



Newsletter of Maryknoll Lay Missioners

Spring 2008



#### LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

#### Dear Friend of MKLM,

In MKLM's organizational mission statement, it is noted that we "are inspired by the mission of Jesus". This is entirely true and it keeps us going, even when we feel the full weight of our service as we witness the suffering and injustices related to desperate poverty. Still, it seems that Christ occasionally offers us a little extra motivation by helping us to see Him in a particular face among those we meet in our journeys.

One such face belongs to a 16 year-old Tanzanian boy named Rama. I first met him last summer at the Huruma School for Children with Disabilities, shortly after his arrival there. Rama has cerebral palsy and a related speech impediment. He had been mis-diagnosed as developmentally disabled since birth. Because of this, Rama received no schooling whatsoever...the Tanzanian system makes no accommodation for what we'd call "special education".



But there he was, sitting on the porch of a church in Mwanza...the porch upon which the Huruma School had been founded and built by Maryknoll Lay Missioner Bertha Haas and her colleagues. It was Bertha that introduced me to Rama, and my 11 years in Kenya enabled me to greet him in my best Swahili. He could barely grunt in response, but I could sense some connection.

I returned to Tanzania in April of this year. Along with our Board Chair, Fr. Bill Vos, I was visiting each of our African mission sites. Upon our arrival at the Huruma School, Bertha said that she had a surprise for us. She then introduced Rama to Bill, and Rama and I exchanged the smiles and nods shared by acquaintances. And then...Rama began reading aloud!

His delivery was labored and halting. His limited motor control caused him to drool and lose his place momentarily. But Rama pressed on, completing three paragraphs written at a third-grade level. Rama could read! And in his beaming face, we could see our inspiration, the reason for our mission, Our Savior.

In this issue of Voices of Compassion, you'll read more about Bertha Haas and all of our missioners hard at work in Tanzania. You'll read of their challenges and their successes. You'll also read of their gratitude to you, who also inspire all of us through your caring, your generosity and your prayers.

On behalf of Maryknoll Lay Missioners, and all those whose lives are touched through our collective effort, I thank you.

Yours in Christ,

Kevin Mestrich
Executive Director

#### IN THIS ISSUE

This issue of Voices of Compassion I focuses on MKLM ministries in Tanzania and how your contributions help support the presence of our missioners there. People of this country have known what it is like to suffer the effects of extreme poverty. (Tanzania is among the poorest 15% of the world's countries, with GDP per capita equalling \$744.)



Tanzanians keep their culture and traditions alive through tribal dance.

Overwhelmingly, healthcare and educational needs have beckoned MKLM missioners to tend to those who are often forgotten: AIDS vic-

UGANDA Lake KENYA Mwanza Lindi ZAMBIA

tims, both those who have acquired the disease and the children orphaned because of it, and the women of Tanzania who have suffered some of the most egregious human-rights violations.

In Tanzania, eight MKLM missioners apply their skills and knowledge to respond to basic needs of the poor, raise the quality of life, and restore hope, by helping to improve healthcare and education, advocating for justice and peace,

working for sustainable development, and offering pastoral care.

Also in this issue, on the page to the left, you will read a letter from MKLM Executive Director, Kevin Mestrich. Kevin served in Kenya, Tanzania's neigh-

boring country, for 11 years. He has recently returned from a visit to Africa, including Tanzania, and has offered his reflection on the difference you, in partnership with MKLM, are making in this part of the world.

If you wish to learn more about our organization, the work you enable us to do, the missioners you help us to send and support in mission, or those whom you help us to serve, please call us at 1.800.867.2980, visit us at www.mklm.org, or write to us at: Maryknoll Lay Missioners

> P.O. Box 307 Maryknoll, NY 10545-0307

## SPOTLIGHT: Tanzania

thunderous roar bellowed from the pit of its belly, sending shockwaves and reverberations for hundreds of miles. Fires spewed from its mouth and poured along its chest. The very sound of the erupting voice meant that its lashing tongues of flame could singe anyone who heard it. And then, suddenly, it went silent. And what is left in its wake is what we know as Mount Kilimanjaro. The mystical mountain is the highest point in Africa and serves as the backdrop for Tanzania's other most aesthetically intoxicating natural artwork, Lake Victoria.

