

Canada: villagemissions.ca USA: www.village-missions.org

COUNTRY Matters

ANNUAL REPORT

OVER 65 YEARS OF EQUIPPING THE COUNTRY CHURCH


Village Missions
Keeping Country Churches Alive

WWW.VILLAGE-MISSIONS.ORG
COUNTRY Matters



A View From the Country

with Brian Wechsler, Executive Director

I have a friend who frequently mentions the special times he has, sitting in front of the crackling fireplace of his home.

He finds it relaxing to sit and reflect, to see what God has done, and to consider what God will do.

As we finished the year 2013, I found myself thinking about some of the critical issues that we face out here in the country. The problems of the inner city were once isolated in the inner city. That's no longer the case. They've impacted virtually every one of the communities Village Missions serves.

Hurting families, bad choices, unfortunate circumstances – all create far less than what is often romanticized as “life in the country.” And I realize that each one of our Village Missionaries faces an increased responsibility in 2014.

I know from my own experience as a Village Missionary that helping the hurting can become draining. Who helps the helpers when they're feeling spent, when they are discouraged, when they feel that they have no more to give?

In this issue you'll learn about couples that play a critical role in

Village Missions—our District Representatives. Former Village Missionaries themselves, they help our missionaries stay the course. They are “pastors to the pastors”—understanding the unique challenges of rural ministry and coming alongside our Village Missionaries to provide support. And not just our Village Missionaries, but also the leadership in the churches we serve, so that both are equipped to reach their communities for Christ.

Village Missions has always believed in a supported ministry. And in today's difficult world, that's more important than ever!

Standing with the Country Church,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Brian Wechsler
Executive Director, Village Missions

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

Have you ever heard of our District Representatives? Usually you get to hear about the Village Missionaries themselves, so you may not have heard of these good people. You see, for each region Village Missions serves, there is a District Representative couple overseeing it. Some care for as many as 41 churches in their district, and because the District Representatives served as Village Missionary pastors at some point before, they seem to know exactly how to help our folks out on the field.

In order for Village Missions to preach the Word and love the people, we need to make sure our Village Missionaries have the kind of support they need. That includes training and encouraging, and of course, praying. Here we're talking about how we do those things. I think you'll enjoy hearing about what's on the horizon.

Since this issue of the Country Matters Annual Report's theme



is Equipping—the E in FIRE—we thought it'd be best to tell you the stories of our District Representatives, so you can see what they are seeing, and know how to pray.

If you don't remember FIRE, let's review. Each letter in FIRE illustrates what Village Missions is all about.

F is for new Fields—places where a church might close without Village Missions' help.

I is for Investing—it takes money and people to help supply spiritual leadership for rural places.

R is for Recruiting—we look for leaders who feel called by God to small

communities.

E is for Equipping—we seek always to equip our leaders and the communities they serve.

Read on to learn more about these amazing folks who equip our Village Missionaries to serve the Country Church.

PASTORS TO PASTORS

Take a look at the list below to see many of the ways District Representatives do their jobs:

- **Encouraging** the Village Missionaries (this includes hosting conferences, helping with conflict resolution, bi-annual visits, phone calls, reaching out to wives and children, and many more things).
- **Serving** as liaison between Village Missions' leadership, missionaries, and the churches themselves.
- **Recruiting and mentoring** new Village Missionaries
- **Meeting** with new fields.

WITH ALL OUR HEARTS...

This year, we honor two retiring District Representative couples, for their longstanding service to the Country Church.



John & Gloria James
*42 Years
of Service*



Walt & Rosanna Jacoby
*31 Years
of Service*



Twice a year, our District Representatives make their rounds to all the churches in their districts, taking time with each and every Village Missionary couple. During their time there, they meet with the church boards, spend time with the Village Missionary families, and encourage and uplift however they can. Our Village Missionaries have taken on a big job, and the support we can offer is indispensable.

“Village Missionaries need encouragement...always. Their fields deal with real-life problems ... like suicide, or sometimes their own families having illness. Just the real bumps in the road that are distracting and discouraging. They need encouragement that they are doing a good job, that they are called by God.”

