

Christian Friends of Korea

Activity Report

Volume 13

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"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience... Forgive as the Lord forgave you, And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Colossians 3:12-14



CFK November Confirming and Technical Teams

CFK Celebrates Expanded Work in DPRK

As we look back over 2007, our hearts are filled with thanksgiving for the many milestones reached this year that mark new levels of love and service to God among the people of North Korea. Your generosity, together with the partnership of many in-kind donors, provided over \$5.2 million dollars worth of aid to North Korea during the previous fiscal year (July 06 - June 07). Four teams have visited North Korea this year, including visits by three teams in October and November. Major renovation projects at two of our supported hospitals are well on their way to completion, and when finished will transform the level of care provided to patients.

Yet, 2007 has also been a very difficult year in many respects for millions of North Koreans. Massive flooding in early August caused by 8 days of torrential rains that impacted 9 of North Korea's 12 provincial areas left over 600 people dead or missing, destroyed or damaged over 240,000 homes, wiped out or damaged thousands of schools and clinics, and devastated infrastructure such as roads, bridges and power lines. After many repairs were completed, Typhoon Wipha came through in September, causing more flooding and wind damage and undoing much of the reconstruction efforts, all the while visiting

further miseries and sickness on hundreds of thousands of acutely vulnerable people.

Your response was generous and swift. As a result of your compassion and those of our partners, we were able to send an air shipment of emergency health kits that included enough basic medicines and supplies to treat 20,000 patients for 3 months. We also sent a special 40' container shipment filled with antibiotics, general medicines, quilts, hygiene kits, soap, bandages and canned meat. A truckload of 1000 heavy weight blankets and zippered covers arrived in Pyongyang days ago to help patients and those suffering from flood damage stay warm during the cold and difficult winter months ahead. And we were also able to send 15 more large greenhouses (in addition to 30 sent earlier in the Fall) to help local hospitals and rest homes grow more food during the coming winter.

We saw some of these and multiple other shipments during our recent visits, and received heartfelt expressions of gratitude from local, provincial and central level officials, local hospital and rest home directors, staff members, and patients. The support provided through Christian Friends of Korea is touching the lives of tens of thousands of suffering people, bringing to them tangible expressions of God's love and mercy.

We were deeply encouraged this year when our counterparts at the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH)

surprised us by constructing on our behalf a new warehouse building in Pyongyang to safely store our shipments prior to their final delivery to the local areas. They did this on their own initiative and without any financial or



New CFK materials warehouse in Pyongyang

other investment on our part, and already this warehouse is contributing greatly to our ongoing work. Our relationships with our counterparts in North Korea continue to grow stronger with each visit, and we are deeply grateful for ever increasing levels of trust and partnership.

We hope you will enjoy reading the reports and looking at photos from our recent visits. Your support of this work allows for very special opportunities to love and serve a people who are made in the image of God just as we are, but who have not had opportunity to know of his love for them for decades. We trust that your partnership will remain strongly with us in the coming year so that together we can continue to demonstrate the love of God to the people of North Korea in word and deed.



CFK Flood Damage Team with Emergency Health Kits

CFK Team Visits North Korea in October in Response to the Aug/Sept Floods

A special CFK delegation of three members visited the DPRK from October 6-9, 2007. The purpose of the visit was to confirm the arrival and distribution of 2 Emergency Health Kits and various supplemental kits sent by air in response to the recent flooding. These kits were sent in partnership with Medical Teams International, Dorcas Aid International, and several other donors, and were designed to treat the common ailments of 20,000 patients for a period of 3 months following a natural disaster. During our time in country, we visited 5 warehouses that were involved in the distribution process and a hospital that would be receiving the medicine. We had discussions with MOPH staff about our upcoming Fall visits, worshipped at the Chilgol Church in Pyongyang, and also saw the Arirang Mass Games performance.

Our trip came just a few days after the summit meeting took place between the leaders of North and South Korea, and hope was in the air despite the devastation from the recent floods. We were able to have very useful discussions and preview recently-arrived shipments, including the materials and equipment that had just arrived for the hospital improvement projects scheduled for completion later in the Fall. It was most productive to be able to reconfirm in direct discussions the distribution of all these goods. We spent one day traveling out into the countryside, where we saw some evidence of the recent flooding, and heard stories about local areas that had been hard hit. The health kits were very gratefully received, and we were also able to have discussions about future ways we could help.