But amidst the paradise-like scenery of Tanzania live some of the world's poorest people. Eight MKLM missioners are working earnestly to find ways to help these people in need rise from the ashes of a history lit-



Tanzanian children on the shore of Lake Victoria.

tered with the debris of imperialism, failed economic and governmental structures, and the byproducts of the country's status as a welcoming refuge for millions of people from the bordering war-torn countries of Burundi. the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda.

The country known as Tanzania had once been the regions of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Tanganyika was a

German Colony from 1880 until 1918, and then was a British Mandate from 1919 until its independence in 1961. Zanzibar, having established its independence from the United Kingdom in 1963, merged with Tanganyika on April 26, 1964 to form the United Republic of Tanzania under the leadership of Julius Nyerere. ("Tanzania" is a combination of

the words Tanganyika and Zanzibar.)

Nyerere had been Prime Minister of Tanganyika since 1960, governing the nation through its independence and its unification with Zanzibar. In the new African nation, Nyerere implemented a socialist-type economy



Liz Mach spends time with AIDs orphans. Read about her ministry on page 11.

which emphasized equality based on collective agriculturalism. He believed that by returning to its tribal roots of sharing among extended family, Tanzania would prosper through Ujamaa, or "familyhood." But Ujamaa failed. By 1976, Tanzania, which had once been the largest exporter of agricultural goods to neighboring African nations, had become the largest importer.

#### THE GREATEST NEEDS

As is often true of any poverty stricken people, those who are already marginalized are often pushed even further from what little their society has to offer. Tanzania is unable to provide for the basic needs of its people. Housing often means shacks and shantytowns; food supply can often mean little more than scraps every few days. Lack of basic education, healthcare, and education about how to care for one's

### DID YOU KNOW?

The three branches of Maryknoll -**Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers**, Maryknoll Sisters, and us, MARYKNOLL LAY MISSIONERS - are each separately funded and operated. Each depends on its unique donors for support.



This man, center, plays an animal horn, a popular Tanzanian instrument.

own health exacerbates the substandard human conditions.

In Tanzania, where women are often considered second-class citizens (if not property), husbands who engage in promiscuous behavior often infect their wives with AIDS. Consequently, AIDS has

become epidemic, has orphaned hundreds of thousands of children, and increased the rate of mother-to-child transmission. Thirty-six percent of Tanzanians will die before age 40.

MKLM has eight missioners assigned to Tanzania. Their direct service to hundreds of

thousands of people often means the difference between life and death, the difference between economic independence and a cycle of poverty, the difference between hopelessness and knowing the kindness and compassion that Jesus has sent us to share. Your donations help us make that difference!

#### YOUR WILL, YOUR LEGACY

"He who is generous will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor."

Proverbs 22:8, 9

YOU can be generous today and for generations to come.



Help the POOR, HUNGRY, and OPPRESSED by including MKLM in your WILL.

To receive a FREE WILLS PLANNING BOOKLET, call Dave Loretan at 1.800.867.2980.

## **FOCUS: HEALTHCARE AND EDUCATION** The Greatest In God's Reign

"Those who make themselves as humble as this child are the greatest in God's reign. Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me." - Matthew 18:4-5

The people of Tanzania are among the poorest in the world. Their needs and their suffering are great. But it is the children who suffer the most, because they lack so much: housing, food, healthcare, access to education, and funding for educational materials. Many of them even lack parents or guardians due to the AIDS pandemic.

Your donations have placed four MKLM missioners - Tom Scott, Joanne Miya, Bertha Haas, and Eileen Charleton - in Tanzania to help alleviate the suffering of the children there.

**JUST 50 MILES NORTH** OF MUSOMA, and approximately the same distance south of the Kenya border, lies the Kowak Mission. The

Kowak Mission includes a hospital, a convent, and one of Tanzania's most renowned Catholic girls' schools, along with its boarding house.

It is at this mission site where Tom Scott serves in any way that he is needed. Tom tutors students enrolled in English and computer classes and applies his mathematic skills to do the accounting tasks for the school. Tom also assists in repairs in the buildings which house the



Tom Scott visits the mill at the Kowak School.