– *District Representative Gil Doebler*

People doing kingdom work don't always get to feel the rewards...not

every day, at least. But the District Representatives have a unique view, as they see ALL the fields, and can keep the big picture better in mind. Sharing that perspective with the Village Missionaries is essential to perseverance.

“They might feel like, ‘We just keep on doing the same work over and over, wondering if it's really what we're supposed to be doing.’ But preaching the Word and loving the people does the job. Sometimes our missionaries just have to be reminded of that.”

– *District Representative John James*

That's really what our District Representatives do...they help our Village Missionaries keep doing their job, to Preach the Word and Love the People.

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH

With such a broad range of churches in each territory, our District Representatives truly hold a unique perspective on the Country Church. They see the big picture, yet know each church personally at the same time.

Here are some of the amazing things they are seeing.

“We see lives transformed. We see drug addicts come to Christ and serve in churches. We see stubborn atheists come to faith and follow the Lord. Marriages are healed, ministered to by our missionaries as they give the Word of God. Children come to Christ in DVBS, missionaries are geared into discipleship. We see that happening on a regular basis. **Good things [are] happening out there in Rural America.**”

– *District Representative Walt Jacoby*

“**Good things [are] happening out there in Rural America.**”

And they also know what incredible, quality people we have serving the country church.

“I’ve been really impressed by the quality of people out there serving. **Sometimes folks get the impression that the best pastors go to big churches... but our missionaries don’t need to take a back seat to anybody!** A lot of people out there need Christ, and our guys are doing the job.”

– *District Representative Greg Petrie*

Maybe the most encouraging part is the growth they get to watch!

“It’s been exciting to see God moving churches from point A to point B on the growth continuum. There is nothing stagnant about what we are doing, there is never a boring moment. **Lots of challenges, but we love watching what God is doing.**”

– *District Representative Jon Hansen*

CONFERENCES

Rejuvenating Village Missionaries... and Their Families

At least once a year, the District Representatives host a conference for the Village Missionaries in their districts. It's a very important time that provides a great sense of unity for the Village Missionaries, who seldom have a chance to spend time with other folks doing exactly what they are doing

"We try to use our staff conference as a chance to give our missionaries a little fun, and also to help them grow in any areas they want to discuss with us. We make it both spiritually uplifting, and a time to connect with other missionaries...and to relax too."

– Jon Hansen

It's a time for reflection, recreation, and edification...and for some Village Missionary families, this is the only vacation they ever take while they are serving.



"Sometimes it is **the family vacation.** Right there on the beach. The whole family. It's fun! The wife doesn't have to cook, she just has to get all the kids to dinner!"

– Trish Doebler

And the conferences really do build up the whole family.

'Conference is good for children, because they feel a part of the whole. They see other kids who are like them, whose parents are also Village Missionaries.'

– Trish Doebler

Training, resources, relaxation, and a time to connect with the leadership of Village Missions...conferences play an important part in Equipping our Village Missionaries.

“For it is for this we labor and strive...” (1 Timothy 4:10)

Purpose Statement: Village Missions exists to glorify Jesus Christ by developing spiritually vital churches in rural North America.

Combined US & Canada statistics:

Salvation decisions in 2013:

Adult: 409
Children: 498

New Membership:

Adult: 355
Children: 73

Baptisms:

Adult: 209
Children: 259

Rededications & other decisions:

Adult: 1,236
Children: 488

145,397 visits by missionaries over the year, **149,373 hours** spent in visiting.

Median Sunday morning attendance (per church):

US: 49
Canada: 31

United States (as of June, 2013): 186 fields served by Village Missions with 79 fields or 42% in need of help from Village Missions for the missionary's salary/health insurance. 187 couples serving as Village Missionaries, 6 District Representative Couples, 4 Administrators (Executive Director, Assistant Director, Director of Stewardship and C.F.O.) 3 full-time office staff and 2 part-time staff.

Canada (as of June, 2013): 23 fields served (2 Associate) with 8 fields or 35% in need of help from Village Missions for missionary's salary, 2 District Representative Couples, 1 Regional Administrator, and 1 office staff.



