



the CHALLENGE

MOVING EARTH TO SHARE HEAVEN OCTOBER 2024

Accelerating the
Gospel Message

**Let the Light
Shine:**

**Papua New Guinea
Solar Project**

**BLESSED TO BE
A BLESSING:
FIA's Corporate
Sponsors**

**The Pearl of Africa:
UGANDA**

**Trip Opportunities:
2024 & 2025**

Accelerating the Gospel Message



BARRY JOHNSON, FIA USA SHIPPING & WAREHOUSE MANAGER

“So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” – **1 Corinthians 3:7 (KJV)**

With a dedicated Shipping and Warehouse Ministry, FIA fulfills its mission to serve and accelerate the ministry of global partners and international mission workers as they share the Gospel message with a Lost World.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus often meets the physical needs of the people as an opportunity to address their spiritual needs. FIA models Jesus' love and compassion by meeting the practical needs for tools, trucks, furniture, solar systems, and more. These tools help our partners share the good news of Christ and bring hope and transformation to the communities they serve.

Sustainable Farming

Last year in West Africa, we shipped a weather station to document and track the temperature, humidity, rainfall, and windspeed. This is a pragmatic request with a deeper purpose. In many of our remote locations, sustainable farming is a challenge. The global worker shared data from the weather station with the local farmers and families, which enabled them to adjust their planting and harvesting activities. Higher crop yields resulted in extra produce to sell and increased income. FIA helped the international worker obtain the technology, but God used it to positively impact the individual families and community, demonstrating his love and provision.

Steel Rods & Iron

Building materials are common for us to ship as we "move earth to share heaven," often a metaphor for building the Kingdom of Heaven. Fulfilling a request from a global partner in the Pacific Ocean, FIA staff and volunteers loaded twenty-foot-long steel rods and angle iron into a 20-foot container, which only has nineteen feet and six inches inside! Without our assistance, the movement of the steel would be cost-prohibitive.

More importantly, the global partner fabricated the steel rods and iron into trusses between two shipping containers to build a roof. The roof protects the equipment parked under it, like a bulldozer and tractor, which are needed to assist the local people or to make a way through a jungle for international mission workers to reach villages. Shipping steel and iron meets an immediate need and paves the way for deeper spiritual connections.

Shipping Appliances

Occasionally, we receive unique requests for household appliances that are not readily available in the U.S. A recent order for a washing machine was a model with analog controls, a far cry from the Wi-Fi-capable models commonly found

in U.S. households. We contacted a local family-run appliance store, and they had the exact model we needed!

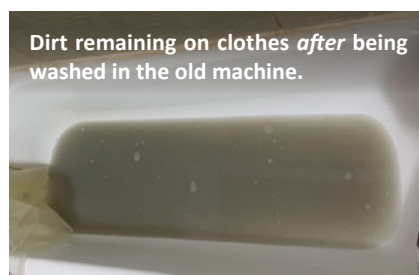
Buying a new washing machine may not be challenging for us. For this international mission worker, it was. She was grateful and praised God for helping her find the correct machine and getting it to her home overseas. "We are so excited to have the ability to ship this new one!" she exclaimed.

She stated this model will add to her quality of life in the remote areas of evangelism. A photo she shared demonstrates how "clean" her laundry is after washing her clothes in a locally procured model. The new washing machine will truly clean her clothes — not leave dirt in them after rinsing them in the tub!

Since this ministry's inception, we've partnered with over 140 ministries and 900 international mission workers. Each container or crate we pack and send is part of God's marvelous work to reach the unreached for Christ. By modeling the actions of Jesus, people experience God's love in tangible ways, providing an environment that is open to hearing about the good news of the Gospel.

