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## PET TV Special Approved by NBC KOMU-TV



Sarah Hill, newscaster for KOMU-TV Channel 8 in Columbia, Missouri is known for her award winning "Sarah's Stories." Sarah has traveled from mid-Missouri to Sri Lanka in pursuit of stories of extraordinary human interest, so going to Vietnam to film a "distribution" of PETs and wheelchairs was a perfect fit. What could be more exciting than interviewing and filming mobility impaired men, women and children on the ground one minute and, the next, seated upright, mobile, dignified, and filled with hope?

Sarah's career started in radio in Springfield, MO in the early 90's. She worked for 7 years as the main anchor at the CBS affiliate in Jefferson City, MO. In 2000, she returned back to her alma mater to work at KOMU. Here, she reports a weekly feature franchise called "Sarah's Stories", anchors KOMU News at 5, and helps students hone their storytelling skills. She has won numerous awards for news writing including a 2004 Mid-America Emmy and four regional Edward R. Murrow awards.

Sarah and KOMU-TV videographer Scott Schaefer, accompanied by PET co-founder Larry Hills, PET International volunteer executive director Steve Baima and retired nurse from Ashland, Missouri "Vee" Faschiotti joined up with a 9 member volunteer team from Hope Haven International Ministries (HHIM). Four hundred wheelchairs and 40 PETs were shipped to Vietnam by HHIM, a primary distribution partner for PET. The distribution occurred at Da Nang, a large city on the coast about midway between north and south Vietnam.

Volunteers from HHIM led by Val Brummell evaluated the recipients to determine the appropriate wheelchair or PET. Larry and Steve assembled and adjusted PETs to fit recipients. Physical and occupational therapists, and others specially trained were in charge of "seating". Vee, with the aid of an interpreter, conducted exit interviews. All the while, Sarah and Scott interviewed and filmed. They documented a snapshot of time illustrating the lives of our brothers and sisters, their



**Purpose:** The promotion of PET vehicles for individuals with disabilities who have no appropriate means of mobility; to coordinate PET work sites where PETs are constructed; to assist in the dissemination of vehicles to international agencies/sponsors.

#### **PET Affiliates**

PET MO—Columbia  
PET FL—Penney Farms  
PET TX—Luling  
PET TN—Murfreesboro  
PET FL—Tampa  
PET Southwest MO  
PET NY—East Jewett  
PET WA—Inland Northwest  
PET KS—Moundridge  
PET TX—San Antonio  
PET FL—Jacksonville  
New Life Center—  
Zambia, Africa  
PET—Cape Town,  
South Africa

#### **Affiliates forming**

PET Mexico—Progresso  
PET—Sierra Leone

plight without mobility, and their hopes and dreams for a future with mobility.

KOMU-TV Channel 8 will begin airing the PET series of Sarah's Stories in mid-Missouri in February 2007 with a 5 minutes segment each Monday evening at 6:00 pm. Then a 30 minute special will air on Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. *For more information on Hope Haven International Ministries, visit their website at [www.hopehaven.org](http://www.hopehaven.org).*

## **PET CO-FOUNDER LARRY HILLS RECEIVES AWARD!!!!**

**Congratulations** PET Co-founder Larry Hills has been awarded The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International's highest honor—Paul Harris Fellow. The citation reads, "...in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given for the furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations among peoples of the world." The Rotary Club of Orange Park, Florida, Inc., who nominated Larry for the award, is a key supporter of PET FLORIDA-Penney Farms.

## **PET International—A Growing Ministry**

What a year for PET and the thousands of people we serve! During this past year PET has expanded in the US to 11 Affiliate production and assembly sites. *See side bar for Affiliates list.* Additionally, PETs are being made and distributed in Kitwe, Zambia, and Cape Town, South Africa. And, recently, new production facilities are underway in Freetown, Sierra Leone and Nuevo Progreso, Mexico.

**US Highlights** In 2006 a PET Affiliate was opened in Moundridge, Kansas. Kirby and Chris Goering, friends of Larry and Laura Hills, started building PETs in their muffler shop. Kirby and Chris are committed Mennonite Christians and most excited about their new ministry.

Sid Martin and a great group from San Antonio, Texas, are building PETs in a rented airplane hanger. Additionally, they instigated the new PET project in Nuevo Progreso, Mexico and have worked out a novel agreement with the Mexican government that facilitates border crossing with PETs made in the US. What a dynamic group!

Tom Woodard teamed up with Charlie Downing and a group of others from Jacksonville, Florida, to establish Florida's third PET production facility. Starting out making parts for PET Florida-Penney Farms, the group decided in 2006 to build the entire PET. They are a great team. It is with much sadness that Tom reported Sam Gates, loyal volunteer PET builder/painter, passed away this fall.



Personal Energy Transportation  
PET International, Inc.

### Special points of interest:

- A bulk purchasing system was started to make larger orders for some of our suppliers of manufactured parts and in turn we receive a discounted price for all assembly sites.
- PETs are now also in Mongolia, Argentina, and Mali for a presence in 60 countries.
- PET TX—Luling built and shipped their 500th PET.
- Tom and Dallas Andrew in Napoleon, OH, have been long-term, dedicated part makers. They have produced and delivered 5,000+ painted, welded steel frames to various affiliates.

