

# Christian Friends of Korea

Activity Report

Volume 14

December 2008

*I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

*Philippians 1:3-6 (NIV)*

## Four Provincial Hospital Operating Suite Renovation Projects Done in 2008

**2008** marked the initiation of multiple major hospital operating suite renovation projects. They began in earnest in November of 2007 when a CFK technical team began work in two



*Dr. Marcia Kilsby and the Vice Director of Haeju TB Hospital in the new OR*

provincial TB hospitals (North and South Hwanghae), installing electrical panels and wiring, outlets, conduit, power conditioners, drop ceilings, OR lights and delivering supplies including tile, windows and doors, water heaters, AC/heating units, and multiple pieces of medical equipment. While local North Korean staff completed the first two projects, our CFK team returned in May 2008 to begin work on a third hospital (Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital), doing much the same at this hospital, but also installing a largely solar-powered water distribution system for the hospital complex, new windows and doors, hospital beds



*Greater CFK Team and Kaesong TB Hospital Working Team in October*

and bedding, and other improvements. And then members of the team returned a final time in October 2008 to begin work on the 4th operating suite upgrade project located at the Kaesong TB Hospital. These projects have required true partnership between CFK and

central and local officials and staff; with local staff members working directly alongside CFK teams, learning about new materials and building practices, and contributing greatly to the timely completion and success of these projects. These lasting improvements are making a very significant impact on patient health. In the words of one of the hospital directors, **“We have tripled the number of surgeries (from before the renovation) and we have reduced the number of post-operative infections by 70%. The renovation has also greatly expanded the kinds of operations we are now able to do. One of the advantages of the rehabilitation is that we are providing a very clean and good psychological environment for surgical patients. Patients feel very safe and reassured that they will be cured by their surgical operation. The staff also has greater confidence that they are providing good care. Now we are meeting nearly all the needs in our province and patients are coming from other provinces for help as well.”** We hope the daily diary (printed inside) from our most recent technical visit will give you some idea of what happens on one of these kinds of visits.

## Alarming Rise in TB in DPRK

**W**e are greatly alarmed by reports received during our October visits that the total number of registered TB cases is up 40% over last year. Medicine is expected to be available from international sources this coming year for 52,000 patients; but already there are over 80,000 registered TB patients, and health officials expect that there may be well over 100,000 patients nationwide. This means that from now until at least the latter part of 2009, at least 30,000 – 50,000 patients will not have the medicine that they need to get well, and so long as this medicine is not available to them, many of these patients will remain contagious and their health will deteriorate. The average contagious patient can infect 10-15 others *each year*, so if this is not dealt with quickly, it could soon spiral out of control. Many places we visited expressed deep gratitude for a CFK shipment of 5,000 patients worth

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Daily Diary of the October Technical Team

**Saturday** – The team of volunteers (most of whom pay their own travel expenses and take time away from work and their families to participate with us) arrived in Pyongyang late on Saturday afternoon after spending two nights in Beijing recovering from jet lag and picking up North Korean visas. Our guides and drivers met and greeted us warmly at the airport, drove us to the guest house, and then after settling our luggage in our rooms, we met to discuss the schedule for the upcoming 13 days. Much to our surprise and appreciation for their flexibility and suggestion, we were able to go to the Koryo Hotel to have dinner and visiting time with the CFK/USNGO food teams working on a totally separate project in a different area of the country.

**Sunday** – After our daily devotions and prayer time together as a team that focused during this visit on the book of Isaiah, we worshipped at the Chilgol Church in Pyongyang, had lunch together with our guides and drivers at the famous Pyongyang cold noodle restaurant, and did a little sightseeing for the benefit of the two new team members. Later in the evening, we hosted the USNGO food team for dinner at the guest house where we were staying, discussing current program issues and enjoying fellowship together before leaving the next day for the countryside.



