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**From:** Donovan and Mae Palmer <dm@the-palmers.org>  
**To:** Roger Gerard <Roger.Gerard@fbc.org>  
**Date:** 1/12/2012 2:24 PM  
**Subject:** An Update on Us!  
**Attachments:** PastedGraphic-1.pdf; PastedGraphic-2.pdf; Part.003; PastedGraphic-3.pdf; PastedGraphic-4.pdf; Part.006; PastedGraphic-5.pdf; PastedGraphic-6.pdf; Part.009; PastedGraphic-8.pdf; PastedGraphic-9.pdf; Part.012; PastedGraphic-12.pdf; PastedGraphic-13.pdf; Part.015; PastedGraphic-11.pdf; Part.017; princessanne.jpg; Part.019; PastedGraphic-10.pdf; Part.021

Hi Roger,

Warm greetings and happy new year from the Africa Mercy. It seems just like yesterday that I had dinner with you at the wonderful family restaurant in Arvada. Where has time gone!?! I am overdue to send you a report to pass onto FBC. We have been on a dead run for the last several months and there is much that we could report, but here's a stab at it...

We just completed a 10 month visit to Sierra Leone and have sailed to Togo after stopping off in Ghana for a short break over Christmas. We will be in Togo for the next five month deploying our services. By doing this we are setting a record for Mercy Ships. No other ship has ever taken on this length of a tour of duty without returning to Tenerife, Europe or South Africa for technical and crew support. This is proving to be a challenge to us practically, but we are shifting our field service schedule and it also means that we can be on location longer doing what the ship was built for.

Sierra Leone was tough. Really tough. I would have to say that Sierra Leone is one of the toughest countries that I have ever been to personally. The post war rebuild effort is getting momentum, but the capital city I would describe as the world's largest refugee camp. It's not literally a refugee camp, but the effect of having so many people move into the city during the troubles has created a human problem on a scale that I have not seen before. We encountered hardship, suffering and death on a frequent basis. We had many stories of joy of where we would be able to help, but also many stories of tears where we were overwhelmed with the needs.

The final stats are being computed, but I'm guessing that the impact of our programs exceeded 300,000. While we were there we were also to advance our desire to do remote medical operations. Before we arrived, our medical teams had seen and screened through 7,000 people. We are going to use these techniques that we developed to go even further into the bush to do what we are calling 'extreme screening'. Our goal will be to go to the forgotten of the forgotten in very remote areas, to treat basic medical needs and refer people to the ship for surgery.

We are also working on ways to further train and 'work ourselves out of a job'. In Sierra Leone we trained a number of medical people. In Togo, we will be working side by side with their surgeons to compliment the capacity of AFM. This is a win/win. We can do more, but there is mutual cross training between our people and their people.

I could go on and on, but we've got a lot on the burner. Once we are done in Togo, we will steam to Tenerife for a shipyard period and then off to Conakry, Guinea. I don't know you guys know much about the country, but with the political instability there, there has been very little development done in healthcare particularly in recent times. So if it is at all possible in terms of stability, we plan to go. The needs are huge there as well. For example, when we pull into port, our capacity onboard will more than double what is already in the country in terms of anesthesiology. While Guinea will be more of a classic medical relief situation, our hope is that we could engage with them in the same way that we have done in Togo and Sierra Leone to begin to build capacity in their systems with a long term goal so that we won't be needed there so much in the future.

I have attached some photos below of our work with some of the patients in Sierra Leone. Pictures are worth many words! One of the photos below is us welcoming H.R.H. Princess Anne and Sir Timothy Lawrence onboard for a short tour in Freetown. She was engaging and very supportive of our work. Many

of the crew were encouraged that she would take the time to see us.

Anyhow, hope this sort of brings you up to date. Please convey our thanks to the church for their support of us. We are not sure when we will be Stateside again, but look forward to when we can see everyone again. God bless you guys!

With much appreciation,

Donovan, Mae, Lara, Hannah and Jordan