BBF’s Hurricane Harvey Relief Efforts Continue in Texas

USA Today labeled Rockport, Texas, the largest city in Aransas County, as “Ground Zero of Hurricane Harvey.” As expected from that assessment, every facility in the Aransas County Independent School District sustained damage from flooding or intense winds, and some facilities are still closed. The impact on the student body was devastating as well. When Hurricane Harvey hit the school district, student enrollment was 3,274. Due to Hurricane Harvey, that number fell over 20% to 2,547.

After dialogue with school district employees and an in-person needs assessment conducted by BBF staff, Brother’s Brother Foundation donated $365,000 to assist in the rebuilding process. Kathy Henderson, Chief Financial Officer of ACISD, recently expressed that Aransas County ISD is so thankful for the support and donation we received from Brother’s Brother Foundation. We are using the funds to purchase new furniture, equipment and supplies for some of our high school, middle school and Little Bay Primary classrooms. Brother’s Brother is proud to assist a resilient, inspiring community like Aransas County in its time of need.
President’s Report
by Luke Hingson

Brother’s Brother is celebrating its 60th Anniversary this year, and with that milestone has come plenty of reflection. A celebration is planned for Thursday, September 20th, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In the first two months of 2018, product contributions totaled $11,381,942 and product shipments totaled $10,167,765. Direct shipments and medical mission trip support went to people in need in 35 countries. BBF is growing both in the number of people served and in the scope of our programs. While agricultural shipments are no longer a focus area for us, disaster response constitutes an ever-increasing portion. So far this year, BBF has worked in both Puerto Rico and St. Croix, assisting them with recovery efforts from Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Also, BBF shipped to new sites in Nigeria and Iraq, always reaching out to new partners and avenues to get our resources where they are most needed. In these first two months, the BBF Medical Program sent 9.5 containers of assistance to countries in need while BBF’s Education Program sent 7.5 container equivalents holding more than 95 tons of library books, textbooks and teaching materials.

However, we cannot do our work without our generous donor organizations. Incoming medical donations for these first two months are valued at $6,361,539, which includes 119,869 bottles and tubes of medicine. We’ve also had supply donations from our partner hospitals across Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania and are beginning discussions to take over collections from Pinnacle Health near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

All of this has been made possible by you, our loyal supporters. Many of you have been watching and supporting our work for decades. As we travel the region talking about the organization, our staff rarely does a presentation where someone doesn’t have their own BBF story. Whether it’s hosting a dinner for visiting doctors who had participated in one of Dr. Hingon’s trips or visited an orphanage in Haiti and encountered products from the United States already in use, you’ve shared these moments with us. On September 20th we’ll be taking an evening to celebrate all of these stories and the ones yet to come. Please join us at this gala as we celebrate BBF’s six decades of connecting people’s resources to people’s needs, and all of the opportunities to continue this work into the future.

BBF NCA Welcomes Brenda Rian

The BBF team would like to introduce its newest member! Brenda Rian joined us in February as the Assistant Director of Aid and Internal Controls in our National Capital Area office. Brenda brings with her a wealth of experience and knowledge. Brenda’s eye for detail will come in handy as she helps BBF to implement new data and inventory tracking to continuously improve the services that we provide to both our donors and recipients.

Speaking of detail work, Debbie Baucom is another member of the National Capital Area team that keeps things moving. Debbie is the Alternative Recycling Coordinator for BBF. Among other things, Debbie finds organizations that can use items that we can’t send to our recipients abroad. Working with local nursing programs, food pantries, and reprocessing groups, Debbie is able to find useful homes for many of the items that would otherwise end up in a landfill. Her tireless dedication to the work of BBF over the last five years has made a huge impact on the organization.

BBF Sends Books, Humanitarian Relief and Medical Equipment to Iraq

On February 14, 2018, BBF, in conjunction with LIFE for Relief and Development, shipped a 40’ container to the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. The container was loaded with 12 pallets of new and used medical books, new clothing and wheelchairs. The shipment was in the works for over eight months, during which period the borders were closed and reopened and closed again on multiple occasions. This mixed shipment of educational materials, medical equipment and humanitarian goods will assist in the provision of medical services to refugees and will help to clothe the many needy and displaced persons affected by the dire conditions in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. BBF is glad to have the opportunity to help people in need in areas of the world affected by wars, unrest and poverty.

