courses in tropical agriculture and development, and an ever-increasing need for plants for the Global Farm and Nursery—we are bursting at the seams!

To meet the demand for ECHO's resources, we are expanding the capacity of our plant propagation area at ECHO. The Plant Resource Center (PRC) will serve as the plant propagation hub of ECHO. The center will provide space for producing plants, conducting training activities and creating an engaging learning environment for visitors.

Phase one is a large addition to our shop building (currently under construction). The nursery and farm offices have also been relocated to the shop.

Phase two will involve the construction of a greenhouse, misting house, and a shaded growing area to provide protection for young plants. All of these structures will be linked closely to work areas, supply storage, and staff offices for more efficient operation. It will be exciting to see this vision become a reality as the resources are provided. Thanks you for helping ECHO grow in our calling to serve the poor through agriculture!



Edison's Banyan Tree

## ECHO EAST AFRICA SYMPOSIUM

FEBRUARY 8-10, 2011 - ARUSHA, TANZANIA



ECHO is conducting a Symposium in February 2011 in Arusha, Tanzania. This is a step towards opening an East Africa Regional Impact Center. The Symposium will bring together key people and organizations directly involved

in the fight against hunger in this region. Some of the subjects on the schedule are Conservation Agriculture, Permaculture, Organic Agriculture, Integrated Pest Management, Soil Fertility, Marketing and Seed Systems. We have also seen that some of the greatest value in these gatherings is the opportunity for people to connect with each other, sharing both experience and knowledge.

Take the case of a group of Ethiopian delegates

registered for the symposium. Paul Lukins attended the Florida conference in 2007 with one Ethiopian counterpart. At that conference he met intern Marcie Chapman and they discussed the possibility of her working with them in Ethiopia when she finished her time at ECHO. In August of 2009 Marcie arrived in Ethiopia to begin a two-year assignment.

Paul Lukins and Marcie plan to attend the East Africa Symposium this month, but this time, more of their staff will be able to attend. One of their fellow missionaries at another location in Ethiopia plans to attend with a national staff member as well. This event is making it possible for people to get together for networking, learning and encouragement -- people who would probably never have an opportunity to travel to Florida.

## EXPANDING OUTREACH: ASIA REGIONAL IMPACT CENTER

Dozens of eager and curious people hovered around tables. Before them were seeds of various crops gathered from different corners of northeast India. This opportunity to access diverse regional crop varieties was just one of the engaging activities at the October 2010 ECHO Northeast India Conference.

This Conference was initiated by the ECHO Asia Regional Impact Center, based in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Their outreach initiatives are enabling agriculture and community development partners across Asia to access much needed resources, information and skills. This equipping, in turn, enables these partners to better assist the poor. Thus far, ECHO Asia services and activities have included:

- Organizing the 2009 ECHO Asia Regional Conference attended by 155 people from at least 15 countries.
- Fielding technical response requests and questions from hundreds of regional partners
- Establishing the ECHO Asia Seed Bank.



- Launching of ECHO Asia Notes, a quarterly technical newsletter similar to ECHO Development Notes, in four regional languages.
- Providing on-site consultation services for partners in India, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar.
- Introducing an ECHO Asia website (<http://asia.echonet.org>) offering on-line technical resources.

Over the coming year, ECHO Asia is looking forward to further expanding its training and resources by:

- Offering a three-day Tropical Agriculture Workshop;
- Increasing the range of services and inventory of seeds at the ECHO Asia Seed Bank;
- Convening the 2011 ECHO

Asia Agriculture and Community Development Conference (October 3-7); and,

- Taking-on additional consultation engagements.

We are blessed and grateful for your support of this growing enterprise!

## INTRO TO TROPICAL AGRICULTURE DEVELOPEMENT I & II

After ECHO's first year of offering the Introduction to Tropical Agriculture Development class, we were excited to receive letters of affirmation from students declaring, "My time at ECHO has been so important to me ... your work has moved powerfully through my life!" and another letter stating that "By the end of the week I received a clear understanding of how to merge my public health nursing background with nutritional education and a passion for agriculture into community development."

Students also pointed out the value of individual classes. One wrote, "Soils was not at the top of my 'can't miss' class list but it ended up being a huge favorite. In my naiveté, I had never considered stewarding the soil."

Topics like appropriate technology, poverty mentality, basic nutrition, perennial vegetables, nursery management and urban gardens challenge students to focus their efforts on reducing hunger and poverty utilizing sustainable inputs.