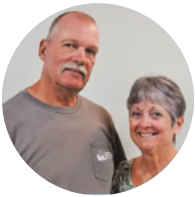
Get Involved

FIA is looking to grow its shipping team, whether through occasional volunteers or involvement on a full-time basis. If interested, please contact Barry Johnson at barryjohnson@fiintl.org. ■





Let the Light SHINE



MIKE AND RUTH BUTLER, FIELD LEADERS, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” – **John 8:12 (KJV)**

In May of 2023, FIA announced the need to fund a solar project in Papua New Guinea (PNG), where only an estimated 13% of the 8.6 million people have access to grid-connected power, which is often unreliable. The lack of electricity severely impacts our mission base, as our woodshop is a major means of supporting missionaries. Without power, we cannot run many tools to help with projects headed by trained nationals. Here is our story of your support and God's faithful provision.

We live in a small town in PNG with roughly 18,000 people. The town runs on six generators that supply electricity and water to the people. Unfortunately, only one or two are operational. Reservoir tanks pump the water, and gravity feeds it to the town. If the power goes down or the generators stop working, everyone is out of power and cannot get water as the tanks run dry.

Power Outages

In 2014, we decided to build an addition to our warehouse. We thought it would be the perfect angle for a solar system at the time, but we did not think it was necessary yet. If we experienced power outages, they would only last about an hour, which was manageable. However, as the years went on, the power outages worsened. They started to last for 3-4 days, for 72–96-hour periods, making it harder for us to finish work. Fast forward to 2021, after Covid hit, fuel prices started to skyrocket, and our town had trouble obtaining and affording the diesel to run their operational generators. The ongoing power outages were lengthy, and our backup generator often ran 24/7. We realized we needed to find a solution.



God Prepares The Way

To begin, we contacted a ministry called ITEC. At first, we were a little overwhelmed trying to figure out exactly what was needed, so we put off the paperwork for some time. However, once we submitted everything, ITEC informed us that a group of retired electricians was interested in building a base solar system that could adapt to the needs of the area it was going to. The solar system consisted of a 20-foot shipping container fully insulated with all the unit's 60 panels, switches, and five 48-volt batteries weighing 500 pounds each. Upon arrival, everything would be wired and ready to go. We simply had to put the solar panels into position and connect the wires.

The biggest hurdle for this project was obtaining the necessary funds. It was an expensive project, but we trusted that God would provide, and He did. Before we had a chance to share our need in our newsletter, funds started to come in from the few people we mentioned it to. Within a year, we had the funds for the entire project.

Installation

Also, God was already providing a way for the completion of the installation! About a month before the team came over to install the solar system, a man from our home church arrived to help with some preliminary work. We calculated that the solar panels would be an extra 3,500 lbs. (about half the weight of an elephant) on our warehouse roof! We did not build our warehouse to sustain extra weight like "snow weight" since we live only three degrees from the equator. Therefore, we had to manufacture and install extra supporting brackets to withstand the weight.

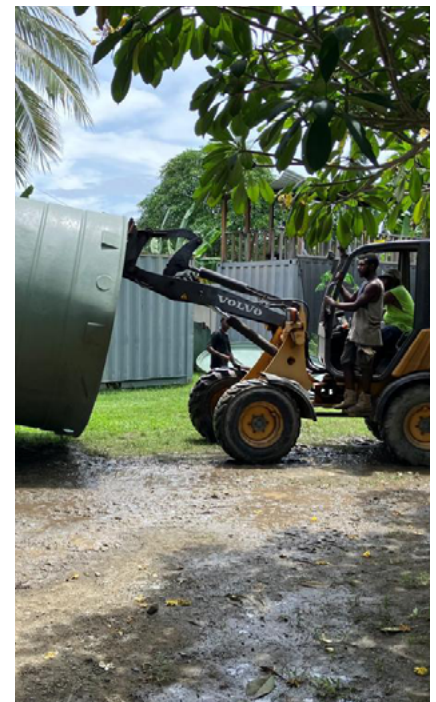
The second hurdle was the weather when the team arrived for the installation. Usually, the temperatures in PNG are so hot that the roof will melt the bottom of your shoes. We had been praying that God would provide overcast weather so that we could work. Sure enough, God answered our prayers! We had cloudy weather during the installation, plus a breeze most days.