BBF’s Continuing Work in Africa

In the first two months of 2018, BBF sent three containers to Africa. Two of the shipments were from Pittsburgh, and one was from BBF’s NCA warehouse. Two of these shipments, supporting medical facilities in Malawi and Zimbabwe, were arranged with partners that BBF has worked with previously. The shipment to Nigeria was arranged through a new partnership with St. Luke’s Anglican Church and its related hospital in Wusasa, Nigeria. The hope is that this Nigeria shipment is the first of two that BBF will send in collaboration with the Anglican Church in Wusasa, Nigeria. There are also planned shipments to Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe on the horizon, so stay tuned to BBF’s Facebook for news on those as they are loaded. (http://www.facebook.com/BrothersBrother)
BBF-Supported Medical Mission Trips

Hands on Global, Inc. Provides Care to Refugees in Greece

In response to massive humanitarian need, the members of Hands on Global, Inc. traveled to the Moria Refugee camp on the island of Lesvos, one of twelve refugee camps in Greece. The medical team, using 132 bottles of medication and several pounds of medical supplies provided by BBF, treated more than 600 patients in incredibly over-crowded conditions.

We Care To Share’s Medical Mission Trip to Chantal, Haiti

The Virginia-based Hands on Global, Inc. medical team recently traveled to the Chantal Dispensary in Chantal, Haiti to offer dental, medical and vision care. BBF provided 103 bottles of medication and several pounds of medical supplies to help provision the station as the team treated over a thousand patients. BBF has worked with We Care to Share for years and has supported eleven of its medical trips since 2013.

Hope Chest for Women’s Medical Mission Trip to Honduras

Hope Chest for Women, based in North Carolina, recently sent a medical team of 23 to Santa Barbara, Honduras for a week-long mission of care. With the help of 26 bottles of medication and 44 pounds of medical supplies from BBF, the team provided medical care at the La Vueltosa, Las Breas Chinda and El Palma Arada clinics as well as Eulogio High School. The teams saw more than 300 patients and assisted with 28 surgeries, offering compassionate and reassuring care. The team also spent time at a local orphanage, bringing along games, toys and sports equipment to help keep the children smiling.

BBF’s Mission Trip Program in 2018

In the first two months of 2018, BBF supplied medical supplies and pharmaceuticals to 76 medical mission trips to 27 countries.
Dr. Robert Hingson and the Peace Gun in the 1970s

By the end of the 1970s, Dr. Hingson’s “peace gun”—a device capable of delivering vaccines at high pressure at the rate of 1,000 patients an hour without the use of a needle—was still one of the world’s most important medical advances that few had ever heard of. Meanwhile, as one history book put it, “The World Health Organization had successfully used his gun in its mass immunization against smallpox, the only disease ever to be eradicated worldwide.” But there were yet many virulent diseases to combat around the world and so Dr. Hingson attempted to broaden support for Brother’s Brother’s inoculation program through any avenue available to him. One was the Rotary Club. In 1972 he became the president of the Oakland Rotary Club in Pittsburgh and was invited to elaborate on his humanitarian work. The club was moved and over the next few years support built within the local Rotary District 7300 for a way to support Dr. Hingson’s work. The club and district raised money to buy polio vaccines for Guatemala which resulted in the immunization of 700,000 children against polio. In 1978, Hingson was given the opportunity to address Rotary International at its convention in Tokyo, Japan. The audience was “entranced” by his message. It so happened that Rotary International had been in search of a world-scale program to support as a way of marking its 75th anniversary. When another Rotarian proposed the mass inoculation against polio as a worthy endeavor, Dr. Hingson found strong support within the organization. To test for viability, BBF and the Rotary collaborated on trial mission trip to the Philippines.

Given the extraordinary success of these models, Rotary International proposed to exclusively assume control of the polio eradication program from BBF. Dr. Hingson’s son, Luke—yet young and impetuous—expressed strong concern to the program’s transfer. This had been his father’s work after all and to transfer it, he believed, was to undercut his legacy. Dr. Hingson didn’t see it that way and gently told Luke, “Son, the Rotary has far greater resources than we have. It’s not about me. It’s not about credit. It’s always been about others.”

By this time, the doctor had immunized 13 million children against polio and other afflictions. The program was transferred to Rotary, becoming known as PolioPlus. As Dr. Hingson predicted, Rotary International went on raise $1.7 billion to inoculate over 2.5 billion children—becoming one of the first programs incubated by Brother’s Brother.