Efforts are currently underway to streamline the program, offer more hands-on training for this first course and potentially offer a second level training with a more in-depth look at tropical agriculture. The third week of February, May and August have already been selected as the 5-day training periods for 2011. A Level II course is currently being considered for August 2011.

Dear ECHO,  
I really enjoyed

# NINETEEN EIGHTY ONE ECHO WAS BORN

Nineteen eighty one. Space Shuttle Columbia took its maiden voyage, Prince Charles married Lady Diana, the word “internet” was first coined, President Carter turned over the reins to President Reagan, a postage stamp cost 15¢ ... and ECHO was born.

Much has changed at ECHO since then.

- The five acres of pine trees and pasture where Martin and Bonnie Price began has become a 5-acre Global Farm.
- Elise Hanson was only the first of more than 180 interns who have trained at ECHO.
- ECHO’s first issue of ECHO Development Notes (mailed to 37 people) has been followed by 109 more issues that are distributed in more than 160 countries, to over 3,000 people, and read in multiple languages.
- The internet makes ECHO’s technical resources available 24-7-365 around the world.
- The ECHO Seed Bank ships starter packets of seed, from more than 350 plant varieties, to 180 countries.

- ECHO has hosted 17 annual agricultural conferences in Florida, complemented by agricultural symposia in West Africa, East Africa and East Asia.

While the scope and impact of ECHO has grown in ways that were unimaginable in 1981, ECHO’s focus has not changed: *ECHO exists to reduce hunger and improve lives.*

For 30 years, ECHO has been gathering and developing solutions to the problems that plague small-scale farmers all over the world. In the process, ECHO has been building credibility and networks of agricultural development partners around the world – partners who are on the front lines in the battle to end world hunger. ECHO’s desire is to help them work as effectively as possible.

Today, it is this same focus and desire that moves ECHO forward. Thank you for being part of 30 years of faithfulness...and for continuing to partner with us as we move into the future with God’s help!

## THE HIDDEN VALUE IN YOUR IRA AND 401(K)

Each year, after one reaches age 70 ½, IRA and 401(k) are subject to required minimum distributions. Because the distributions start at just under 4% at age 71 and slowly increase, many IRA and 401(k) plans will continue to grow. While distributions will eventually become larger, most individuals will eventually pass away with an IRA or 401(k) balance reasonably close to the value of the plan at age 70.

For the IRA or 401(k) owner, the qualified plan is a wonderful benefit and a valuable asset. However, for children, the IRA or 401(k) is transferred with a large “you owe the IRS” tax bill attached (with the exception of a Roth IRA). For the vast majority of qualified plans, the family will pay the income tax.

For this reason, it may be wiser to bequeath the home, land, stocks, and other assets to the children because there is no income tax bill attached. Then distribute the IRA or 401(k), or percentage thereof, to charity.

Because charities are tax exempt, they do not pay income tax or estate tax. By transferring the IRA or 401(k) to charity, the family will avoid a tax bill and your favorite charities will benefit from your legacy.

For more information, go to <http://www.echogifts.org> and view creative charitable giving ideas, or, call Orlando Logelin at 239-567-3343 or email [ologelin@echonet.org](mailto:ologelin@echonet.org).

This is a complimentary service to friends of ECHO. For specific legal advice please consult your legal or tax counsel.



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## PASSPORT TO THE WORLD TRAVELOGUE FILM SERIES



ECHO's Passport to the World Film Series tickets are still available for the remainder of the 2011 season. Enjoy exciting shows that will take you across the world from the Silk Road to the Tuscan Hills. Feast on a delicious buffet lunch at the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre while you explore these exotic destinations!

Call Debby at (239) 567-3347 for more information or to order by phone.

Clip and Mail! Order your tickets today!

**ONLY TWO SHOWS  
 REMAINING!!**

**SET OF TWO FILMS:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Set of two tickets for two remaining films @ \$180 per couple
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set of one ticket for each remaining film @ \$90 per person

**SINGLE FILM TICKETS:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$100 per couple
- \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$50 per person

Make checks payable to ECHO Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or pay by credit card:

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Visa/MC/DISC Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name Here: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: ECHO, 17391 Durrance Rd., North Fort Myers, FL 33917 1 www.echonet.org 1 (239) 567-3347

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

- \_\_\_\_\_ Friday, Feb 18, Inside the Tuscan Hills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friday, Mar 11, The Silk Road

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_