

TBM board hears reports on far-flung ministries

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DALLAS—The Texas Baptist Men board of directors honored two longtime employees and heard reports on TBM volunteer ministries around the world during their Feb. 20 meeting.

The board presented the Finishing Well Award to Don Gibson, who retired in December as TBM executive director after serving the organization in a variety of roles across 40 years, and honored Jeanette Nichols, who retired after 25 years service in administrative assistant posts on the TBM staff.

Health and hygiene added to water ministry

Bob Young and Dee Dee Wint, co-vice presidents for the TBM water ministry, reported on well-drilling projects and water-filter distribution in Panama, India, Zambia and Ghana. Wint also described how the ministry's latest emphasis on health and hygiene could save the lives of countless children worldwide who otherwise would die from dehydration.



Dee Dee Wint (center) works with Baptist Global Response, moving rocks and rubble after an earthquake hit Nepal. (Photo / Courtesy of Tim and Dee Dee Wint)“In Africa alone, 2,000 children die each day from dehydration due to water-related issues and diseases,” she said. “And 90 percent of those deaths could have been prevented.”

TBM water ministry teams now include a health and hygiene component, which educates people in developing countries about oral rehydration therapy. Using a plastic spoon with a scoop at each end, volunteers teach families how to measure precise amounts of sugar and salt, and then add them to purified water they can drink to replace bodily fluids lost due to diarrhea.

“It gives the people a way they can take control of their own health,” Wint explained. “And all the time we are teaching them about it, we are also teaching them the love of Jesus Christ.”

While making a presentation at Huckabay Baptist Church near Stephenville, Wint mentioned the measuring spoons for oral rehydration were available only from a manufacturer in England.

Within three weeks, a church member with connection to a plastics manufacturer developed a locally produced measuring spoon designed according to the same specifications. The church is making the spoons available at no cost to TBM.

“With each (health) lesson we teach, we offer a biblical application,” Wint said. “Clean water and hygiene can change a whole community. But it is hearts made clean by Jesus Christ that can change the world.”

Men’s ministries serve far and wide

TBM renewal teams led Experiencing God weekends in Utah and Maine last year, and they are planning to conduct similar events in Illinois and Vermont soon, said Randy Newberry, men’s ministry consultant.

A Couples on Missions team is planning a trip to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in late April to help local Christians prepare for ministry during the Olympic Games in August, he added.

Disaster relief volunteers respond to needs

TBM disaster relief volunteers responded to 35 disasters in 2015, donating 6,700 volunteer service days prior to the tornadoes that swept through parts of Dallas County the day after Christmas, said Terry Henderson, state disaster relief director.

Not counting the ongoing response to the tornadoes in Rowlett and Garland, TBM volunteers prepared 44,000 meals, distributed 20,000 boxes to help homeowners reclaim scattered possessions, cared for more than 100 children, washed and dried 1,800 loads of laundry and provided 2,800 showers, Henderson reported. Volunteers completed 1,300 recovery projects, including mud-out after floods, ash-out after fires, chainsaw jobs to remove broken limbs and tarp installation to provide temporary roof covering after storms.

They also recorded 3,300 ministry contacts and gospel presentations, distributed 400 Bibles and led at least 85 people to make professions of faith in Christ, he noted.



Skidsteer operator Joe Henard from Amarillo removes debris after tornadoes hit Rowlett. (Photo / Ken Camp) In response to the post-Christmas tornadoes, volunteers donated 2,000 volunteer days. They removed 200 trailer loads of debris, completed 600 recovery jobs, provided 500 showers, prepared 9,000 meals and logged 250 hours operating heavy equipment, Henderson reported. They also presented the gospel at least 100 times and distributed 130 Bibles.



TBM heavy equipment operators remove debris after demolishing the wreckage of a

storm-damaged home in Rowlett. (Photo / Ken Camp)Beginning Feb. 22, TBM heavy equipment operators planned to spend at least a week demolishing homes in Rowlett. Many homeowners discovered their insurance did not cover demolition and removal of the resulting debris, and the average cost per home is more than \$10,000, Henderson said.