Tom, a father of two adult sons, is originally from Friendswood, Texas. He joined MKLM in 2005.

Between 2000 and 2005, Tom spent summers repairing homes with young people at group work camps in Colorado and Utah. He has been involved in a variety of parish activities including educational programs, retreats, youth ministry, the promotion of religious vocations, and the World Community for Christian Meditation.

school, the boarding house, the convent and the hospital.

A retired Chemical Engineer, Tom received his degree at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas. His expertise is in the areas of water chemistry problems, industrial water treatment for boilers, and waste water reuse.

#### JOANNE MIYA IS THE DIRECTOR

of the Uzima Centre. Uzima is the Swahili word for wellness. The program is aptly named because "wellness" - physical, spiritual, and educational – is just what Joanne aims to provide to those that the program serves.

Uzima, a Diocesan program, offers support, education and healthcare to more than 100 AIDS orphans, their guardians and those living with HIV or AIDS. AIDS orphans in the area are often unable to attend school because their guardians cannot afford to buy them school uniforms. Often, their guardians are emotionally and financially stretched, and those living with HIV or AIDS are prone to

depression and secondary infections due to a lack of moral support and medical care. Without Uzima and Joanne, the



Freddy Agoro, a client of the Uzima "Wellness Centre", looks forward to the time he spends with Joanne Miya.

Joanne has lived and worked in Tanzania for more than 20 years. Before living in Tanzania she resided in Victorville, California where she was a member of the Diocese of San Bernardino. She joined MKLM in 1983 and served for three years. She remained in Africa and rejoined MKLM in 1995. Joanne is married to, and has five children with, Martin Miya, a Tanzanian community leader.

> people benefiting from the program would fall victim to the same reality.

AIDS orphans in the area are often unable to attend school because their guardians cannot afford to buy them school uniforms.

Sadly, many of Tanzania's 120 native tribes traditionally have considered a child with a disability to be a family disgrace or even a curse. Many times, disabled children have been abandoned or hidden inside the home. Other times, the father abandons both the mother and their handicapped child.

But, through Uzima, and because of Joanne's presence there, Uzima members are provided uniforms and tutoring, access to workshops on subjects such as health and income-generating projects, inclusion in support groups, medical care, transportation, and nutritional support.

AT THE HURUMA SCHOOL for Children with Disabilities, Bertha Haas works directly with more than 30 students. Bertha is a founding member of the school which seeks to provide an education to, and further the human rights of, children with disabilities.

Lack of adequate of healthcare, especially prenatal and early childhood care, poor nutrition, inadequate sanitation and lack of access to clean water all contribute to the high number of children with disabilities in Tanzania, and specifically in Mwanza, where the school is located. Mwanza, because of its geographical location, has seen a dramatic influx in refugees from surrounding areas, further exhausting its already limited resources.

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Bertha Haas brings the disabled children of the Huruma School on an outing.

Bertha joined MKLM in 2002 from Baker City, Oregon. There, she was very active in Our Lady of Angels' parish in the Diocese of Baker. She earned degrees from Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and from the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma. Bertha brings years of experience as a guidance counselor to her role in Huruma.

Huruma offers a comprehensive approach to meet the needs of the children with disabilities. It offers physical therapy, and appropriate elementary education while providing healthcare support and daily nutritional support. Bertha has also nurtured a growing sup-

Eileen is originally from Buffalo, New York and joined MKLM in 1988 after serving as an elementary school teacher for a number of years. Eileen's first seven years as a lay missioner were spent living and working with the poor in Venezuela. In 1995, she returned to MKLM Headquarters in Ossining, New York to serve on the Orientation Team, helping to prepare new missioners for their overseas experience. In 2006, Eileen began her new assignment in Tanzania, Africa.



Eileen Charleton examines the basket-weaving techniques of the local villagers.

port network for parents and caretakers of children with disabilities.

Bertha's experience in special education and counseling has been instrumental in the school's success. Ultimately the school seeks to provide a model that can

be duplicated throughout the city of Mwanza.

YOUR DONATIONS HAVE PLACED **EILEEN CHARLETON** in the city of Musoma where she works as a teacher at St. John Bosco School. Eileen tends to the littlest ones of the school's 336 students, currently a group of approximately 50 children between the ages of four and six. These children must study English, the official language of the Tanzanian curriculum, though Tanzania recognizes both Swahili and English as its official national languages.

