Fall Technical Trip, 2014

From September 20 – October 9, CFK made our third extended visit to DPRK for 2014. Our purpose this time was to install new water systems at two TB care centers, to conduct training on tractor/motorcycle/tri-motorcycle vehicle maintenance and repair, to inspect several renovation projects that were in process, and to prepare for our upcoming November visit to DPRK.

Our final trip approval was very late in coming for this trip, and we were grateful for the flexibility and faith shown by our team to go ahead despite the uncertainty. We were deeply blessed to see God’s provision in our work in many ways.

We arrived into Pyongyang late on a Saturday afternoon, rested and worshipped with local believers on Sunday, and then spent our first work day gathering the project materials from our warehouse and tools from our containers. We have 3 sea containers at the Central TB Prevention Hospital that provide secure storage when we are not in the country.

Small Engine Repair / Maintenance Workshop

We stopped into the North Hwanghae TB Hospital (in Sariwon), to drop off James Linton, President of Wellspring of Life, who spent several days with our team this time leading a workshop on small engine repair and maintenance with hospital/rest home directors/staff who had gathered there from 21 CFK supported rural care centers. James did both lecture and hands-on training (in Korean), and we gained a deeper understanding of local conditions and needs. We were also able to see new roofing that had been recently installed at the pediatric ward of this hospital as a result of CFK’s support.

“Thank you so much (with a series of 90° bows). Now I can grow more vegetables each season.”
- Sariwon TB Rest Home Staff Member

“James Linton (center) is answering questions regarding maintenance and care of cargo-motorcycles.”

“I offer water that will become a wellspring within you that gives life throughout eternity. You will never be thirsty again.” - John 4:14 (The Voice)
The following day, we drove to Sariwon TB Rest Home to walk the site and mark all the digging that would need to take place for this system installation. We agreed to install 11 hydrants at this facility, as well as set a new pump, solar panels, and a 10 ton water storage tank. Our team mapped out where all the trenching would need to be dug (1 meter deep) in order to lay all the water lines. Digging started right away.

From there, we made the 2.5 hour drive on rough roads to Changyon TB Rest Home – located on the far West Coast, to walk that site with local staff and lay out all the trenching that would be needed there. This rest home is located on the sea coast, and until now, they have had to take their tractor and trailer down a hillside, across a wide valley and up another hillside 2x/day to hand dip water from a spring into a 250 liter barrel in order to supply water for this rest home that cares for nearly 100 patients a year. This job required digging more than 1km of trenching (1 meter deep) – so we needed to lay out the job for them so that they could start digging during the week we were working on the project at Sariwon. We jointly estimated it would take upwards of 150 people digging trenching for several days to complete the project. After outlining the job, we drove the 2.5 hour jolting ride back to the Sariwon hotel, where we would spend the rest of the week while working on the water system for the TB rest home there.

The next morning when we arrived at Sariwon TB Rest Home, upwards of 75 people from the health department and community were digging the trenches, so our work began with setting the tank up on the hill and setting the posts for the solar panels. The next day brought more progress as we installed the pump into the well, assembled the solar panels, and began to assemble the hydrants and install the pipe.

While most of the team worked at Sariwon, a couple of team members made a trip back to Pyongyang to collect more needed materials from our containers/warehouse, and also stopped at the Hwangju TB Rest Home to inspect the completion of a new Multi-drug Resistant TB Ward at this facility, supported by CFK. This place has been completely transformed by our partnership efforts.

On our last full working day at Sariwon TB Rest Home, we finished all the frost-free hydrant installations, completed the wiring to the tank and control box, and late in the afternoon hit the switch activating the system. What excitement there was as the solar panels provided power to the pump and began to charge the system with cold, clean water! As the water began to fill up the lines, the various hydrants were tried one by one. The joy and amazement on many faces was priceless! There were two women working in the kitchen, one of whom had been...
busy all week filling buckets at the handpump and carrying the water to the kitchen – more than 150 feet away. When the outlet in the kitchen poured forth water, the one woman joyously said to the other, “With all this water, now you will hardly have any work to do!”

Solar-Power Lights up the Darkness!