After the system was up and running, we experienced a 7.2 earthquake.

The entire town lost power and we were not sure the system would hold. Thankfully, it withstood the quake, and we still had power. We say God gave it the good ole "that should hold her" shake, and we were good to go.

His Timing is Perfect

Solar energy has made all the difference for us in remaining in PNG. Not only do we always have power and running water, but we can also continue working. We can provide water and ongoing work to our national workers during power outages. We do not need to worry about obtaining the large amounts of fuel formerly needed with the ongoing shortages. We have seen God's hand throughout this entire project. He provided everything we needed and went before us to prepare the way. Trust His timing, for it is perfect! ■



Blessed to be a Blessing: FIA's Corporate Sponsors

"I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.." –Acts 20:35 (KJV)

FIA is blessed to collaborate with dozens of corporate sponsors. Our business partners provide gifts-in-kind, discounted machinery, matching campaigns, monthly support, and individual gifts. These collaborations help FIA reach new audiences with our mission, secure needed resources, and further our impact.

Recently, we took a moment to catch up with one such sponsor, Merv Breckbill, co-owner of Wall-to-Wall Floor Coverings in Ronks, PA. For over 25 years, Wall-to-Wall has provided flooring products for any size project, whether residential/retail, commercial, or new construction. Listen as FIA's Partnership Development Specialist, Shannon Medich, and Merv discuss his involvement.

SHANNON: Tell us a little bit about Wall-to-Wall. How did you get started?

MERV: Back in the 90s, I worked for a company but was not making enough for my wife to stay home with our kids. I knew I would have to go into business for myself for that to happen. So, in the fall of 1996, I worked solo for about six months, and then my brother-in-law and a good friend worked with me for another year. After that, we started the business and opened the store in February 1999.

SHANNON: Tell us about what is hot in flooring and your business model.

MERV: Well, luxury vinyl tiles (snap or glue down) and LVP (vinyl plank) remain the top choices due to durability, water resistance, and the fact that they look like hardwoods. As for a business model, our strong suit at Wall-To-Wall is hard work

and honesty; God takes care of the rest. There is no other secret to our success.

SHANNON: How and why did you get involved with Friends In Action?

MERV: Paul Brosey, FIA's Teams Coordinator, used to be a contractor we worked for on a handful of jobs in the early years. He told me about the tangible ways FIA uses construction to help promote missions, and I wanted to be part of that.

SHANNON: So, are missions something dear to your heart?

MERV: Even out of high school, I went to Grenada to work at a church school where I helped to lead Sunday School classes and Bible studies. I believe each of us is called to be a witness wherever we are. I can reach people here in Lancaster County by meeting needs and speaking God's Word. I love that FIA enables me to do that internationally as well.

SHANNON: FIA is involved in five different countries on 10+ projects each year. How do you choose what you pray for and give to?

MERV: I like to be a monthly supporter and usually direct my giving where I'm told it's needed most. I love that FIA uses construction in a practical, hands-on way to meet tangible

needs. I remember reading an FIA article about how a witch doctor said that the spirits would not allow FIA teams to get water from drilling. But when the people see water gushing forth from a newly dug well, that is a powerful testimony of Truth! I love giving to what matters most to FIA's ministries.

SHANNON: Merv, we would like to thank you and your family for your faithful support to our ministries and those we serve. Your prayers and generosity have touched so many lives over the years - thousands - and we want you to know that your involvement matters and is making a difference.

MERV: I don't even know what to say to that. But praise the Lord! We've been blessed and want to continue to pass those blessings forward, so we're glad to be a part of what FIA is doing.