To her work in Tanzania, Eileen brings years of experience as a primary school teacher in the United States. She helps the Tanzanian children to develop elementary English skills so that they can adapt to the educational curriculum. In addition, Eileen designs workshops for high school students to explore and deepen their faith experience.

To learn more about Tom, Joanne, Bertha, Eileen, and other MKLM missioners, please visit: www.mklm.org.

## **FOCUS: HEALTHCARE** The Lost

"And their prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make them well." – James 5:15

s a 32-year missioner with 24 years of service in African nations, Elizabeth "Liz" Mach knows well the pains and struggles of the people of Africa. In the city of Mwanza, a port on Lake Victoria in Tanzania, Liz, until recently, focused her ministry efforts on healthcare, education, and abuses of civil and human rights, specifically for the female population.

At the Bugando Medical

The Bugando Medical Center is an 870-bed hospital which serves a population of one third of the country, or approximately 12 million people.

Center, Liz, equipped as a Registered Nurse, served more than 450 patients weekly. Through her ministry in the Patient Advocacy Office, Liz advocated for the patients who she says, "had been lost" in the local hospital systems. Patients of the hospital often had traveled through a series of local and regional hospitals before they were referred to the Medical Center.



Liz Mach, a 25-year MKLM missioner, enjoys an afternoon with women from the Bugando Medical Center.

Liz joined MKLM 32 years ago! At that time, Maryknoll Lay Missioners was still a pilot program of the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers. As the "program" has blossomed into the autonomous organization that it is today, so too, has Liz grown into an integral part of our success story.

Originally from Pine City, Minnesota, Liz was a member of Immaculate Conception Parish in the Diocese of Duluth, Liz's ministries include service in Tanzania from 1976 until 1982, MKLM Leadership and administrative roles at our U.S. Headquarters from 1983 until 1991, and in Northern and Southern Sudan from 1992 until 1997, when she returned to Tanzania.

The office in which Liz primarily worked provides counseling, used clothing, return tickets home, and personal visitation for the patients who are often very far from family and friends who can comfort them during their hospital stay.

The Bugando Medical Center is an 870-bed hospital which serves a population of one third of the country, or approximately 12 million people. Not surprisingly, Liz was often called to work outside the office to provide her services as a nurse as well.

In addition, Liz served as advisor for a program that addresses a serious reproductive health issue afflicting many poor women. The injury results from complications following a difficult childbirth. The operation offered these women, says Liz, "restores their health and gives them back their lives."

Liz's efforts have helped the Bugando Medical Center to stand strong in service to others, enabling her to embrace new challenges. Liz has recently answered a call for help from another ministry site in Tanzania, the Kowak Mission, where she joins MKLM missioner Tom Scott. Liz continues her work as a nurse and



An afternoon spent with Liz means a great deal to these AIDs orphans.

has started another patient advocacy program in her new mission site. Please visit www.mklm.org in the coming months to learn more on the progress of those that Liz is serving in her new ministry.

# Join Us at Your Local Parish!

Maryknoll Lay Missioners will be speaking in nearly

100 parishes

throughout the U.S. in 2008!

Go to

www.mklm.org/ChurchTalks to find out when a Maryknoll Lay Missioner will be speaking

at a church in your area!

#### SPOTLIGHT: WELCOME TO TANZANIA! KARIBU TANZANIA!

## Lake Forest, CA Resident Becomes MKLM Missioner in Tanzania

ith a Bachelors degree in Fine Art, V Jenny Vande Hei of Lake Forest, California could have continued her multi-faceted career running her own jewelry business, and serving as an event coordinator and wedding planner. Instead, in 2007, Jenny left the United States to pursue overseas missionary work with Maryknoll Lay Missioners.

"I knew that someday I would be writing to Maryknoll Lay Missioners - sitting at my computer praying that what I was writing would be my ticket back to such an experience."