This time, we also installed several small solar-powered lighting systems – to give light to places that get little to no electricity. The system includes a solar panel, control box, motorcycle battery, charging outlets, 2 permanent lights/cable, and rechargeable portable lanterns. We decided to install one system at Sariwon TB Rest Home since they are mostly “off grid”. We put the permanent lights into the director’s office – and as we prepared to depart later one evening, they lit up the entire room.

The next day, when we came back to check on things, the director said with a big smile that he had stayed up past midnight – “...I wanted and wished to work at night before but I did not have enough light. Now that I have two lamps from the solar power, I am going to work extra hard for this rest home. Thank you!”

As the project came to completion, we gathered all the staff, patients, and residents from the nearby homes for a brief orientation on the use and maintenance of the system. We were able to share with them that this system was made possible by hundreds of Korean-American young people from different churches in Irvine, CA who came together to pray and raise support so that the local residents, staff, and patients might know of God’s love for them, and receive healing through the provision of clean, abundant water. Many staff and patients went out of their way to express their delight and sincere gratitude for the new water system, and we look forward to returning to this facility in the future to hear of the impact on health that will be possible as a result of abundant clean water.
Early on Monday morning, September 29th our team split and Heidi Linton returned to Pyongyang to meet with the National TB Reference Lab staff and to visit the Pyongyang #2 (Hepatitis) Hospital. We sent roofing materials here for this hospital to replace their large and leaky roof, and the re-roofing was well underway. We discussed with them our November plans, including a pilot hepatitis-B survey and vaccination program for health care workers at our supported hepatitis facilities, and also gathered additional materials from our container and warehouse needed for the job at Changyon.

Heidi departed on the 30th in order to deliver a couple of workshops on CFK’s activities at a conference held in Seoul, leaving our team of 5 behind to complete the work at Changyon and make minor repairs to other systems.

As an African saying says, “When you travel alone you may go faster, but when you travel together with others, you will go farther.” So I personally thank the youth groups from four different churches in Irvine, CA and the Oh family from Sydney, Australia for raising enough funds to complete two water systems, and for partnering in this journey of faith and service. I am sure that this journey of faithful people will continue towards the promised end.

During the visit, a CFK technical team of 5 people visited two TB rest homes to install water systems. Of course, the team faced challenges and difficulties in terms of conditions of the sites, communications with local authorities, and various physical challenges. As a matter of fact, both sites were very rocky, so digging the ditching to lay the pipe was difficult! The local staff especially had to break rocks through sheer physical strength to make a path for the water pipes.

The back cover panoramic image was taken from the first site, Sariwon TB Rest Home. As it shows, long, twisting turns, up and down hills, and rocky ground were what we had to deal with and overcome to install one pump powered by 10 solar panels, one 2500 gallon water tank, hundred yard lengths of underground pipes, and 11 water hydrants. What a challenge the team faced! But the team did the only thing we could do; gathering together every day to pray and trust God; as the Bible says ‘Cry out to God, then you will see…” (Jer 33:3 English translation from New Korean International Version)

It is not easy for me to write a short note for the newsletter because I have so much to share with fellow CFK friends and donors and supporters. During 21 days of working and serving in the DPRK, I faced so many opportunities to witness how much God loves the North Korean people and how much God wanted our team to share it with them.

Cry out to God, then you will see.
by David Won Kim of Mansfield, Australia

David Won Kim (middle) with two of the staff at Changyon TB Rest Home.

Pump installation for the gravity-fed water system at Sariwon #3 TB Rest Home.

New roofing material provided by CFK is being installed at Pyongyang #2 Hepatitis Hospital.

Rocky ground made trench digging difficult.

Every day over 50 local volunteers and all staff persons showed up and worked together with us diligently and faithfully. It is so true to say “when we travel together, we can go farther.” On our third day at the site, we were all able to march together to drop a pump into a deep well drilled last year by the Wellspring of Korea’s drilling rig.
The second site was even more difficult and almost impossible for the team because of the distance from the water source to the rest home and of the work time allowances we had. The natural spring source was close to 1 km away from the rest home, so the team had to walk over 6 km each day in order to install the water system. We only had 5 working days and 5 hours of work time each day due to the 6 hours of tiring commutes to and from the rest home. Again, our God is amazing, living, and our very gracious God. We were so blessed by God’s presence and provision for the rest home. By His grace, we were able to install a water system with two 2500 gallon water tanks, 12 solar panels, over 1.5 km long of underground pipes, and 7 water hydrants.

