

# ROC the World Times

Empowering People Through the Gift of Mobility

*Providing mobility products without regard to political affiliation, religious belief or ethnic identity.*



Winter 2008 / 2009

## GALLATIN VALLEY YOUTH HELPING KIDS IN MEXICO AND TANZANIA

*By: Christy Sofianek, Board Member/YEWTHS ROC Volunteer*

The YEWTHS ROC Program, now in its second year, continues to inspire youth to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Over 150 students in the Gallatin Valley are engaged in reaching out and caring for others by creating products to raise money to sponsor ROC chairs for children in Mexico and Tanzania. Students at Monforton, Emily Dickinson, and Pass Creek Schools have been hard at work creating ROC Beads and ROC dolls to sell at their holiday programs. Sunrise Medical has already purchased 200 ROC dolls to give out at their annual conference in April. That alone is enough to sponsor six wheelchairs! That translates into six children who can go to school, go out into their communities, play with their peers and be involved in the day to day activities of their families. Thank you Sunrise Medical!



Pass Creek students displaying their finished necklaces

The YEWTHS ROC Program is empowering local area youth with the knowledge and skills they need to make a

difference in their world. In addition to learning new skills in the arts, students will broaden their knowledge of the world by learning about the cultures of Mexico and Tanzania, increase their understanding and acceptance of disabilities and make a personal connection with the children in



Monforton students sculpting ROC Beads

Mexico and Tanzania through letters, books or videos. ROC Wheels is being considered for a grant to incorporate manufacturing as part of the YEWTHS ROC's program for 2009. This project will teach students about the design of the ROC chair and provide the opportunity to assemble wheelchairs for children in need in less resourced countries.

YEWTHS ROC will continue to expand programs into other interested schools and community groups. If you would like more information or if you would like to join our growing group of committed volunteers, call us at 406-556-8065.

YEWTHS ROC (Youth Empowered With The Helper Spirit Reach Out and Care) is a community based program provided through ROC Wheels, Inc. It is designed to empower youth to make a positive difference in their world by giving them the tools, knowledge and experience they need to be leaders and world changers. This program is possible thanks to a generous grant from the Gilhousen Family Foundation and countless hours of time given by dedicated and passionate volunteers.

### Co-Founders

Wayne and Lee Ann Hanson

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An Iraq ROC Chair fitting

## MISSION STATEMENT:

To provide mobility products for people with disabilities in developing countries and to foster partnerships through ministry, youth empowerment, wheelchair distributions, manufacturing opportunities and educational development.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDERS

By: *Wayne and Lee Ann Hanson*

We have been specially blessed this last year by the young people who have joined us in reaching out to children with disabilities in developing countries. Children as young as five years old, as well as college students, have been busy using their creative talents and time to compassionately touch the lives of individuals with disabilities around the world. Awareness is increasing, world views are broadening, and children are learning that they don't have to wait until they are adults to change their world one life at a time. Simple acts of kindness and words of encouragement have become our motto in the schools. The students even came up with the idea of writing cards of thanks and encouragement to the prisoners at the South Dakota State Penitentiary for making the wheelchairs that the students are

working hard to sponsor. God's love working in and through us is powerful and contagious. As we look back over this past year we have so much to be thankful for. Generous donations from you our supporters and numerous volunteer hours have enabled ROC to touch many lives with love, hope and mobility. As one fifth grader said, "I love doing this. It makes me feel so good inside." Our prayer is that each of you feel good inside as well, knowing that you have impacted so many lives with your generous giving. We understand what a sacrifice it is to give in such tough economic times and we appreciate your willingness to Reach Out and Care with love.

May God bless and keep you in His loving care.

## WHEELCHAIRS FOR IRAQ UPDATE

### Wheelchairs For Iraqi Kids

Brad Blauser of Wheelchairs for Iraqi Kids continues to team up with military troops and deliver wheelchairs to children throughout Iraq. Brad recently received 240 more wheelchairs and ROC is working on the final shipment of 281 sponsored chairs from 2008. Certificates for chairs that have been distributed will be going out by the end of January.