CFK Technical Team Renovates Operating Suites at Two Provincial TB Hospitals

A CFK technical team comprised of six members (most of them volunteers who paid their own travel expenses and took time off from work to participate) worked to renovate the operating room suites at two of our supported TB hospitals from November 3-15, 2007. Working long hours alongside local staff, including doctors, nurses and support people, they were able to do most of the critical components of the renovation projects at Sariwon and Haeju. The scope of each project included full electrical upgrades (including installation of power conditioners, panels, conduit, wiring, outlets, fixtures, etc.), installation of new ceilings, doors and windows, tile for walls and floors, installation of heating/cooling units, scrub sinks, and the provision of multiple pieces of medical equipment. While the teams were not able to fully complete the work at each location due to time constraints, they were able to discuss and demonstrate what remained to be finished to the local staff. We were assured, with great joy and gratitude, that when we return in the Spring we can expect to see completed and transformed operating suites. We hope to send a technical team back in Spring '08 to troubleshoot anything that remains, and also hope to do further technical training on equipment at that time.

While these kinds of projects are the most demanding (and expensive) in terms of logistics, resources, organization, time, and execution, both on our side of things and on the North Korean side of things, they are also among the most valuable projects we can do. Not only do they make long-term and permanent improvements at these places, but they also provide opportunities for us to work alongside local staff, sharing knowledge, friendship and trust, and living the Gospel out before them in word and deed.



Technical Team and local staff at Haeju TB Hospital

Our technical team was also able to complete final assessments at the Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital and the Kaesong Provincial TB Hospital. We hope to send volunteer technical teams to complete these projects in the Spring and Fall of 2008. Thank you for your faithful prayers, and for all your support that makes possible these projects that are impacting and productive on so many levels.

CFK to Restart TB Medicine Program

From 1997 - 2001, a large part of our tuberculosis (TB) program in North Korea included the provision of the basic anti-bacterial medicines needed to treat TB. In 2001, when the World Health Organization's (WHO) pilot TB program expanded to include all areas of the country, we suspended our TB medicine program so that we wouldn't duplicate their efforts, and so we could use the funds that would ordinarily have gone to TB medicine to provide other greatly needed things that WHO was not able to fund. We have learned recently that the continued funding for TB medicines through WHO is no longer assured. The shocks of the flooding and other recent disease outbreaks have impacted the health of people significantly and the number of patients appears to be increasing again. Our North Korean counterparts are strongly urging us to make the provision of the basic TB drug treatment regimen our first priority. We will need to raise new moneys to fund this restarted project, and a treatment course of life-saving medicine for one patient (6-8 months worth of medicine) is expected to cost around \$34. We hope you will generously respond to this new need.

Other Support Needed



Collapsed rest home building from the floods

During our visits to the countryside this time, we learned that nearly all of our supported hospitals and rest homes suffered significant crop losses in the recent flooding, and in some places, their entire crop for the year was wiped out. This amounted in most places to losses of 2-3 tons of soybean and corn, and as many as 10 tons of vegetables. One of our hospital directors described planting cabbage for *kimchee* three times due to the flooding. Much of the cabbage we saw in the fields (our visit took place at the normal cabbage harvest time) was less than half the normal size. As cabbage made into *kimchee* is the primary vegetable source for many households during the winter months, this is of great concern. It is not clear how or if these losses will be made up. Each local place strongly urged us to continue sending food - as much as possible. The canned meat is particularly prized along with soybeans; as are the greenhouses that help them grow fresh food even during the coldest months. Each place can support more greenhouses and we hope to continue sending these, as well as replacement plastic for them as needed.

The tractors that we have sent help them significantly, particularly in the spring and fall when the farm work is most intense. The tractors are not so efficient, however, in moving our



Greens growing in November

often heavy and bulky donations long distances - and so we have a new request if possible to provide the most rural rest homes with a three-wheeled cargo motorcycle. We hope with your support we can meet this need in the coming year.

Several places lost buildings in the recent floods, swept away by mudslides, or dissolving and collapsing from being submerged in standing water. These places need help with such things as roofing materials, windows, doors, and concrete in order to rebuild. Other facilities need help in addressing water, electrical and other basic infrastructure needs.



This rest home lost two buildings in the floods

We have updated our Catalog of Hope for the coming year and would ask you to prayerfully consider how you can reach out in the name of Christ to those in need in North Korea.

Give *Elevy* as a Gift and Support the Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital

The book, *Elevy* brings to life the early years of the Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital when it was known as the Ivey Hospital. Founded in 1907 by Dr. Wightman T. Reid, a Methodist Episcopal Church South missionary, the hospital continues to serve the people of Kaesong now 100 years later. *Elevy* recounts what it was like to grow up in this place at a complex time in history. Copies are available through CFK for \$15 and additional proceeds from the book support CFK's ongoing work at this hospital. We have plans to complete major renovations at this hospital in Spring 2008.



The Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital

Auto Electronic Funds Transfer Now Available

One of our donors asked us for a way to make it easier and more convenient for him to support our work. He wanted to contribute monthly without the hassle of writing a check, finding a stamp, etc. So, we are now set up to process Electronic Funds Transfers from your bank account to ours on a monthly or quarterly basis. Your gift may be earmarked for specific projects or go into our general fund, to be used where most needed. If you are interested in supporting the work of CFK in this way, please contact our office at 828-669-2355 or by email at tsmith@cfk.org.