Wall-to-Wall is just one of the dozens of businesses that support FIA's mission. Keep on the lookout for generous dollar matches some of these businesses provide before year-end! Our upcoming "All In Give" on November 22, 2024, will be your next chance to double your donations towards our \$50,000 one-day online giving goal! ■

The Pearl of Africa

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went, and sold all that he had and bought it." – Matthew 13:45-46 (KJV)

In 2023, FIA partnered with Milandila Community Missions, a medical and skills training ministry in Uganda. Like FIA providing a water source to a village as an avenue to communicate the gospel of Jesus, the medical ministry and skills training from James and Morgan Tumwesiigye allows them to share the love and hope found in Jesus.

Our summer intern, **Mason Moore**, and Partnership Development Specialist **Shannon Medich** and her family traveled to Uganda this summer to share their skills and faith among the local people. "Their visit was a true blessing to our team, and their love, positive energy, and dedication were a source of inspiration," said James.



Providing Hope

Mason Moore, 19, a Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology student completed an internship this summer after COO Andy Bachert visited his school's Bible study last year. Mason felt a call from God to be a part of FIA, which led to his first international mission trip to Uganda for two weeks in June.

"In Uganda, we got to work with Milandila at their pregnancy center and out on home visits in the village. We handed out food and drink to the mothers and children," said Mason. "I also assisted with some construction projects such as digging a trench for a septic system and painting the walls of the family center to make mothers feel more welcomed and comforted there."

Mason was apprehensive before the trip because he anticipated the town to be a "hopeless" place based on what he had read. However, after arriving, he saw that Milandila was providing hope to mothers and the people of the community through Christ. "The local people were hopeful and remained positive despite unfortunate circumstances and were some of the nicest people you'll ever meet," Mason said. "I found it rewarding that though I may not see our impact, we had a part in doing a 'little digging' to help contribute to the community and the advancement of their ministry."

For Mason, his biggest challenge was to let go of what he wanted and go all in for what God asked of him. "For those thinking of maybe getting involved in a short-term trip, I say you should just let go of every excuse in your head and all the reasons why you shouldn't go. I never felt so certain that this was what God wanted for me in my life. It was worth it, and I'd do it again every time."

Pathway to the Gospel

After she asked Morgan about the needs at the pregnancy clinic, 12-year-old Kallie Medich collected 1,047 onesies and 153 baby blankets over 18 months. In June, the Medich family delivered the onesies and blankets and volunteered their time and skills.

On the first day they visited the pregnancy center to see the ministry personally. "We walked through a narrow alley, passed a burning garbage heap, and rounded a corner to see an ocean of people waiting for us!" exclaimed Shannon Medich.

More than 75 women with newborns intently listened as the Medichs shared their testimonies and distributed resources. Many women asked spiritual questions and some practical questions about parenting or marriage.

The women shocked everyone when they loudly cheered as Shannon's husband, Bryan, introduced himself. The translator explained that they were celebrating a man who was the husband of one wife and helping raise his children. What a snapshot of their reality and a pathway to share the Gospel.

The next day, they participated in home visits where a clinician would ascertain what support and resources an expectant mom had and then put a plan together for unmet needs. The abject poverty, lack of education, and fatherlessness revealed the limited options for many of the women. "These encounters created a deep gratitude in my 12-year-old daughter for the opportunities afforded to girls in America," Shannon shared.

The women were gracious, grateful, and willing to share their lives and stories. "One of many examples was a momma who had given birth to twins, now desperately sick because the mother didn't know enough to wake them to feed them. I have no doubt this visit saved their lives," said Shannon.

The Medichs (along with Mason) spent the remaining days working with nationals on a septic system at the missionaries' compound and painting the clinic. They talked and shared as they worked: "I'm connected with God because I'm a good man, and my prayers get answered." "Why, as a woman, are you digging with us?" "What does it mean that Jesus was a sacrifice for sin? It is both good and godly that you have come here to us."



James shared that the nationals ask the FIA volunteers spiritual questions they do not normally voice. During daily devotions before work, James thoroughly answered the questions from God's Word and provided resources in their language for further growth.

