



Disaster Warehouse Newsletter

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March-April 2017

Dream on Hold

Larry and Karen Fite have felt God's call to help Native Americans since their teens. As young people dating during the 1970s, they dreamed of traveling and working with missions to Native American people in the U.S. After their marriage in 1975, they were faced with needing to care for disabled and ill family members, so they put their dreams on hold for a time. In their church, Gandy's Cove United Methodist Church, in Falkville, Alabama, they became involved with the missions activities.

Years passed, and then about ten years ago, while delivering UMCOR kits put together by the UMW at Gandy's Cove to the Disaster Warehouse in Decatur, Alabama, the Fites met Director Ray Crump. Ray encouraged them to stay and help in the Warehouse that day.

“Ray was always encouraging and eager for us to help in spite of whatever physical problems we may have,” Karen remembers. This encouragement was particularly meaningful to the Fites since Larry Fite has Parkinson's disease.

“Ray has a talent for seeing past the disabilities and seeing where our talents

are and where we can best be used by God,” Karen said. The first time they stayed to help, Ray asked Larry to help with identifying donated medications and labeling them for appropriate use. As Larry is a retired Medical doctor, the task fit his abilities perfectly.

A UMW friend asked if the Fites would be interested in going on an Appalachia mission in 2015. Larry knew this was one he could be a part of, in spite of his disability.

“We traveled to the Hinton Rural Life Center in Hayesville, N.C. with a team of volunteers, and helped with a painting project,” Karen said. Larry worked hard and met the challenges that arose with dignity.

In 2016, Karen and Larry began talking again about the dreams they had of helping Native Americans in their younger days 40 years prior. They decided they weren't getting any younger and if they were going to make those dreams come true, the time was now.

So Karen contacted the Volunteers in Mission (VIM) office of the United Methodist Church and asked if there were any mission



Linda Garriott, left, and her husband, Dr. Charles Garriott, are shown during their visit to the Warehouse in November of 2016.

opportunities for older adults -- one with a disability – who were called to work with Native Americans.

Of the three mission possibilities Karen received from VIM, the first to respond to her query was Linda Garriott, the director of the Tree of Life Mission on Rosebud Reservation located in Mission, South Dakota.

“We felt an immediate connection with Linda and we knew this was the mission God was calling us to be part of,” Karen said.

“We began gathering items to send to the Garriotts at the Tree of Life Mission in February, 2016. In March, we realized the outpouring of donations was far greater than we could afford to mail by USPS, so we called Ray for advice.”

As a result, volunteers from Gandy’s Cove UMC in Falkville, and Southside Baptist Church Women on Mission group from Decatur worked at least once a week through March and April to prepare the donations at the Warehouse.

Once the word was out about the project, many other churches made donations, including Hamby’s Chapel UMC, Eva UMC, Falkville First UMC, First UMC in Decatur,

Asbury UMC in Madison, Madison UMC, First Baptist in Decatur, Calvary Church in Chattanooga, Tenn, First Baptist Church in Clinton, Tenn, Eva Senior Center and many other volunteers from churches visiting the UMCOR warehouse on the days packing was taking place.

The shipment from the Warehouse included UMCOR health kits and school kits, along with shoes, clothing, toys and many other items from the Warehouse. The shipment arrived in South Dakota while the group of volunteers from Gandy’s Cove was there on a mission trip. They were able to see the needs first-hand and experience the gratitude of the Lakota Sioux Reservation staff and Tree of Life Mission.

The Gandy’s Cove group is planning another mission trip to the Reservation for 2018 and volunteers are welcome.

In November of 2016, Linda and Charles Garriott came to visit the Warehouse to see how things were done and to express their gratitude for the much needed supplies.



Linda Garriott holds one of the 1000 school kits sent by the Warehouse to the Mission on the Lakota Reservation in South Dakota. With her are Larry Fite of Gandy’s Cove UMC Church in Falkville, Alabama, and Shakira, a Lakota Reservation staff member.

Shoebox Success Story

Sara Flores is a missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries serving in church development and community ministries in Ecuador, working with the Evangelical United Methodist Church of Ecuador. Her husband, Dakin Cook, is a retired Global Ministries missionary. The couple lives in Quito, Ecuador. Sara's work in Ecuador places an emphasis on diaconal ministries, supporting congregations in the development of projects that respond to the prioritized needs of the congregations and communities.

Following the earthquake in Ecuador in 2016, shoeboxes that had been delayed in customs for almost one year, were finally released and given to missionaries to distribute in Ecuador. ***"It was such a tremendous blessing for the children who were displaced to receive the gifts. They came at the perfect time,"*** said Sara.

Sara and her husband visited the Warehouse on Tuesday, March 28, 2017. Several local volunteers lunched and visited with them, sharing stories and fellowship. Sara and Dakin expressed deep appreciation to United Methodist churches who support their ministry in Ecuador through the Disaster Warehouse.

The Methodist Church in Ecuador is a young, growing church with twenty congregations and seven new mission initiatives. ***"The churches are sustained both in rural and urban areas by a***

wonderful commitment on the part of our Pastors," said Sara. She said local tithes and offerings given by members cover only the basic support for the pastors and many churches need buildings or parsonages.

There are three mission priorities at this time – Integral Ministry for Children, building new churches and parsonages, and Pastoral support.

To contribute support for any of these ministries, visit the web site at www.umcmision.org/Give-to-Mission. You may send an email with details of your gift to Sara at: ssdd16@hotmail.com.



Sara Flores and her husband, Dakin Cook, who are UM missionaries in Ecuador, are shown presenting a banner to the Disaster Warehouse during their visit on March 28, 2017.

umdisasterwarehouse.com

The website is down for maintenance. For information about The United Methodist Disaster Warehouse, please contact The Executive Director Ray Crump at 220 Hwy 31 So., Building. F, Decatur, AL 35603
256-341-9961

Beds Were Us

Following the tornados in Phil Campbell, Ala., the UM church provided a bunk house for out-of-state Volunteers in Mission (VIM) teams. When the Long Term Recovery Committee was finishing up with helping the last displaced family, and there were no more apartments or houses available in Marion County, the committee decided it was time for this family to have a permanent home since they had been moved three times in two years. The children had been moved to three different schools in this time. So the bunk house was converted to a home for them and the bunk beds and mattress were given by the NW District to the Warehouse.

Now these same beds and mattresses will be used by volunteer fire fighters from throughout Alabama. The beds will be set up in the facilities of the local Alabama Forestry Commission that are located in areas of the State where forest fires are most prevalent.



Personnel from the Alabama Forestry Commission are shown on March 28, 2017 at the Disaster Warehouse after loading bunkbeds and mattresses that will be used by out-of-area volunteer firefighters as needed across the state of Alabama. Loading the beds were Vincent M. Barrios (not shown), Albert Mayo, Chris Home, and Jason Downs.

God is good and we are His hands and feet. - Ray Crump, Disaster Warehouse Director

If you or your family/friends need disaster assistance your local Disaster Coordinator will gladly assist you. UMC Conference Disaster Coordinators are listed below.

North Alabama	Randy Burbank	205-907-2657	Randy.burbank@umcna.org
Tennessee and Memphis	Angela Overstreet	615-329-1177	Angela.overstreet@tnumc.com
Alabama-West FL	Amelia Fletcher	251-978-8384	amelia@gulfshoresumc.org
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South Georgia	Luis Morales	478-335-6678	morhill@gmail.com
Holston	Jim Fetzer	865-805-8290	jfa@tds.net
Mississippi	Kenny McGill	662-416-1981	msumcor@mississippi-umc.org