As I look back, it was indeed only about/for/with/and by God. All because of God’s amazing grace and love for North Korea and her people. That is why we continue to serve Him with thankful hearts and faith-filled humility.

**Seoul, South Korea**

The conference in Seoul that Heidi attended gathered Christians from many parts of the world who share a keen interest in the work of God on the Korean Peninsula. It brought together on-the-ground workers, as well as pastors, supporters, and interested people to worship together, pray together, and learn together about both the challenges and opportunities already open for Christian work in and around North Korea. She was both encouraged by the heart and dedication of fellow workers, and sobered by the changing atmosphere in South Korea that is resulting in disinterest and falling support for DPRK-related work. While the door remains largely closed for South Koreans to engage directly with North Koreans, the door is very much open for diaspora Koreans and non-Koreans to work in North Korea. There is a huge opportunity for Korean churches to work and partner humbly together with those who can engage directly — yet many are reluctant to do so if they cannot work directly on their own. We continue to pray that God will draw the body of Christ to work humbly together with one another as one body, and thereby reflect more fully His grace and love towards the North Korean people.

**Doctor’s Kit Assembly in Black Mountain, NC**

We are very grateful for a new relationship with the Asheville Youth Mission (AYM). AYM helps connect volunteer groups with our Black Mountain facility, giving CFK the opportunity to include youth in our ministry.

On Saturday, September 13, AYM brought 10 youth and 2 adults from Myers Park Presbyterian confirmation group in Charlotte, NC to our shipping center. They volunteered two and a half hours of their time to help assemble over 100 doctor’s kits that will be delivered to the staff at our supported facilities in North Korea. These kits provide the basic tools necessary for medical personnel to carry out their vital work.

We had a great day of hard work, laughter, and prayer. We pray that this year’s Myers Park Presbyterian confirmation group will grow in their walk with Christ and represent God’s love among their peers, families, and communities.

This year’s Doctor’s Kits were supported by One Vision International and many private donors. Enough supplies and funds were available this year for Nurse’s Kits as well, which will be assembled and shipped with the Doctor’s Kits later this Fall.
November Trip Activities
CFK plans to return to DPRK from November 4 - 22, 2014 to complete our activities for this year. The November scope of work includes:

- Pilot survey / HepB vaccination for health care workers.
- Further training in TB and clinical diagnostic methods at the National TB Reference Lab in partnership with Stanford University and other expert volunteers.
- Confirming visits to upwards of 25 care centers to check on shipments, the new water system, renovation projects currently underway, etc.

CFK Invited to Expand Work
With the completion of water projects, renovation projects, expanded greenhouse use, and other developments at local sites, we are seeing lasting progress being made in self-sufficiency and the ability to care for patients. Many places are almost unrecognizable as a result of the positive changes and development in recent years. While we will want to maintain our relationship with them to continue to encourage progress and provide minimal help as needed, we can now focus our efforts on other places that have not come as far along. In October, our colleagues at MoPH opened a discussion, asking if we could expand our efforts to new facilities. They said, “You have provided a lot of help to many places - but there are many more places that have not received any help. Can you expand your work to include some new places?”

This is a tremendous opportunity to which we could not give a ready answer because of current funding constraints. CFK has struggled greatly this year to raise enough general funds to maintain our current activities, and at times this account has dipped perilously low despite implementing various cost cutting measures. Some of our projects can only be maintained at a very minimal level because of a lack of sufficient funding. Expansion of our work to more places, showing the grace and love of Jesus Christ to more regions and people, would require significant expansion of our funding base. Yet the current political / diplomatic difficulties present perceived obstacles for many potential donors. We know that many of our donors are already giving sacrificially and generously, and we thank you for your faithful support. Will you pray with us that God will draw more people, churches, and organizations to regularly, generously and faithfully support this work through prayer and provision? Will you help to make this possible by sharing what God is doing in North Korea with your church, organizations you know that can help, and other contacts? We hear from our DPRK counterparts that CFK’s work is effective and welcome. This opens a rare and exceptional opportunity to speak into the lives of countless sick and hurting people with the love and grace of Jesus Christ. We pray that God will provide the means for us to faithfully respond.