Please send gifts to:

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Columbia, MO 65201-3717

[www.petinternational.org](http://www.petinternational.org)

Email: [pet@petinternational.org](mailto:pet@petinternational.org)

501 c 3 non-profit

### International Highlights

Pastor John Pascoe is director of Opportunities to Serve Ministries (OTSM) in Mitchells Plain, Cape Town, South Africa. In 2005

Rev. Tommy and Mollie Watson from Westridge Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Florida introduced Pastor John and his wife Evelyn to PET and encouraged them to include mobility to their already burgeoning list of ministries including HIV Aids Orphanage, health care, school ministry, and much more. They met with Larry Hills for training and returned to South Africa sensing God's call to start building PETs. (Note the fiberglass in place of the traditional wooden bed in photo insert. Contact John Pascoe at [www.otsm@mweb.co.za](mailto:www.otsm@mweb.co.za) for more information.)



Steve Perry, is a Rotarian in the Rotary Club of Clifton, Bristol, UK. Steve retired in 2004 as Managing Director at Williams Ltd, a Building and Maintenance Company operating throughout the southern half of England. Steve is now the non-executive Chairman with more time to pursue his humanitarian passions in affiliation with Rotary International and Rotary UK. Steve, along with fellow Rotarians, is trying to set up a Rotary Africa Mobility Project.

Last year Steve went with two friends from his Rotary club, David Sutton and John Murphy, to Sierra Leone, the poorest country on the planet with more than half the population living on less than \$1 a day, one third of children not living past age 5 and adult life expectancy at 38 years. In his words, Steve writes, "we joined with other Rotarians building an extension on a VVFClinic in Freetown. Vesico Vaginal Fistula is a condition occurring after a difficult childbirth leaving women incontinent; there are 2 million women with this condition and only four clinics in the whole of Africa! We had the privilege of helping Mercy Ships, which is staffed by

volunteer doctors and medical staff who pay their own expenses. Before we went we agreed that our visit had to be more useful than simply spending a couple of weeks on a building project. During our short stay we were taken to see the New Steps project outside of Freetown, originally built to provide prosthetics and orthotics for polio victims and people who had lost limbs in the war."

"It was at New Steps that we had our first thrilling ride on a PET. Doesn't it just capture the imagination? The New Steps approach to disability is to try to create economic and social opportunity for their community. What better, we thought, than getting our Rotary Club to fund some PETs and perhaps we could promote a national Rotary trike project in the UK. We set about learning more about the needs of the disabled in developing countries and after talking to experts were soon convinced that we should be looking for more sustainable mobility solutions. We were told how wrongly assessed or badly fitted equipment can cause pressure sores or arthritis. We were told how some donated wheelchairs are more suited to Western hospitals than the rugged terrain of countries with poor infrastructure. What good is a donated wheelchair if it falls apart and cannot be maintained?

What better, we thought, than helping Africans to help themselves?

We want to work with the PET organization, already well known to New Steps, whose physiotherapists say that the PETs are providing a good solution to local needs. PETs are suited to the terrain, carry essential goods and are designed to have exceptionally low maintenance."

Steve and his friends are just at the point of trying to get the funding and final approvals necessary to set up a workshop in Sierra Leone to build PETs and wheelchairs. The aims of their project are to establish a sustainable mobility equipment workshop model that could be replicated in any developing country and to transfer knowledge for assessment, fitting, training in use and maintenance of wheelchairs and tricycles as well as helping to create economic opportunity. They admit to having much more to do but if all goes well hope to be in production in 2007.

PET Mexico-Progresso. That is the name selected by the coalition working to establish the first PET production and training facility in Mexico. A large cast of players is working toward that end including Sid Martin from San Antonio, Texas, who instigated the project. (Actually, it all started with a friend of Freddie Brown from Murfreesboro, Tennessee. You will have to get that story from Sid or Freddie who say it was a "God thing.") Involved in the project are Susan Hellums, Border Area Mission Coordinator with the United Methodist Church from McAllen, Texas, and her counterpart, Willie Berman, in Mexico; Elaine Hernandez, American Red Cross health delegate to Mexico; Alejandro Sousa, deputy director, of the Mexican Conciliate in McAllen, Texas; and Pastor Ruben Hudtler Grijalva from Nuevo, Progresso.

The project is well underway. A local board has been established to work with Pastor Ruben in directing the project. Construction has begun on the shop which will reside on the grounds of the UM Church at Nuevo Progresso. Elaine Hernandez hopes to incorporate some elements of health care into the project. She notes that diabetes and tuberculosis are widespread throughout Mexico. PETs are needed by scores of amputees suffering from advanced diabetes and other leg disabilities. She hopes this project will serve as a pilot and model paving the way for other similar facilities throughout impoverished regions of Mexico. Opportunities for visiting work teams from the US will be announced in early 2007 to help construct the shop and help equip it with essential tools. Stay tuned for updates.

These are truly exciting times for the PET mobility project. These highlights represent only a fraction of the day-to-day PET ministry performed by several hundred volunteers and supporters. Thank you for your continuing involvement and support of this ministry to "the least of these" who are our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus.