Confirming Team Visits 5 Hospitals and 8 Rest Homes from November 6-15, 2007

by Paul and Kay Rader (retired international leaders of the Salvation Army. Kay is a member of CFK's Board of Directors)

When we visited North Korea in 2005 for the first time ever even though as missionaries we had lived in the Republic of Korea for over 22 years, we discovered that upon the initial touchdown of our flight from Beijing, our landing on a North Korean runway, our feet touching the North Korean soil, resulted in emotional reactions that neither of us had fully anticipated. This time the emotions upon arrival were not as strong but included the anticipation of greeting old "friends" among the members of the Ministry of Public Health personnel; renewed memories of the capital, Pyongyang; and feeling 'at home' at the guest house, Ko Bang San located on the river Tae Dong.

OBSERVATIONS:

It seemed to us there were more cars on the roads, particularly in Pyongyang. As we took off for visits to hospitals and rest homes, we marveled at the number of bicycles ridden by both women and men. Countless numbers of people, bearing heavy loads on these bikes, trudge along despite rocks, gullies, muddy ruts, steep hills and deep valleys, somehow managing to plod on to their destinations, wherever those destinations were.

Beyond Pyongyang the acute difficulties of the people are unmistakable, recent floods exacerbating the situation. Fields that should be 'ripe unto harvest' are left with nothing but rotting husks or standing residues of water. The faces of children and adults, both stunted in growth, show signs of deprivation. Apartment houses appear to be abandoned, yet there are people living in them. The same is true for most of the smaller houses, as well. For whatever reason we seemed to observe more tractors in the fields and on the roads, albeit the age-old oxen are still very much in demand.

People walk from morning till night and late into the night to reach their destinations. One woman appeared out of nowhere as we drove along a very dark road around 9:30 p.m. Street lights are nonexistent outside of Pyongyang, yet the people venture out. Women on bicycles hauling bags of rice or other commodities were headed home long after the sun had set. We observed the words, "South Korea" [Tae Han Min Gook] printed on some of the rice bags and on at least one, "U.S.A."

We felt more openness and less tension throughout the land. The anti-American billboards are mostly gone and the tour guides at the major monuments seemed quite willing to talk with us. One guide shared with Paul that she had been on her feet all day, had had no time to eat lunch and that she was very weary. She remembered meeting Heidi before and thought she remembered me.

At each of the hospitals and rest homes there were those who remembered that Paul and I were with the CFK group in 2005. They seemed genuinely happy to see us again. The doctor at one rest home whom I stood beside in the group

picture in '05 wanted to have a picture taken with me this time. His smile is infectious.

There is still a hesitancy when responding to interview questions such as, "What do you need?" "Tell us your priorities here so that we can better help you." Always a glance towards the representative from the Ministry of Public Health or the county, provincial or local party representative before replying. At one hospital, the new director asked the translator why they are being asked to say what they need. He told her it is because "You are the ones who know your professional needs." In the end, the answer is the same: first, an acknowledgement of the help received from the State, then,

"We need the things CFK sends. We so appreciate the medical supplies and especially the food."

In every place the *wonjangs* and *sojangs* (directors) are more than happy to see CFK. The director at one hospital, never restrained in his comments, expressed gratitude for CFK's diligence and dedication, the attention to detail and for CFK's frequent visits. It seems to us that without confirmation of receipt of goods as well as checking on the state of the green houses, tractors, bicycles, medical equipment, etc., the effort would soon grind to a halt. The value of more technical equipment depends to a great extent on adequate training of those who use and maintain it. Instruction, advice, and counsel, while sensitive, are needed. The greenhouse instruction booklets hand carried this time to teach about how to construct the new larger greenhouses were greatly appreciated.

Koreans are resourceful people. Koreans have an indomitable spirit that is part of their DNA. It is interesting to observe the similarities between north and south Koreans. In spite of the total separation from each other for over 57 years, their body language, mannerisms, sense of humor, cultural as well as individual personality characteristics are amazingly the same. For example, their reaction to the dried vegetable soup mix (sent recently by CFK through a partnership with the Mennonite Central Committee) was identical in each place and was so reminiscent of South Korean responses to some of the Western-type foodstuffs that were distributed in the aftermath of the Korean conflict. In the end, however, they wanted more dried soup mix and said they are becoming more used to it, especially when they add canned meat, peppers and other spices.