### Mosul, Iraq Assembly Project

ROC is completing the process of putting together a shipment of 650 ROC Chair parts to be assembled by trained technicians in Mosul, Iraq. This will be the first of two shipments to travel from Montana to Mosul as a part of our efforts to empower manufacturing facilities within less resourced countries.



Brad Blauser with a recent ROC Chair recipient in Iraq

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By: *Andrew Babcock*

Last year started with a bang in February when CNN covered our mission in Iraq as Brad Blausler, founder of Wheelchairs For Iraqi Kids, performed wheelchair distributions in hostile regions in Iraq. The coverage was aired on international television, CNN's website (thanks Wayne Drash), and in e-mail streams that were forwarded to others by touched viewers. The footage portrayed heart twisting stories of families and children arriving against all odds to receive ROC Wheelchairs which were custom fit by smiling and jovial US Troops working collaboratively with Iraqi military, government officials, and police. Donations began flooding in from all over the world from kind souls and included letters, stories, and e-mails of how this story touched their hearts and how happy they are to be able to support our troops and help disabled children and their families in Iraq. The donations escalated and soon we faced the sudden blessed reality that we would need to deliver 643 wheelchairs throughout Iraq. Shipping and transporting this many wheelchairs is a challenge in itself, but the real challenge is gathering the right people together who can coordinate the delivery and professional custom fitting and follow up of the wheelchairs. Thankfully Brad Blausler's network in Iraq suddenly multiplied thanks to the attention of the CNN story that quickly spread through the military and government channels. Brad received a letter from General Petraeus throwing his support behind the operation and in doing so his staff put the word out about our needs and abilities to help more people.

Instantly opportunities began to present themselves working with Provincial Reconstruction Teams, businesses, foundations, and government agencies to expand services and care in Iraq and throughout the world. The market proved to be very receptive to the empowerment system that relies upon using many of ROC's core competencies to help locals serve their needs themselves. This led to the Mosul assembly operation to deliver 1,300 ROC Chair parts to be locally manufactured and delivered in northern Iraq following hands on training performed by ROC's founder Wayne Hanson, David Urband, and Andrew Babcock. This operation proved ROC's ability to empower people in Iraq and soon we found

ourselves working with new partners to setup a major factory in Iraq to deliver thousands of ROC Chairs and other mobility devices in Iraq and provide training at 13 rehabilitation centers.

These missions combined with past knowledge gained from the Vietnam factory, the South Dakota State Penitentiary factory, and the many distributions and training seminars around the world created systems and templates that are strengthening ROC's ability to serve as a leader in the movement to establish regional manufacturing centers and training seminars for local people. ROC developed two new departments to perform the training. The Manufacturing Team and the Physical Therapy and Custom Seating Teams that in 2009 and beyond will travel throughout the world to help lift people up and serve the needs of people with disabilities. Next year we have in place plans to establish two international regional centers thanks to our highly capable partners here and abroad. Meanwhile the South Dakota State Penitentiary is improving their operation and will continue to provide ROC Chairs paired with refurbished wheelchairs from Hope Haven to use on wheelchair distributions in 2009. ROC's ever expanding network has provided many opportunities to serve people in new countries. Upcoming wheelchair distributions will be to Mexico, Jamaica, Tanzania, Morocco, and a few more countries that are providing ROC with measuring worksheets to identify the need. Early in 2009 we are hoping and praying to receive favorable news that will allow the re-introduction of a Bozeman based youth wheelchair assembly operation with potential for expansion to other areas. The many manufacturing operations in new countries is reliant upon approval of a grant with World Learning / USAID. We will continue our efforts to get support from governments to provide long-term financial support for people with disabilities abroad. ROC may even have a new type of wheelchair in 2009! God willing 2009 will be just as exciting as this past year has been for us and all people we serve.