*CFK Tech Team and  
USNGO Food Team*

**Monday** – Our day began early with visits to our warehouses in Pyongyang to pick up multiple bins of tools that we keep there in storage,

and to sort and pick up project supplies that had been shipped in prior to the technical team's arrival. We were also able to meet with a representative from the World Health Organization (WHO) to get an update on the overall TB situation. We returned to the guest house to pick up our luggage, and then left for the drive to Kaesong, stopping briefly in Pyongyang to buy new tires for our truck which our drivers were providentially able to find before leaving town. Our 3 hour drive to Kaesong was delayed twice to change flat tires on the truck – and we were really grateful that we had purchased new tires before leaving Pyongyang. There are no service stations or stores along the way – so any mechanical difficulties can leave one stranded for hours by the roadside until a fix can be cobbled together.

**Tuesday** – Our week at Kaesong TB Hospital began at 9AM. The morning was spent



*Fixing the 1st flat tire*

sorting and unloading supplies and multiple bins of tools, talking with the director about the scope of the work and what we hoped to accomplish with their help, and setting up for the Lab-in-a-Suitcase (LIS) workshop. Before the day was out, Dr. Marcia Kilsby (Chair of Clinical and Laboratory Sciences at Andrews University) and Dr. Ri (our supervising guide) were fully engaged in the LIS training, and the technical team together with our other two guides and many local staff had succeeded in mounting the nearly 400 pound operating room light in the center of the operating room ceiling. With local grid power only very minimally and sporadically available, we ended our work at dark and returned to the Kaesong Folk Village Hotel, a traditional Korean style inn built during the Yi Dynasty, for a hot supper and cold baths.

**Wednesday** – While the local staff was digging the ditching needed in order to be able to lay conduit and string heavy electrical wiring, our team continued installing several panel boxes – at the small building that housed their incoming transformer, and in an adjacent room to the operating room that would house the power conditioner. Exterior conduit pipe was laid and connected in the trench in preparation for pulling wire. Meanwhile, Drs. Kilsby and Ri continued the Lab-In-a-Suitcase training course, mixing lecture time in the director's meeting room with hands on time in the lab using the various components of the LIS.



*Rob Robinson and  
Kaesong electrician*

**Thursday** – Work began on channeling in the walls of the operating room where the conduit would need to be run for pulling the wire. Our team demonstrated the use of the power equipment to local staff and officials and moved on to other projects while this was being completed by local staff. The room was filled for most of the day with clouds of dust from the channeling, and the noise of the equipment. Working together with local staff and officials, the heavy electrical wires were pulled through the conduit in the ditches and connected into the main exterior power panel and to the panels in the power room inside the hospital. Before the day was out, most of the channeling was completed, a full inventory of the hospital OR equipment that we had sent was completed, the tool bins were sorted and reorganized, and the main power panel completed. Training continued through the day for a dozen laboratory



*Pulling the electrical cable is a  
team effort*



specialists on the LIS. We returned to the hotel for our usual supper of soup, rice and *kimchee*, and a cold bath (despite the diligent, but largely unsuccessful efforts of the hotel staff to provide us with hot water due to the overall significant shortage of electricity in the city).

**Friday** - With the week drawing to a close, there was real urgency to complete as much as possible. Interior conduit was cut, bent, pieced together and run, and electrical boxes and outlets hooked in, with our team demonstrating and much of the work being completed by the local staff. The OR light was fully wired in. Meanwhile our team was connecting the wiring to the power conditioner and to the generator located in another area of the hospital to be able to provide emergency electrical power from the generator to the operating room area if local power was not available. Dr. Marcia Kilsby and Dr. Ri completed the LIS training workshop in the late afternoon and we were able to take group photos of this historic occasion. The weather turned colder during the day, and we could feel in the air the coming chill of winter. Thankfully, the staff at the hotel was finally successful in providing warm water for bathing which was most welcome after nearly a full week of hard work.