We were allowed into the patients' rooms with more freedom than in '05 even to our being invited to step inside, interact with the patients, ask about their families, former livelihood, their first signs of TB, their present condition, what they do to pass the time, etc. Some of the men said they play chess. Two of the three at one place had been coal miners for five years before contracting the disease. Three women shared that high fever was their first sign of serious illness. They said they like to sing to pass the time away (but yarn and knitting supplies would again be welcomed!)

Photos, while still sensitive, were allowed in each place.

One special memory of ours is the sight of a director at one special facility, hearing that we wanted to visit, running to open the door to a room where seven women patients resided. In that same room, one of the patients who was sitting beside me suddenly took my left hand in her two hands and held on tightly. I said, "We're friends now," to which she replied, "Yes, we're friends." I was able to tell them that we would pray for them, remembering their faces and their



*Kay Rader and Heidi Linton
with TB patients*

stories. They registered keen appreciation and delight.

It is impressive to observe the dedication of the directors, doctors, nurses and other members of the staff at these institutions. At one rest home, one of the nurses has been there 30 plus years. She came first as a result of TB in her own body. The director at another rest home has had TB three times in 14 years. The County Representative at that place said they need new buildings so that the Director will not have to sit up all night when it floods, making sure the buildings don't collapse. The Director of a hospital we visited in Pyongyang that was severely impacted by the August flooding had been there for ten years. He was effusive in his gratitude for CFK emergency help after the floods. He spoke more freely when I spoke with him privately in the courtyard following the visit.

Despite no electricity, often no safe water, and very little of this world's goods, these people carry themselves with an aura of dignity that is admirable. No one is spoiled. Even those women who ride bicycles whilst carrying babies on their backs and a heavy load tied to the rear fender are dressed in their best. A blanket or shawl thrown over the baby for warmth, a scarf around their necks or over their heads, coats, jackets and trousers neat.

Our hosts were the epitome of graciousness. They were kind, generous and helpful. We were the spoiled ones. The guide who accompanied Paul and me on most of our long days on the road engaged us in conversation as often as possible. We spoke together both in the Korean language and in English, depending upon his choice. He inquired about The Salvation Army. He asked about our family. We showed him photos from our cameras of our children and grandchildren.

We joined North Koreans in worship at the Chilgol Church on Sunday, November 11, the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. How appropriate that a Methodist Bishop from Seoul chose to speak on the topic: Suffering and Blessing. The next day we witnessed several busloads of North Koreans leaving one of the government buildings in Pyongyang to be reunited by videolink with their relatives. How moving to see elderly men dressed to the nines in their recently acquired new suits and hats helping each other find their way out of the enormous

corridors of the building and the women in traditional Korean dress behind them, making their way downstairs.

We were impressed by the reverence and respect of the waitresses at each hotel we stayed in when faced with our heads bowed in prayer for grace before meals. These are a people who know how to be reverent. They know how to pay obeisance. They are accustomed to honoring and obeying.

REFLECTIONS:

- As our visit progressed, the request from the directors seemed to change from "food, medical equipment" to "windows, doors, flooring, roofing" and in one place, "all new buildings." One director began his request with "You have given so much, I hesitate to ask. . ."
- Electricity is a major problem. Food is a major problem. Meds are a major problem. Clean water is a major problem.
- How do patients survive cold winters when toilet facilities are outdoors? How do TB Rest Homes and Hospitals operate without proper electricity, water and sanitation? How do patients escape staph infections when linens are washed at the river's edge or not at all? How do patients endure the pain of surgery with little or no anesthesia?
- Knitted hats with pictures of those who did the knitting and a message – all very good. Directors were very pleased.
- Hospitality outstanding. Fruit, peanuts, chestnuts, persimmon, apples, pears, baked sweet potatoes, even kiwi, candy, cookies, cornbread, cake. One place set out celadon teapots.
- Making choices is not easy for North Koreans. Their normal way of life leaves them powerless to make choices. The directors are on a steep learning curve.
- When offered opportunity to choose the menu for his special birthday dinner, our driver warmed to the idea of choices in a heartbeat. His solution: choose one of everything. We shared a wonderful and memorable meal together.
- How significant are our counterpart's words in the last meeting,



*A CFK donor list and
hand-knitted baby hat*

*"Have I kept my word in the two
years we have been working together?
I trust you; you can trust me."*



Stopping for a picnic lunch during our travels to TB facilities

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Pulling wire together at Sariwon

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Colossians 4:2 and 3:17



Checking tractor oil at a rest home

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."

Special IRA Giving Opportunity and tax benefit slated to end December 31, 2007: Charitable gifts given directly from an IRA account to a qualified charity such as CFK can be excluded from income through December 31, 2007. Individuals must have attained age 70 1/2 prior to distribution and gifts count toward the annual minimum required distribution of the IRA. Up to \$100,000 per taxpayer can be excluded from taxable income. Please contact your accountant or tax planner for details on this means of giving.

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

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