Although Jenny's departure for Tanzania was her first with a missionary organization, she has previously experienced life abroad. In 1996 she spent ten days in Guatemala where she constructed roofs and walls, and laid concrete. The experience fueled her passion

to use her gifts to serve God, and prompted her to apply to Maryknoll Lay Missioners. "Through my experience in



Jenny Vande Hei is pictured here during soccer practice with orphan girls who are part of Uzima Centre, where both Joanne Miya (story on page 8) and Jenny serve in ministry.

Mwanza now has, for the first time, a girls' soccer team. Jenny is currently working on starting a girls' soccer league in the hopes of leading the league to a World AIDs Day program of soccer matches for orphans and street kids.

Continued on page 14

#### FOCUS: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

## Women Gain Skills for Success in Kalebezo

"Blessed are those who have regard for the weak; the Lord delivers them in times of trouble." Psalm 41:1

Through her ministry at VEMA, Carmen Matty-Cervantes offers education. healthcare, and sustainable development activities to the children, women, and elders of the village of Kalebezo.

Kalebezo is representative of a typical Tanzanian village; 80% of Tanzanians live in villages, and 90% of those have no electricity or running water. Most villagers, especially women and girls, do not attend school beyond seventh grade, tending instead to their



Carmen Matty-Cervantes is pictured here with the pre-school children she teaches at VEMA. Today's lesson - bubbles!

#### **SPOTLIGHT** continued from page 13

Guatemala, I knew that someday I would be writing to Maryknoll Lay Missioners - sitting at my computer praying that what I was writing would be my ticket back to such an experience."

In college, Vande Hei worked as a Catholic campus ministry intern running the peer ministry program where she coordinated ecumenical events, service projects, trips, and retreats. She served in soup kitchens and created art for her local Day

of the Dead parade, a traditional Mexican holiday which celebrates and honors the deceased.

MKLM is proud to support Jenny as its newest missioner in Tanzania. Please visit www.mklm.org in the coming months to learn more on her progress and the progress of those she is serving in her new ministry.

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about becoming a lay missioner, please visit: www.mklm.org.

responsibilities at home and in the fields. But, because of VEMA, and because you helped us send Carmen to VEMA, Kalebezo will soon celebrate its first female university graduate.

Born in Mexico, Carmen came to Maryknoll Lay Missioners in 2004 from Stockton, California. Before joining MKLM, she worked as the Study Abroad Advisor at the University of the Pacific and as a Contracts Management Analyst for the Employment and Economic Development Department of San Joaquin County. Carmen has volunteered nationally and internationally in Mexico, the Philippines, Spain, and elsewhere. She holds degrees from Santa Clara University, the University of San Francisco, and the University of the Pacific (all in California).

VEMA is a vocational and kindergarten school. There is also a program within VEMA that works specifically with a women's group to provide developmental activities. Carmen's ministry

80% of Tanzanians live in villages, and 90% of those have no electricity or running water. Most villagers, especially women and girls, do not attend school beyond seventh grade, tending instead to their responsibilities at home and in the fields.

consists of teaching typing and computers skills to the staff, and elementary math to the masonry and tailoring students. She also helps with administrative work. The women's group at VEMA sews napkins, pouches, and robes, and makes dolls and note cards. The sale of the items helps provide funding for the students' secondary school education.

To learn more about Carmen and other MKLM missioners, or to learn more about becoming an MKLM missioner, please visit: www.mklm.org.



MKLM is a BBB Accredited Charity and a proud member of the BBB Charity Seal Program, which indicates a commitment to the 20 Standards for Charity Accountability, MKLM meets all the Standards, which assess our organization's finances, governance and oversight, effectiveness measures, and fundraising and informational materials.







## Love Boot Camp

By Janet Hackert Kiralfy, former Maryknoll Lay Missioner to Tanzania (1986-1997)

udy Mathias, Friends Across Borders\* (FAB) participant, dubbed her experience "Love Boot Camp" after just one week of visiting Maryknoll Lay Missioners (MKLM) at their ministries in Tanzania. The phrase was apropos, having received such love from our Tanzanian hosts, and having seen the missioners waging war on illness, disability and injustice in God's name.