**Saturday** - This being our last day at this hospital, our guides had asked us to plan on working only half the day so that we could enjoy a little rest. We all worked hard in the morning to finish pulling wire to all the outlets and switches and to tie them in to the grid, we cleaned and packed up the LIS's and the supplies kits for later delivery to the hospitals that had sent staff to the training, and Mark Heydenburg of International Aid was able to do considerable orientation on multiple pieces of operating room equipment. The local officials worked hard to get grid power supplied from the city to the hospital so we could test the power conditioner, and shortly before mid-day the power came on. We stopped briefly for a quick lunch with local officials at a nearby restaurant, and then returned to finish our work and assess



*Mark Heydenburg demonstrating new medical equipment*

other needs at the hospital, including the spare parts needs for an ambulance that we had delivered to this hospital some time before. In the midst of all of this, there was a mid-afternoon thundershower including heavy rain and hail that allowed us a little more working time. By the late afternoon, we had finished the bulk of our work and were delighted to be invited to play a friendly volleyball match between the staff of the hospital and our joint Ministry of Public Health/CFK team. It was a special time to savor – in the light of the setting sun, North Koreans and Christians from America playing together just a few short miles from the DMZ – cheering good plays

on both sides of the net, with scores of patients and staff gathered around to watch. Fresh persimmons were shared around, and the game ended only when it became too dark to play anymore. We left the hospital with warmth and thanksgiving in our hearts for a job well done, for new friendships formed, and assurance that they would be able to complete the laying of the tile, the hanging of the ceiling and installation of the fluorescent lights, the sinks and the set up of the operating room equipment after our departure. We look forward to returning in the Spring to see a fourth fully renovated operating room that will greatly improve the surgical care of patients.



*A friendly volleyball match*

**Sunday** - Our guides and the local officials planned a very special day for us on Sunday. After having our own private worship service in the morning, we left the hotel under brilliant blue skies and sunshine with our friends and colleagues to enjoy some of the historical places of Kaesong. They took us first to see two king's tombs, where we learned about ancient love stories. From there we drove to a Buddhist temple up in the mountains where there are many poems and sayings carved into the rocks. While there, we hiked to a beautiful waterfall that is featured in many North Korean nature paintings, and then our hotel staff honored us with a wonderful picnic including *bulgogi* cooked over charcoal shared among all of us as we sat on straw mats on the ground enjoying the waterfall. We had a wonderful time of visiting and fellowship, enjoying the beauty of nature, good food and friends, and songs shared between us in the open air. The song sung by our local guide touched us deeply – he said in his dedication to us that during our time together, we had left footprints on his heart.



*Greater CFK team in Kaesong*

**Monday** - We spent the better part of the day at the nearby Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital (formerly the Methodist Ivey Hospital) where the technical team had worked in May. We delivered one of the LIS to the lab staff, meanwhile our technical team split up and worked on several small things that needed to be fixed or adjusted. We worked through the lunch hour and into the late afternoon, and we were very grateful for the flexibility shown by our guides and the local officials in facilitating the successful completion of our work. As the sun sank low on the horizon, we bid warm farewells to our local officials and the

hospital staff members, and departed for the 3 hour drive on rough roads to Haeju. Along the way, one of the leaf springs broke on one of our vehicles, so after stopping for a repair attempt by the side of the road under a sky brilliant with stars, as well as multiple stops at security checkpoints along the way, we limped our way into Haeju – arriving there late in the evening.

**Tuesday** – We spent the better part of the day at the South Hwanghae (Haeju) TB Hospital working on several follow up matters from the previous installation and completing the sorting of our tool bins for storage in Pyongyang. We also delivered an LIS to the staff of this laboratory. The hospital staff prepared snacks for us, including peanuts, persimmons, pears and bread so that we could continue our work without losing time for lunch, and by late afternoon we were ready to return back to Pyongyang for hot showers and rest. We arrived too late for supper, but grateful for warmth of relationships, safety in work and travel, and the completion of many projects.

**Wednesday** – After a good night's rest, we drove an hour back to Sariwon to deliver the final LIS, and finish up pending matters at the North Hwanghae TB Hospital. We also met there with the Hwangju TB rest home director to discuss a renovation project that he had underway. We worked through lunch again, having a quick snack at the hospital before leaving again for



*Delivering an LIS to Sariwon*

Pyongyang and our final meetings there. As the day drew to a close, we invited our guides and drivers out for a farewell dinner, enjoying another good time of friendship, discussions and fellowship. We returned to the hotel, finished our packing, and

met with our guides one final time to finish off last minute details and discuss new projects.

