

Local ministry digs clean water

Thanks to a local ministry, a community in India now has access to safe water.

The Shared Ministry of Hope Lutheran Church and All Saints Episcopal Church raised money over several months last year to dig a well in one of the thousands of communities around the globe that lacks access to safe water.

The project in Jan Vikas Samiti, India was completed in November of 2012. Jan Vikas Samiti is not a town, but a social welfare organization in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, bordering Nepal, that operates various programs to assist and support women and children living in extreme poverty.

The project grew out of Pastor Katy Anderson's challenge to the congregations on World Water Day in 2011, and again in 2012, to set aside the dollar a day that might be spent on bottled water or other luxuries and save it to help provide clean drinking water to people who have none.

"Water is so basic for life. Farmers and ranchers know how important it is to have access to water, but most of us take clean water for granted... just turn on a faucet," says Anderson.

"Access to clean water is considered the foundation for all other forms of economic development," she continues. "Children who don't spend hours every day hauling water, and who don't get sick from drinking contaminated water, have more time for school and the possibility of a better life than they were born into. Eradicating extreme poverty was on the top of the list of UN Millennium Development Goals, but without access to clean water, little else can change."

A focused effort to raise \$5,000 to dig a well began in March of 2012. Children who attended First Friday Friends of Jesus during the year also were encouraged to participate by filling a water jug with coins during their Oct. 5 session.

"There was an outpouring of interest, and many



Community members gathering to collect water from the new well. -Contributed photo

generous donations. What we thought might take a couple of years to fund was fully funded in six months," Anderson says.

The Shared Ministry worked with Living Water International (LWI) to dig the well in rural India. LWI is a faith-based organization that provides the equipment, expertise and education to give thirsty people clean water, as well as sharing the gospel. Since its founding in 1990, LWI has completed 10,000 water projects in 26 countries. Of those, 920 projects have been completed in India in collaboration with local churches, schools and hospitals.

According to statistics provided by the United Nations and its related organizations, in many communities around the world, women and children spend a large portion of every day carrying water (in jugs weighing up to 40 pounds each) from the nearest water source, which in some places can be as much as five miles away.

Even when water is nearby, it can be dirty and unsafe to drink because of poor sanitation practices. Access to clean water and adequate sanitation is considered to be the first essential step in raising a community out of poverty. In fact, according to LWI, health is one of the most serious issues affecting development in India. According to a report released by the organization:

-diarrhea causes more than 1,600 deaths each day, making it the leading cause of death among Indian children;

-An estimated 21 percent of communicable diseases in India are related to unsafe water; and

-only 14 percent of the rural population has access to a latrine.

When the LWI team arrived in Jan Vikas Samiti, the approximately 80 community members were using a water source unable to sustain their water needs. Because of that, lo-

cal families were suffering from cholera, dysentery and malaria.

"Some time there is no light/power supply for a month and we are not able to get water for drinking. When water scarcity is there, we had to fetch water from another hand-pump which is far from our dwelling and we had to cart water with the help of a trolley," said 40-year-old community member and social worker Santosh Kumar. "When we heard that LWI India is providing hand-pumps, we approached the organization for help. A team was rushed and after the survey a hand-pump has been installed and now we are able to meet our needs easily."

The new well yields 30 liters (nearly eight gallons) of water per minute. LWI also provided hygiene education, including instruction on hand washing, how to properly transport and store water, disease transmission and prevention, and signs and symptoms of dehydration.

Members of the Shared Ministry have expressed hope that this will be just the first of many wells the ministry is able to fund.

"We are already raising money for a second well to be built in Central or South America," says Anderson. "LWI offers opportunities for a well-building mission trip, and we're hoping to send some of our members to actually participate in our next project."

The Shared Ministry will be celebrating the completion of the first well on Sunday, Feb. 24, with a potluck after church featuring the food of India and a fair trade mini-bazaar offering products crafted by the women of north India, with proceeds—of course—going toward their next well project.

More information about LWI and the global need for clean water can be found at their website, www.water.cc. More information on the Shared Ministry is available by calling 541-676-9970.

Heppner to host chess tournament

Heppner will have the honor of hosting a regional chess tournament this Saturday, Feb. 2, at Heppner Elementary School.

The tournament, part of the Chess for Success program, is the regional tournament covering Morrow, Umatilla, Gilliam, Union and Wallowa counties. Check-in will begin at 7:30 a.m. with tournament play to begin at 8 a.m.