At Bugando Medical Center, Liz Mach, MKLM missioner, introduced us to a patient of hers. Liz sat with her arm around the young woman, listening and translating as she fairly whispered her story of a difficult delivery and the long delays prior to receiving professional care. Her family had waited days before seeking medical help for her, which contributed to a series of health complications. Now, finally, Liz and her staff were helping this young woman regain her dignity as problems were fixed by surgery. Liz brings women with similar conditions together for support during the long recovery process. The tear in this woman's eye and the shame on her face had turned to hope as she told of being loved, getting better, and going home.

Looks to me like, with the service of Maryknoll Lay Missioners, love is winning.

\*Friends Across Borders is a mission immersion program of MKLM. To learn more, visit www.FriendsAcrossBorders.org.

## **FOCUS: PASTORAL MINISTRY** The Spiritually Rich

"Iesus told them: Go into the whole world and proclaim the Good News to all creation." -Mark 16:15

Tara McKinney knows that being economically page. nomically poor is not the same as being spiritually poor. Mwanza, where Tara lives and works, is one of the poorest areas of one of the poorest countries in the world. The city receives a tremendous influx of people migrating from their villages and offers few employment opportunities. Lack of adequate healthcare, especially prenatal and early childhood care, poor nutrition, inadequate sanitation, and lack of access to clean water all contribute to the high number of children with disabilities. Thus, Mwanza reflects an even greater level of poverty than that of the country as a whole.

The social, economic, and political factors causing and perpetuating Mwanza's poverty do not halt at the door of the Church. They directly affect the Church's mission, leading to what Tanzanians have termed a moral crisis in the local Church. In response to this crisis, Tara works with the Pastoral Department of the Archdiocese of Mwanza. The goal of the department, and the goal of Tara's ministry, is to increase awareness and understanding of Catholic Church teaching in all levels of pastoral activities throughout the archdiocese. Tara works with Tanzanian pastoral workers to enhance training among Church leaders, promote the role of the laity, and encourage participation among Catholics. Although in the initial phase of



Tara McKinney brings Catholic teaching to the Franciscan Pre-School.

Tara was born and raised in Fort Smith, Arizona. From the University of Notre Dame, she earned a Bachelors of Arts degree in Theology with a second major in History and a concentration in Peace Studies. She also earned her Masters of Divinity degree at Notre Dame. Tara became an MKLM missioner in 2005.

her ministry, Tara seeks to achieve these goals through gathering information on current pastoral activities of the archdiocese, analyzing that information in relation to Catholic Social Teachings, then developing and implementing programs, conducting training seminars for Church leaders, and strengthening existing programs.

To learn more about Tara, and other MKLM missioners, or to learn more about becoming an MKLM missioner, please visit: www.mklm.org.



## Kids Only

What have you learned about Tanzania from the articles in this issue of *Voices of Compassion*? Take the quiz below to see how many answers you can remember.

- 1. Tanzania is a country located on which continent?
  - a. Asia
  - b. Antarctica
  - c. Africa
- 2. Which of these mountains is the highest mountain in Africa?
  - a. Kilimanjaro
  - b. Everest
  - c. Rushmore
- 3. Two countries formed to become Tanzania in what year?
  - a. 1864
  - b. 1986
  - c. 1964
- 4. Which two countries formed to become Tanzania?
  - a. Kenya and Zanzibar
  - b. Tanganyika and Zanzibar
  - c. Tanganyika and Mwanza

- 5. Most children in Tanzania speak which two languages?
  - a. Swahili and English
  - b. Swahili and Tagalog
  - c. English and Mandarin



Hello: jambo (dzahm-bo)

Goodbye: kwaheri (kwah-he-ree)

Good morning: salaam (sah-lahm)

How are you?: Habari? (hah-bah-ree)

School: shule (shool)

Thank you: asante (ah-sahn-tee)

Welcome!: kabari (kah-bah-ree)



## Maryknoll...the tradition continues.



For nearly 100 years the name Maryknoll has been synonymous with overseas mission. As we approach a new century of service, members of the laity are being called to assume an even greater role. As a leader in overseas mission, it's a challenge **MKLM** embraces.

#### The tradition continues with Maryknoll Lay Missioners.

#### did you know?

The 3 branches of Maryknoll – Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers, Maryknoll Sisters, and us, Maryknoll Lay Missioners – are each separately funded and operated. Each depends on its unique donors for support.



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Addres	ss:
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