**Thursday** – Our guides and drivers saw us off at the airport amid warm and reluctant farewells. As one of our guides said during our trip – **“We will miss you. We became like a family working, traveling and eating together for days on end.”** They work very hard to facilitate our visits, to translate and to solve problems on our behalf. Our work is becoming a true partnership, and we are amazed at what has been accomplished through God's provision, your support, and our joint efforts. It is a special privilege to see our counterparts take increasing ownership and joy in our joint work, and to see their pride in what has been accomplished.

In about 30 hours, most of us will finally arrive back at home, a world away from the one we left, deeply tired,

but reflecting and aware of the providence of God in large and small ways through these projects. Just 18 months ago, we received the final approval to proceed – and we fully expected that it might take several years to do the fundraising and complete the projects. Within just a few months, nearly all the necessary funds were raised (nearly \$500,000) enabling us to be much more efficient in sending two 40' containers and at least six 10-ton truckloads of goods needed to complete these projects. With very few exceptions, our goods were very faithfully delivered as specified. Now within a one year time span of beginning site work, the projects are virtually complete, with unprecedented levels of local partnership and collaboration. Local directors and staff are energized and have new vision for what can be possible, patients are receiving greatly improved care, and significant decreases (70%) in post operative infection rates have been achieved. The number of procedures being done regularly has increased dramatically, and patients are coming from other provinces for treatment. It is a real joy and privilege to be instrumental in facilitating such important transformations, and we thank God for his provision and you for your faithful prayers and partnership with us in these efforts that make these kinds of successes possible.

## Week-long Lab-In-a-Suitcase Workshop Completed

While the technical team was fully engaged in the last installation at the Kaesong TB Hospital, Dr. Marcia Kilsby and Dr. Ri (one of our North Korean guides) were conducting a week-long workshop on the use of the Lab-in-a-Suitcase (LIS) for a dozen lab professionals who work at four of our supported hospitals. Each day they participated in lectures and hands-on use of all the equipment in the Lab-in-a-Suitcase, learning how each component could help in the diagnosis and treatment of patients served by their hospitals. The lab equipment comes with a solar panel and battery that can be recharged from a variety of sources. With power unavailable at the training site for much of the training time, it was a very realistic test of the capability of the LIS under usual local conditions. Those who participated in the training were delighted to receive a Lab-in-a-Suitcase for their hospital, and a full starter set of supplies. Central authorities are very interested in this practical and useful project and they hope very much that we can find the necessary funding to expand this important project to many other hospitals in the future. Each LIS costs \$5,000 and we have been asked to send 200 or more of them if possible.



*The 1st LIS Graduating Class*



## Painted Mountain Corn Seed Update

Much to our appreciation, our counterparts facilitated a visit on our October confirming visit to the Agricultural Academy of Science to allow us an opportunity to get an update on the status of the Painted Mountain Corn Seed Project. You may recall that we sent 500 pounds of this seed in 2003, and another shipment of 2 tons in 2004. We visited twice to Ryanggang Province in 2003 and 2004 to confirm delivery of the seed, but were not able to get any definitive feedback on the status of the project after that time. We had asked for this meeting on multiple previous visits, but it has been difficult for them to arrange. We met with the senior corn researcher whom we had met several years previously when we first had discussions about the Painted Mountain Corn Seed. We learned that the corn seed has worked particularly well in areas that range from 1000 – 1400 meters in elevation – which includes large areas of the Northern provinces (Ryanggang and Hamgyong). The corn researcher said, **“Previous varieties of corn grown at this elevation produced 1 ton/hectare, but Painted Mountain Corn Seed produces 2.6 tons/hectare.”** The Painted Mountain Corn Seed has been included in a national register, which makes it available for widespread planting in appropriate areas. We were told that it is now being grown more widely in at least two (traditionally food-insecure) provinces with good results. The unusual colors of the corn are of great interest to farmers. Thank you for your support of this project that is proving to be greatly beneficial in the mountainous regions.



## CFK Teams with USNGOs for Food Aid

This year we were asked to participate in a particularly challenging project - the delivery of 100,000 metric tons of food aid provided through the US Agency for International Development, Office of Food for Peace. We are part of a consortium of five non-governmental organizations delivering this food aid (with Mercy Corps, World Vision, Global Resource Services and Samaritan's Purse) and currently have staff members living and working out of two sub-offices located in Sinuiju (N Pyongan Province) and Huichon City (Chagang Province) to help deliver and monitor the food. The food is being provided to children, pregnant and nursing women, and people over the age of 60. Through this program we are providing food support to 894,160 beneficiaries.

