



January 2012

Dear Friends,

This update letter will be a bit different from my previous editions. I typically try to talk of all the many good things happening at the Lingap Center and there are many. I do this to convey the sense of hope and promise that the Lingap Center is providing for our many disadvantaged children and to demonstrate how you are helping to make this life change possible. This edition however, is a very sad story but a story with a very happy ending.

One of the Lingap Center initiatives is what we call home visitation. Each week, our social workers visit the homes of children in need throughout the community. This is for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is to determine if it is possible for any of the Lingap wards to be placed back with family members. It is our feeling that children are usually better off if they can be with family, provided they are safe from abuse or neglect.

In January of 2011, a number of us, along with the Lingap manager, made a visit to the home of two of our girls, where we found a baby laying on the floor of a nipa hut, in a deplorable squatter area. The area was filthy beyond description and the baby was obviously very, very ill. Coincidentally, one of those with us was a doctor (a Lingap board member). He examined the little girl, estimated to be 9 months old, and determined that she was extremely malnourished (starving actually), dehydrated, covered with body sores and mosquito bites and she had a number of other problems. We tried to give her water, but she was too weak to even drink; it just ran out of the side of her mouth. He told us that she was very close to death - maybe only a few days.

To our dismay, there was no adult or anyone for that matter, in the area. The baby was left entirely alone on a hot, filthy floor. We then went to a nearby nipa hut and found another one, in the same condition. They were twins and both were dying!! This was the first time since I have been involved with the Lingap Center project, that I 'lost it.' It was just about more than I could emotionally handle. Just remembering it today is difficult and the memory always brings tears. It was a fellow by the name of Bob Pierce who once said, *"Let my heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God."* I'm sure that this is what he was talking about.



We immediately contacted the local police and the Dept. of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), both of whom soon arrived and took the girls to the hospital for us. The mother eventually arrived and said that they merely needed a bath!! There was not much concern on her part beyond that.

Since the Lingap Center is not licensed to take babies, we contacted several agencies who could, but they would not accept responsibility for them since the girls were so malnourished. They did not want the medical expenses and probable burial costs since the likelihood of their survival was so low. The twins had no hope and no place to go.



Eventually, both girls were hospitalized through the Lingap Center for approximately four months and we learned that they also had pneumonia, tuberculosis and both had a cleft palate (inside). Additionally, we found that they were not nine months old, rather they were 19 months!! Their mother ultimately gave up her parental rights.

In due time, the girls, Genalyn and Genelyn, recovered and were released to one of the Lingap Center social workers who took them in as foster children. When they reach age 4, they will be admitted to the Lingap Center, where they will ultimately grow up. In the meantime, they frequently spend their days with their foster mother at the Center. Both girls are doing exceptionally well. Genelyn has fully recovered from her tuberculosis and has had her cleft palate surgically repaired. Genalyn is continuing to recover and will soon have her surgery. The Lingap wards (and staff) adore them and I am proud to say that they now have 120 doting parents! This is quite a contrast from the situation in January!

I just thank God that we happened to visit that particular squatter area on that day and were able to rescue them. However, the miracle is that even though we may have been the instruments who found them, the people who actually saved their lives were you, our supporters. Without you, there would be no Lingap project nor would we have been able to have them hospitalized, or provide them with a home, an education or a future. Thank you for being there for Genalyn and Genelyn. They are alive today because of you. Not a day goes by that I don't thank God for the Lingap Center, the Center staff and all of you. Now, instead of facing a very young death under horrific circumstances, the girls have a chance for a tremendous future. They are on their way! It doesn't get any better than that. Perhaps we can't save them all, but we have certainly saved these two.



When I think back to that day in January, 2011 when we found the twins, I am reminded of a quote from an unknown author that goes like this:

*You can close your eyes to things you don't want to see,
but you can't close your heart to the things you don't want to feel.*

Sincerely,



John Drake

Additional Notes

- I would like to invite you to visit our newly redesigned website at:
<http://www.lingapcenter.org>.
- Please watch the video on the home-page entitled: **“A Look at Lingap.”** While you're there, please take a minute to complete the **“Great ☆ Nonprofits” Review, an on-line Charity rating organization**, which can be found on the upper right-hand corner on the home-page. These reviews really help us when people or organizations are thinking of helping us (the more stars the better). I have also written a short book titled: **“I Heard God's Call, But How Will I Answer?”** that is located on the home-page under **“Our Story.”**
- I hope you will consider enrolling in our **“Place at the Table”** sponsorship program if you have not already done so. Sponsorships are critically important to us and will help us to continue our work. As of this writing, we have less than half of the number we need. This program is what keeps us going. You can easily enroll online or just give us a call at 517-529-9702.
- Please mark your calendars for our ninth-annual **“Hope for Orphans”** benefit to be held at 6:00 PM on April 14, 2012 at the Cascades Manor House in Jackson, MI. The evening begins with appetizers and a silent auction. After dinner we will hear from our special guests from the Lingap Center: Kint Omar and Rose Mae, ages 12. Invitations will be sent out in early March or you can make your reservation on-line through our website. We hope you will be able to join us.
- This year, we could use your assistance with the fund-raiser in the form of donations to our silent auction. This can be items of any value or monetary donations. If you would like to contribute to the silent auction, please contact us at: 517-529-9702 or by email at: helpingkids@lingapcenter.org and we will return your call.
- The Lingap Children's Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization, all donations are fully tax-deductible. Additionally, since our Board of Directors and I personally pay all administrative expenses, **100%** of all donations go directly to the benefit of the children.

We would again like to thank all of you for your encouragement and assistance. None of what we have been able to accomplish would have been possible without your help. Hope to see you on April 14!

<http://www.lingapcenter.org>
A 501 (c)(3) Organization