Local kindergarten through fifth-grade students who qualified for the regional tournament are Jackson Lehman, Tyson Vawser, Cedie Dayandante, Gavin Hanna, Mason Lehman, Kendall Dowdy, Hannah Palmer, Gracey DeLoach, Felix Mathew and Jonathan Waddell.

The sixth- through eighth-grade team is made up of Joe Jones, Alex Lindsay, Jimmy Adams, Xavier Glover and Zach Bredfield.



Local students concentrate over their chess boards in preparation for the Chess for Success regional tournament this Saturday at HES. -Contributed photo

Chess for Success organizes annual regional and state championship tournaments for elementary, middle and high school students. The tournaments started as the OMSI Tournament in 1967. Forty-six players in grades four through eight participated in the first tournament. Now,

the organization reports that thousands of students in kindergarten through 12th grade participate in 24 regional tournaments throughout Oregon.

The 2013 State Tournaments will be held March 15 and 16 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland.

ISD TO BUY IPADS

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board meeting and at the Dec. 4 work session that state school funding for the next biennium was estimated to be at the \$5.7 billion level. He said that, while the budgeted number for kindergarten through grade-12 funding was lower, the total purchasing power was \$6.4 billion, which includes \$256 million in PERS reform. Mulvihill said that the \$5.7 billion proposal amount is a starting point for the legislature, noting the Democrat majority in the house and senate. He said that he thought the K-12 budget would end up to be more than \$6.15 billion, which is the current budgeted amount.

According to Mulvihill, "By including PERS reform cost savings in the budgeted amount, the governor is telling the legislature they have to deal with PERS." He also said, "This is the first budget in 10 years above the current service level and the first budget in five years that doesn't rely on one-time government stimulus dollars."

Mulvihill warned the board that administrators in larger urban districts have voiced complaints about "carrying" smaller, rural districts and said that he anticipates the issue to emerge sometime down the road. He also said that state funding for ESDs is also under scrutiny, with a state proposal to move \$120 million out of ESD budgets. He said he anticipates less funding for ESDs as state monies become tight.

Mulvihill said that Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber's state budget plan, which prioritizes preschool to age-20 education, devalues law enforcement, and that attempts to tackle PERS reform, at least in theory, has been "brilliant." He also commented that Kitzhaber has done a "tremendous" job.

Mulvihill's Eastern Promise plan, which coordinates education among some Eastern Oregon high schools, community colleges and universities, and allows high school students

to take college courses and receive college credits, has received recognition and praise from Kitzhaber.

In other business, the board:

-heard a presentation from the district's accountant Chris Cockburn who reported that ISD had a clean audit with "no material weaknesses," but suggested the district be on the lookout for fraud and recommended that someone in a supervisory position look over checks.

-learned that the Oregon Education Investment Board has approved a template for the 2013 Achievement Compact. Under existing law, all districts and ESDs must submit completed achievement compacts to the OEIB prior to July 1.

-declared a 8,000 gal-

lon vaulted fuel storage tank a surplus item, with a minimum bid of \$9 thousand and bids to be opened on Feb. 25.

-received a financial update with the general fund collecting \$126,970 in basic school support, \$917 in property taxes and \$1,856 in county school funds; revenues for other funds including \$1,997.75 in food service operations, \$38,400 from the Morrow County United Recreation District, \$71,613.17 from the Lone Education Foundation; and an Lone Education Foundation Tier II grant for an OMSI trip for \$3,360.

-voted to increase the district's support budget to \$72,000 to allow for the purchase of the iPads.

-announced the next meeting will be held Feb. 26.

Parish celebrates Condon retirement



Members of the community joined members of St. Patrick's and St. William's Catholic parishes last Sunday in a coffee hour celebrating the retirement of long-time parish priest Father Gerry Condon. Top: Father Condon (right) joins the rest of the attendees in listening to Joe Lindsay perform a song in honor of the occasion. Bottom: Area resident and rancher Pam Wunderlich takes a moment to wish Father Condon well. -Photos by April Sykes

Justice Court Report

Morrow County Justice of the Peace Ann Spicer has released the following Justice Court Report.

-Deborah Lavonne Evans, 49, of Heppner was

found guilty of Driving While Suspended - Violation and fined \$435.

-Michelle Alldritt-Holtz, 37, of Heppner was found guilty of Maintaining

a Dog as a Public nuisance and fined \$200.

-Kassandra Gaines, 25, of Heppner was found guilty of Initiating a False Report and fine \$750.



The previous water source in Jan Vikas Samiti. -Contributed photo

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