New fields

“Each field has its own personality. Some are very rural and isolated, some are more suburban. Some have become very difficult, with a struggling economy and the same problems you’d attribute to big cities... dysfunctional families, drug abuse, poverty...things you don’t normally think of in rural America...” - *Greg Petrie*

Sierraville, CA, March 2013. Sierraville was a former Village Missions field. Located at the Junction of Highway 49 and Highway 89, about 30 miles north of Truckee and 20 miles south of Graeagle is the small town of Sierraville - population: 290. Originally a ranching community, Sierraville has become a bedroom community for those who commute to Reno and Truckee for work. In March of 2013, new Village Missionaries Nate and Amanda Praytor arrived on the field; at that point only 18 people attended on a regular basis. Since arriving in Sierraville, they have seen growth within the church with over 30 attending now and many other positive things happening in the community.

Falmouth, MI, November 2012. Located on the Clam River with rolling farmland among groves of trees in the northwest township of Clam Union, Falmouth, MI, is home to dairy farmers, loggers, and those associated with the logging industry. Falmouth is located about twenty miles west of Cadillac, MI, and about fifteen miles from Jennings. After watching the transformation that took place at Jennings Community Church over the past few years, the Falmouth church sought leadership

from Village Missions. Village Missionaries Seth and Julie Finch began serving the church in mid-November. Seth said, “One of the biggest encouragements since arriving in Falmouth has been seeing the church come alive. The church members are hungry for God’s Word and have been striving to reach out to the community around them. We are also encouraged by the youth ministry.” Seth said, “Answering His call and witnessing God at work in the church has been very encouraging.”

Lincoln Center, ME, November 2012. Several miles north of Lincoln, ME, on Highway 2 beside the Penobscot River and nestled in among the trees is the little town of Lincoln Center, ME. People in the area work at the local paper mill, the school, and several other local businesses. Since arriving in July, Village Missionaries Clarence and Marinda Blessard have begun meeting the local people and building friendships with the people.

Pocono Lake, PA, May 2013. One hundred miles west of New York City, north of I-80, lies the little church of Pocono Lake, PA, founded in 1986. Nestled away in the landscape of trees and lakes just off of Highway 940 sits Community Bible Church of Pocono Lake. This little church is awaiting leadership from Village Missions as we search for a missionary to serve in this new field. Please pray that God would provide a couple to go and serve in this small community.

Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets (U.S.)

Income by Source:

	2013		2012	
Donors	\$ 940,318	17%	\$ 778,776	15%
Donors - Designated to Missionaries	2,249,906	41%	2,303,933	45%
Churches served by Village Missions	1,329,694	24%	1,242,039	24%
Village Missionaries	790,930	15%	677,216	13%
Other revenue	140,011	3%	155,909	3%
Total income	5,450,859	100%	5,157,873	100%

Operating Expenses:

Village Missionaries	4,344,638	78%	4,680,615	79%
District Representatives	413,532	7%	356,640	6%
Retirement Facilities	83,349	2%	84,314	1%
Subtotal: Rural Ministry Programs	4,841,519	87%	5,121,569	86%
Administration	554,455	10%	607,208	10%
Development	144,373	3%	150,198	3%
Total expenses	5,540,347	100%	5,878,975	100%

Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets

	(89,488)	(721,102)
--	----------	-----------

Pension Related Charges Other Than
Net Periodic Pension Costs

95,355	(1,264,465)
--------	-------------

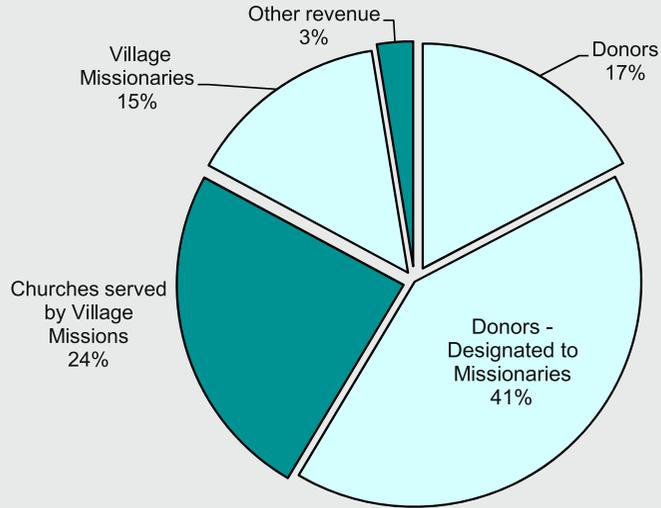
Net Assets, beginning

391,092	2,376,659
---------	-----------

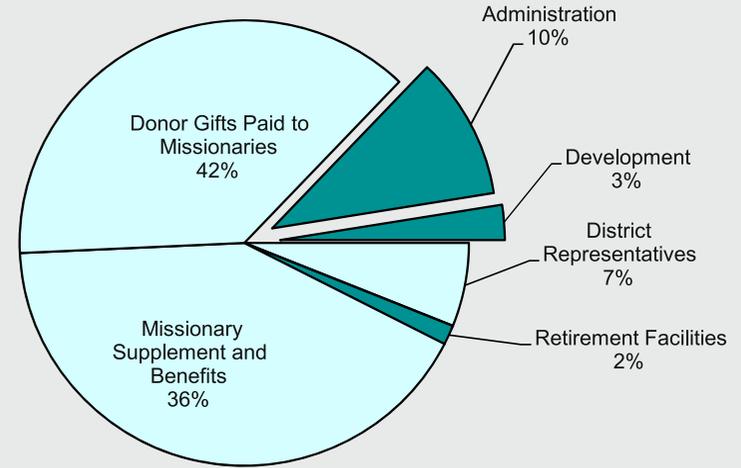
Net Assets, ending

\$ 396,959	\$ 391,092
-------------------	-------------------

General Fund Income and Expenses, for the year ended June, 2013 (U.S.)



Income by Source \$5,450,859 (U.S.)



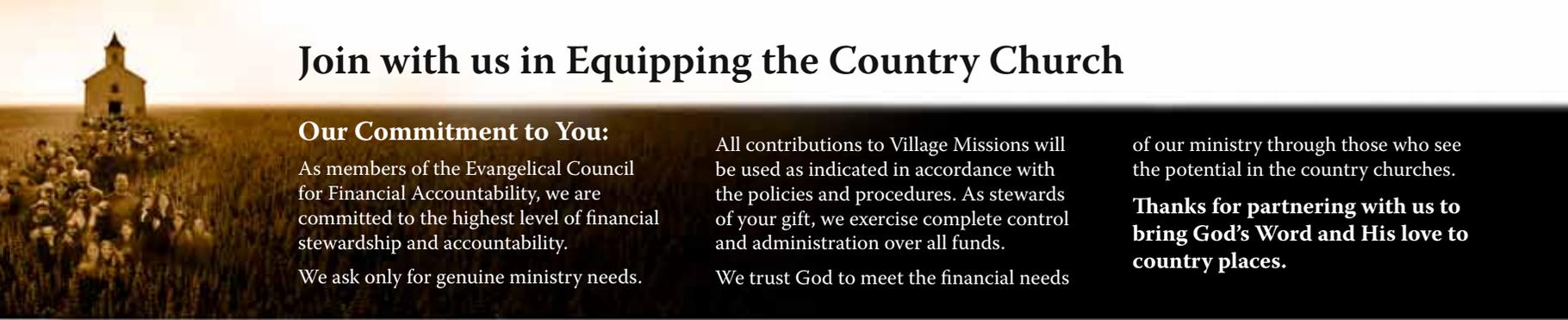
Operating Expenses \$5,540,347 (U.S.)



Village Missions Board of Directors

Front row from left: Keith Walker (Vice-Chairman), Glen Hanson (Chairman), Gil Doebler, Bill Nicholson, Michael Kane

Back row from left: Roy Bell, Don Stuart (Secretary/Treasurer), Jerry Kennedy, Ken Moore, Peter Corak



Join with us in Equipping the Country Church

Our Commitment to You:

As members of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, we are committed to the highest level of financial stewardship and accountability.

We ask only for genuine ministry needs.

All contributions to Village Missions will be used as indicated in accordance with the policies and procedures. As stewards of your gift, we exercise complete control and administration over all funds.

We trust God to meet the financial needs

of our ministry through those who see the potential in the country churches.

Thanks for partnering with us to bring God's Word and His love to country places.



P.O. Box 197

Dallas, OR 97338-0197

Keeping Country Churches Alive