



## NOTES FROM THE FIELD

### October 2007

#### Greetings!

I have had a difficult time writing the Note for this month. I finished two drafts that did not come together. I didn't know what was holding me back, but that "something" was very real. The day I got the last reminder about the print deadline, wildfires began sweeping through San Diego County. They eventually charred over 300,000 acres and destroyed nearly 2,000 homes. Once more, we found ourselves fighting the highly emotional temptation to get caught-up in helping people cope with a disaster that had over 500,000 people evacuated from their homes and looking for a place to rest and eat. As an organization, ANGELCARE was not prepared to do anything. Personally, we couldn't totally get involved..

Some ten years ago, Julie, our oldest daughter, started a foundation that runs two group homes for mentally and physically challenged people in Poway, California. The one-third of the city that was evacuated contained one of their group homes. They moved everyone over to the other one. We then laid out a plan to move everyone to our place if the second home had to be evacuated. We had an uneasy night. No more evacuations were ordered, and in a few days we could begin to relax.

Everyone was talking about the wildfires and what could or should be done to help the victims. I was in two meetings that were discussed how to respond to the heartache and devastation caused by the fires. Both were wrestling with the classic issues posed by almost every natural disaster. As I listened to how these groups were going to respond, I watched them come face-to-face with the reality that they would have to reorder their priorities. They had to either redirect money planned for something else or take an extra collection and be satisfied with doing something "once over lightly."

These discussions made me aware that I needed to share several lessons I have learned while we have tried to respond to the needs of the poor and suffering over the years.

**Lesson 1: You can't save the whole world!** Thanks to modern media we can learn about war, pestilence, and natural disasters on a 24/7 basis. This has brought a new maddening reality to every person who wants to make a difference in the lives of the poor and needy. We live in a world where there is almost a "tragedy-of-the-week." How do you pick and choose where to make a difference and invest your time, energy, and money? The big disaster in New Orleans is replaced by a new disaster in San Diego. Last week's hurricane in Mexico is eclipsed by the sinking of a harbor ferry in the Philippines that drowns hundreds. The genocide in Darfur keeps poking its way into our consciousness as we try to absorb the injustice in so many places in this world. We are forced to decide what we can and want to do.

**Lesson 2: Stick to that decision and set a limit on what you want to do.** Reject the idea that "doing something is better than nothing" because this strategy makes you feel better than it assists the people you are helping. If you are to avoid the donor fatigue that overcomes so many, you need to decide what you are going to focus upon and how you are going to respond. This requires you to determine whether you are going to do disaster relief or community development. Disaster relief is "feeding a man a fish," community development is "teaching a man to fish." It is very easy to conclude that "teaching a man to fish" is the most effective and cost effective approach unless you are standing over a starving child or in the midst of raging wildfires. At that point, logic is overwhelmed by emotion and a desire to make an immediate difference in the life of the child. You need to decide what you can do effectively.

**ANGELCARE focuses on community development through our schools and medical clinics.** We believe that this is the most cost-effective way we can use our resources to solve the most basic problems in the cycle of poverty. When we do respond to a natural disaster we do so as "second responders." We send supplies as soon as we have the extra funds. We send volunteers to participate in the rebuilding of an area. We are not first-responders: firefighters, medics, police, and the like. No amount of emotion can change who we are. Once we got a clear picture of who are and what we can do, we have been able to quickly see if we can make a difference- with the resources at hand - in a disaster situation.

I hope you can find the solid basis you can use in deciding how you will respond to the next disaster.

Peace and joy to us in all circumstances! Ted

## **HERE'S A WAY YOU CAN HELP US ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB – one penny at a time!**

How many times a week do you use an Internet Search Engine such as Google, Yahoo, or ask.com? Your answer is probably, "Lots!" Well, there is a way that ANGELCARE can earn a penny every time you do such a search.

GoodSearch.com is a search engine that donates one-half of its revenue to charities chosen by the searcher. GoodSearch is really not new. It is powered by Yahoo! That assures you good search results.

A penny for every search doesn't seem like much but if 1,000 people averaged two searches a day, in the course of one year, ANGELCARE would make over \$7,000. If you do your part, it will not have cost any ANGELCARE supporter a penny and the children will benefit.

It is simple to start using GoodSearch. Go to [www.Goodsearch.com](http://www.Goodsearch.com). You will see two boxes: (1) the search box and a box that says, "Who do you want GoodSearch for?" The answer we hope you will put in this box is ANGELCARE. Fill in the Search Box and start searching. You can download a GoodSearch tool bar ([www.GoodSearch/toolbar](http://www.GoodSearch/toolbar)) and for you Internet browser so that you can have GoodSearch at your fingertips.

## **LEAVE A LEGACY THAT HELPS POOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES LONG AFTER YOUR TIME ON EARTH IS OVER.**

Each year, ANGELCARE receives bequests from long-time supporters who remember the organization and its work in their wills. If you want more information on including ANGELCARE in your will, Call (888) ANGL CARE/(888) 264-5227.

## **EARN YOUR ANGEL WINGS - DONATE YOUR BOAT, CAR OR TRUCK OR BOAT TO ANGELCARE FOR TAX DEDUCTIONS**



Boats will be used in our new **Pelican Patrol** program that offers day tours of San Diego Bay to underprivileged children to learn about marine life and boat safety. Boat donations also receive a cash payment (Bargain Sale Purchase Price) in addition to the tax deduction for the person who donates.

Vehicles that have some life in them will be repaired and given to poor and needy families. The others will be auctioned off.

