

ChooseAneed

A 501(c) 3 Organization

Identifying, Defining, Publicizing, and Meeting the lifesaving needs of others - one need at a time.

A Quarterly Newsletter

No: 1 Issue - Jan 2008

Our first Video

The first ChooseAneed video has been posted on the front page to our website. You can also watch and download a higher quality version at the following web address:

<http://gallery.mac.com/brianmary#100066>

We are now a 501(c) 3

ChooseAneed.org is now a 501(c) 3 and all of your donations are tax deductible as allowed by US laws.



A new partner

We have recently partnered with an up and coming musician. His music is featured in our video and the work of ChooseAneed will be featured in his concerts. You can visit his website at: <http://myspace.com/matthewcurtisthien>

Matthew Curtis Thien



His debut CD will be released soon and a portion of each CD sale will go to fund a need on our website.

Why ChooseAneed?

Brian tells some of the history of ChooseAneed and why they started this organization. You can find this article on the back page.

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Send us an e-mail: ChooseAneed@yahoo.com

Engeye Clinic

Engeye clinic has grown rapidly this year. Learn more about the needs you helped meet by going to our website.



Water flows

from the brand new wells you helped us purchase this past year.

First a few facts

Here in North Carolina we are experiencing a severe drought and water has been in the news frequently. Did you know that we, the average citizen of the United States, will use an average of 75-80 gallons of clean water each day? Many of us, myself included, will do this without even thinking about the amount we are using each day. Did you know that in Africa the average daily use is only 2- 3 gallons? Did you know that the women and children of Africa and Asia are estimated to walk an average of 3.75 miles each day to collect water? Did you know that much of this water is from unclean sources like swamps and mud-holes? Did you know that after collecting this water these women and children will often carry the water balanced on their heads and in their arms? Did you know that this water load typically weighs 44lbs!



Clean water pouring forth from one of the new wells you helped purchase this year.

A few personal thoughts

I did not know much of this before Mary and I first travelled to Africa. In Africa I was amazed at the fact that these women and children could balance the water jugs on their head. I did not even realize how heavy they were until we tried to help gather water. The village we were staying in had a well and so the walk back from the well was only about a

city block or two. It was from this experience and ones that followed on a subsequent trip that we felt compelled to help start ChooseAneed.

The Results

Helping meet this need can seem insurmountable when faced alone. However, this year through the people ChooseAneed has brought together you helped us meet this need for five villages. The Uganda Village Project has volunteers on the ground who are working with local villages and government officials to create these wells. What they lacked was a small sum of capital to implement the projects. You helped provide that piece of the puzzle and working together we helped save lives this year.

Did you know that you had personally helped save a child's life this year? Did you know that you made someone's life better? Did you know that it was so easy? - Now you know.

Now let us see what we can do in 2008. Thank you for choosing to care. - Brian

(the facts mentioned in this article were taken from the UN report on Gender and Water)



Why ChooseAneed?

Do what you can for those you can.

We are often asked why we started ChooseAneed and what we hope to accomplish.

Mary and I have been on several trips overseas for different purposes, some medical, some church related, and some related to college. On each of these trips our eyes were opened to the vast differences in the way we live in the developed world and the way others must live in the developing world. On each of these trips we saw many problems that I call "needs". Many of these problems, or needs, were small things that I thought to myself "I could help with that", "We could meet that need".

A Church Story.

On one of our first trips, the group we were with must have been feeling the same thing as they were personally confronted by the richness of our lives. We had gone to a very rural Church service in Africa, an area so rural that we just drove over grasslands without a road to reach the Church. At the end of this service, the offering plate was passed and without any prior planning everyone in the group did their usual thing and placed money in the offering plate. I think many of us gave 10 or 20 dollars. We unwittingly gave a relative fortune to that Church and it was a huge deal. The typical offering may have totaled one US dollar but we had just given over 200 US dollars. To put this in perspective, consider a Church in the US that typically collects 250,000 dollars in a year. Our donation was the equivalent of a small group of strangers stopping by one morning and dropping a check for 500,000 dollars in the offering plate. The Church was so excited and many in the group felt great but I was somewhat conflicted for many reasons. We had given from our excess while the usual members had given sacrificially. The local members were giving up food or education or medicine when they gave money to the Church. I was maybe giving up a soda or a coffee. The donation was not bad and I think I learned later that the Church used it to build a new building and to help the surrounding community, but it opened my eyes to the fact that my excess was their riches. The

children who would swarm me for my used water bottle made me realize my castoffs were their treasures. It was very overwhelming and years later I am still processing these trips. It was experiences like this one and many others equally as powerful that brought Mary and I to the point of considering starting ChooseAneed.

A few Cows?

On our last trip to Africa, Uganda, we were again confronted with many needs and a desire to help. We did not want to just hand out money or simply enrich one person with our gifts. We wanted the funds we had raised to be distributed fairly, to help the community, to be used in a way that would save or impact the most lives. It was through this kind of searching that we came across a "cow project". We learned that the community we were staying in had worked for over two years on an idea for a community cow project. They had drawn up papers, had meetings, identified needs, identified responsibilities, and created a budget and five year plan for the cattle and how they would be used. They were only lacking the money to buy the cattle. Here was the answer to our desire to give responsibly and in a way that did not make us the rich Americans and them the poor beggars. They knew about cattle and they knew how to use them to better their community and they had a plan in place. We simply provided the capital to make the project a reality. We have since learned that the herd has almost doubled in size.

On a Napkin.

Shortly after making the decision to donate to this project we were in a cafe in Uganda and on a napkin we sketched out the concept of ChooseAneed as a way to bring these kinds of giving opportunities back home. We believed that if others at home knew of the need and knew of a way to make a difference, knew that they could help many people by meeting this need, that they would choose to give from their excess. We believed that it was important that 100% of the donation go to the project. We believed that it was important for the donor to see the results of their donation. We believed that there were plenty of small needs like the cow project that would never be funded by large funding agencies and that ChooseAneed could meet this need. ChooseAneed could serve as a network

bringing together those with the needs, those with the knowledge to meet the needs, those with the power, and finally those with the funds to meet these needs. This was how and why ChooseAneed was born and I am thankful for your support this year. I truly feel like we are making a difference and saving lives as we carry out this work. I believe that working together we are saving more lives with this work than I am in my pursuit of medicine, and not just saving lives but improving lives. We are helping other humans who were simply born into a different set of circumstances and we are doing so in a way that does not reduce their humanity or deny them their dignity. It's not simple charity work, it's not a handout, it's not an entitlement, but rather it's a team effort to empower others to help meet their own needs and the needs that surround them. Let's help those who want to help themselves. Let's make the world a more just place together.

What next?

When I share ChooseAneed with others I often remind them that this is not just about raising money. There are many ways to help us and there are many ways to help others. If you are already involved in some form of charitable work, if you are already giving some portion of your time to improve the world then we applaud you and pray that you continue. We hope you will keep us in mind when you meet someone who might connect with this project. We do not simply need donors. We need people who find the needs, people who screen the needs, people who have been on the mission trips and know of a need we should put on the web site. We need people with the knowledge and skills to meet those needs. Yes, every monetary donation will help improve and save lives but we also know that there are many other worthy groups doing a similar work. If ChooseAneed is where you want to invest your time or your charitable donations we welcome you and thank you for choosing to join us in this project. We will promise to give 100% of your donation to the need you choose and we will post the results of your donation on our website when the need is completed. Thank you for a great year, I am looking forward to what we will accomplish together in 2008.

With Hope - Brian

ChooseAneed.org is a 501(c)3 organization.