## VISIT TO VIETNAM'S KIDS FIRST VILLAGE

On December 10th, Andrew Babcock and David Urband traveled to Vietnam to meet with members of the Kids First Vietnam (KFV) Board of Directors and to visit the manufacturing facility which has built ROC Chairs since 2007. During the visit seating and positioning training was performed benefiting 9 children with new ROC Chairs.



Smiles all around after another custom fitting (Left)

David Urband, Andrew Babcock and a ROC Chair recipient with his Grandmother in Vietnam (Right)



# GREAT NEED FOR UPCOMMING DISTRIBUTION SPONSORSHIPS



MEXICO



JAMAICA



TANZANIA



IRAQ

Plan's for 2009 distributions are underway and we are in desperate need of sponsorships for ROC and Refurbished Wheelchairs.

Our first distribution will be our annual trip to San Carols, Mexico from February 5th - 15th. The ROC Team in collaboration with Rocky Mountain Ministries will be providing 60 wheelchairs and other mobility devices.

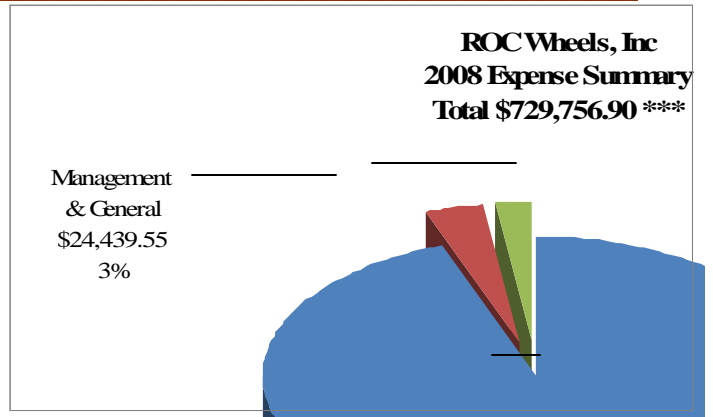
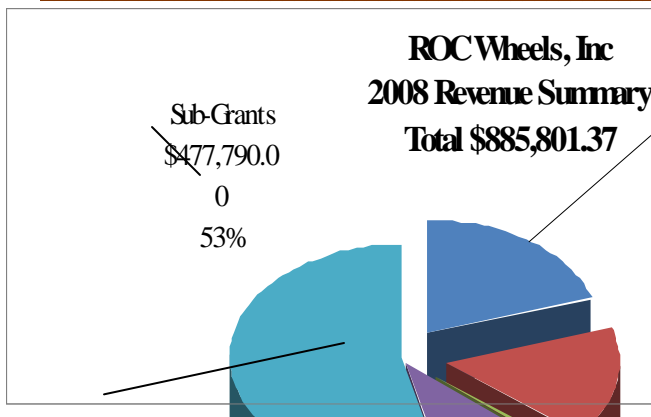
Montego Bay, Jamaica, date to be determined. The ROC Team in collaboration with Food for the Poor and the Montego Bay Rotary will provide over 100 Wheelchairs and

other mobility devices.

Tanzania, Africa is scheduled from June 12th - 28th. The ROC Team in collaboration with Hope of the Nations will provide over 130 Wheelchairs and other mobility devices. ROC intends to return to Morocco to perform another distribution and begin establishing a factory at the Centre Noor.

Wheelchairs for Iraqi Kids will continue to distribute wheelchairs throughout Iraq for sponsored chairs from 2008.

## GIVE THE GIFT OF MOBILITY TODAY AND CHANGE A LIFE



\*\* The \$156,044.47 carried over are restricted funds to complete projects started mid year 2008.

### Giving Needs

- ◆ General support greatly needed to expand our missions and help more children!
- ◆ \$300 Adopt-A-Chair sponsorship for Mexico, Jamaica, Morocco, and Tanzania
- ◆ \$ 90 Refurbished chair sponsorships greatly needed for all upcoming missions.

Return Service Requested

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