

HELPING THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA SINCE 1971

ANGOLA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND



AMSF Newsletter

The President's Corner by Etta Snow



This is Etta's last message to you as your president. Her three-year term is up in June and, at the AGM on June 7th, a new person will be elected for this important rôle. The incoming president will have big shoes to fill to emulate Etta's dedication and hard work. Etta has enjoyed the past 3 years serving the Fund and its loyal members and donors as president and leaves you with an upbeat and encouraging message. EE

Can we make a difference?

"Yes We Can"! That's what Barak Obama says, and that's how I feel about you, the AMSF donors. "Yes We Can" speaks to us in such a positive way, and for the past 38 years, you have made a tremendous difference in the lives of hundreds of young people in Angola. Your generous support has given new hope and optimism to so many shattered lives in the aftermath of the 27 years of civil war.

I was saddened to read in a recent report that 68% of Angolans live below the poverty line and 15% of households live in a state of destitution. But -- good news! We --

YOU -- are making a difference!

I know you were delighted to hear that we were able to send \$30,000 for the ten Formation Schools. These schools offer skill training courses to help these young women become self-sufficient; that's in addition to the Vocational Schools that instruct young girls in practical activities such as sewing, cooking, health care and nutrition. Where would these young people be without the opportunity to acquire such knowledge? Your generosity will ultimately make it possible for them to say, "Yes, we can!"

And, I am happy that we were able to send \$10,000 to the new Seminary at Kachilengue to help the theological students in the preparation and spiritual training that will be so necessary for them to face the challenges and demands of what it means today to be the church's presence in post-war Angola.

Then, there was the additional \$12,000 we sent as a matching donation to monies they received from other sources so they would be able to finish the roof at the former Dondi Institute. There are still hundreds of children in this area who are not able to attend school because the buildings have no doors, windows or roofs, and often they lack desks, chairs and supplies. When these conditions are met, it is our hope that the government will pay for teachers in these schools.

And, don't forget the school in Namibe! The construction there is currently on hold while the church tries to finalize details with the municipal authorities.

Last, but not least, I am proud to know that, because of your support, AMSF was able to send \$20,000 (an increase of \$3,000) to the Angolan Council of Christian Churches to assist 22 pre-university and university students in their studies in Medicine, Law, Nursing, Sciences, Pedagogy, and Business Management.

One of the church leaders said that hundreds of Angolans will be unable to fend for themselves without an infusion of education and new skills development so vital for the enhancement of their standard of living or to meet the technological demands of post-war Angola. The Bible tells us, "Do not grow weary of doing good". Rev. Dr. José Chipenda, former Secretary of the Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola, has asked us, "Will you, our faithful donors, continue to support AMSF through your prayers and your gifts?" To this I say, "Yes, we can!"

We have met the challenge before and with your generous support we will meet it again this year. We will not let our Angolan sisters and brothers down.

On behalf of AMSF, my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your on-going support. God bless you.

Report from the Field by Donna Dudley



Donna Dudley of Chicago is a missionary just recently embarked on assignment in Angola for Global Ministries U.S.A.. She sent a report back home for their own newsletter and has given us permission to print it here. We hope you find it interesting. EE

Greetings from Luanda, the capital of Angola! Having completed six months in Lisbon learning Portuguese, I am now now living in Luanda, working in the Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola (IECA), in their Department of Social Assistance, Studies and Projects (DASEP). DASEP is IECA's community outreach arm that addresses issues that include: extending health care, opening doors for education and

training; creating sustainable development projects; and working to further reconciliation among people and justice in rebuilding communities during this time of peace. I am a Program Assistant to Luis Samacumbi, General Director of DASEP, to help him develop organizational capacities, offer guidance on a variety of development projects, and assist in strengthening relationships with existing partners and creating links to new partners for project support. All of this work will take place in the context of efforts to make DASEP self-sustaining.

The country has really only begun its recovery from the legacy of colonialism and 27 years of civil war. DASEP's work directly addresses people's needs by empowering them to create a richer, fuller life for themselves and their families, communities and country. The work is an active reflection of God's love and reconciliation of people, especially those who are "the least of these" in Angola, and the healing of a war-ravaged landscape that remains riddled with land mines in many rural areas. DASEP is broadly ecumenical in its approach to partnership, working well with people of different faith traditions and with all people of good will who pursue a vision of peace, justice and wholeness.

IECA has clearly accepted the dual challenge by commitment to:

The Spiritual Mission of evangelization that addresses people's hunger for meaning and reassurance that God's strength will increase their own; and

The Social Mission that is dedicated to minimizing people's suffering, satisfying material needs, involving local communities in decision making, and creating protection and opportunity, especially for women and children.

I am very grateful to God for providing this opportunity in Angola to use some of the threads of my life to contribute to the weaving of a new social fabric of life in Angola. It was also a reminder that it's never too late (I'm 61 now) to take an inventory of the talents that God has given each of us to see what "new thing" we can help to create -- in our own backyard or in a faraway place.

Why I Support AMSF by Dr. George Burgess



George and Phyllis Burgess were missionaries in central Angola from 1954 to 1977 when they were forced out due to the civil war. They soon joined AMSF. George served on the Board and Phyllis was Secretary and Regional Rep for many years. In 1994 in the midst of the Angolan civil war, they visited Namibia to make a field assessment for AMSF of the Angolan refugee situation there. EE

AMSF has always had top priority for me as an organization to support every year.

The education that the scholarships help provide at all levels - from Primary Schools to Vocational and University - prepares Angolan youth for community leadership and the skills they need in today's world: to earn a living, to provide for a family, to train in vocations and professions.

It also enables them to acquire skills in music, arts, sports and entertainment, and inspires their spiritual development and understanding of their rôle in life.

Yes, education prepares the youth of Angola to fulfill their rightful place in contributing, as other youth do, to the modern world.

From personal experience, I know every dollar I contribute to AMSF helps achieve these goals.

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