## Work of CFK Continues to Expand

**2008** has been a remarkable year for CFK in multiple respects. We are grateful for your faithful support and that of our partners that has made the following activities possible: During the calendar year to date, CFK has sent six 40' container shipments, four 20' container shipments, 5,000 patients worth of TB medicine, and six 10 ton truckloads of materials and supplies from China, all valued at just under \$4.0 Million USD. CFK has participated in 5 distinct and significant visits to the DPRK this year, we are part of a non-profit consortium that is delivering significant amounts of food aid to the DPRK, and since August 1, we have personnel living and working in the DPRK. We have also completed major hospital upgrade projects at four hospitals this year, and are helping with the full rebuilding of a rest home. God has been faithful to provide many partners, donors, volunteers, and praying people to love and serve the people of North Korea. We are deeply grateful for His faithfulness, and your partnership with us that has made this possible.

## Alarming Rise in TB in DPRK

*(Continued from page 1)*

of TB medicine that had arrived and was being distributed during our visits—but we need to send at least that amount again as soon as possible and hopefully much more in order to arrest the spread of this disease and save lives. With the medicine costing around \$35 per patient for a 6-8 month course of medicine, we hope that funding can be identified quickly to meet this urgent need. Representatives from the World Health Organization have urged us to send as much TB medicine as we can since they expect the medicine shortfall to last well into 2009.

While TB medicine remains our first priority for the coming year, many other urgent needs were identified on our recent visit, including food and general medicine, modes of transportation at all levels, renovation of additional facilities, more greenhouses, new roofing for several structures, medical supplies and equipment and various other goods. We have included our annual catalog to help you better understand these needs.

We know that this is a challenging time for many with job losses and global economic uncertainty. At the same time, among the North Korean people there is a growing hunger for truth and genuine Christian love to be shown to those who live cut off from the hope of the Gospel and who continue to teeter on the very edge of survival year after year. As you consider your year-end giving, we urge you to remember those in North Korea, and the opportunities that continue to grow for us to come alongside them truly as Christian Friends. Thank you in advance for your faithful partnership with us in this ongoing work.

## Inside:

- Four Provincial Hospital Operating Suite Renovation Projects Done in 2008
- Alarming rise in TB in DPRK
- Daily Diary of the October Technical Team
- Week-long Lab-In-a-Suitcase Workshop Completed
- Painted Mountain Corn Seed Update
- CFK Teams with USNGOs for Food Aid
- Work of CFK continues to expand



The smallest girl is 13 and suffering from TB. Her mother, sister and friend walked for 2 hours to visit her on October 10, 2008 (a national holiday).



P.O. Box 936 • Black Mountain, NC 28711

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



## CHRISTIAN FRIENDS OF KOREA

Christian Friends of Korea is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization founded in 1995 to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through humanitarian, educational, and religious programs. Contributions to CFK are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. CFK also accepts stock or in-kind donations. Please make all checks payable to "Christian Friends of Korea."

If you are interested in supporting the work of CFK or to request information or materials, please contact us.

Christian Friends of Korea  
P O Box 936  
Black Mountain, NC 28711



A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.

Website: [www.cfk.org](http://www.cfk.org)  
Tel: (828) 669-2355  
Fax: (828) 669-2357  
Email: [cfk@cfk.org](mailto:cfk@cfk.org)



Fall 2008 CFK Confirming Team and corn drying at Unryul TB Rest Home

*I will praise you, O Lord,  
among the nations; I will sing  
of you among the peoples.  
For great is your love,  
reaching to the heavens; your  
faithfulness reaches to the  
skies. Be exalted, O God,  
above the heavens; let your  
glory be over all the earth.*

Psalm 57: 9-11 (NIV)



home director shows the difference in soy grown with (R) and without (L) inoculant.

Sometimes very simple and inexpensive things bring good results. Small bags of soybean inoculant hand carried in May resulted in a 25 - 30% increase in their soybean crop this October. Here one rest