To envision success not by a project completed but by the connections made with the people along the path challenged Shannon's American value of efficiency. "I saw a handful of tourists as we waited to fly home. Their t-shirts claimed, 'I saw the source of the Nile' and 'Ugandan Safari,' but I couldn't compare them with my heart-changing glimpse of living alongside the Ugandan people," said Shannon.

Matthew 13:45-46 likens the kingdom of heaven to finding a pearl of great price. Uganda is aptly called the Pearl of Africa declared Shannon, "I count the lessons learned, the friendships gained, and the memories made as a precious look at God at work in our midst." ■

2024 & 2025 TRIP OPPORTUNITIES

A short-term trip can be an adventure of a lifetime! On a trip with FIA, you'll see the work of God on the mission field, be a blessing to another culture, and discover how your skills can help further the Gospel. Use your trade skills to help make Christ known by volunteering on one (or more) of FIA's upcoming trips.

We still have trips available for the remainder of 2024. And plan for next year with our preliminary 2025 schedule, with **specific dates to be determined!**

2024 TRIPS

BOLIVIA

November 12-21 | Ministry Center Construction

Skill: General construction, plumbing, electrical

MEXICO

November 4-18 | Well Drilling & Equipment Service

Skill: General labor and mechanics, automotive service

PERU

November 2-16 | Mission Home Build

Skill: General construction, plumbing, drywall, electrical, flooring, carpentry

USA TEAMS

November 9-17 | Ethnos 360 Missouri - Renovation and repair

Skill: General construction, electrical, drywall, plumbing

2025 TRIPS

WEST AFRICA

February, March, April | General Labor & Well Drilling

Skill: General labor and well drilling

August | Equipment & Vehicle Maintenance

Skill: Heavy equip. mechanics, personal vehicle mechanics, air compressor technicians, trailer and support mechanics.

NICARAGUA

January 12-26 | Mission House Renovations

Skill: General construction and carpentry

March 15-29 | Community Center Development

Skill: Concrete flooring; mixing, pouring, finishing

April 26-May 10 | Community Center Development

Skill: Brick and block masonry, plumbing, well drilling

July | Community Center Development

Skill: Carpentry; cabinet, bench, and table construction

November | Construction Development

Skill: General construction

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

WEWAK

March | Equipment & Vehicle Maintenance

Skill: All mechanics

GOROKA (NTM Aviation)

January 11-February 1 | Hangar Construction

Skill: Pre-engineered steel frame building construction, steel fabrication, concrete, general labor

GOROKA (Lapilo Station)

February 19-March 7 | Equipment & Vehicle Maintenance

Skill: Small gas engine, electric motor, vehicle mechanics

Seeking Project Managers



FIA receives requests from partner missions to engage in both short-term and ongoing project management services to support construction and expansion projects.

We are looking for experienced managers willing to serve anywhere from two weeks to 12 months (single deployment or multiple deployments) based on the needs of the projects.

For more information, contact Andy Bachert, U.S. Chief Operating Officer, at andybachert@fiaintl.org.

VANUATU

March 5-21 | Solar Installation Project

Skill: General labor, electrical tech, welding, fabrication

April 16-May 2 | Mechanical Service

Skill: Heavy equipment mechanics, hydraulic mechanics

June | Water Project (Rainwater Collection)

Skill: general labor, plumbers, geo engineering

July, August, September | Welding Project (steel truss & roof)

Skill: Welding, fabrication, metal roof, general labor

MEXICO

April 14-28, November TBD | Well Drilling

Skill: General labor and manpower, equipment mechanics, vehicle mechanics

UGANDA

May | General Construction

Skill: General construction, masonry, labor, agriculture

USA TEAMS

March 9 - 15 | Renovations & Repair (LETU Students)

Skill: HVAC tech and installers, Roofers, Diesel Mechanics, Commercial Electricians, Welders, Stone Masons

May 11-17 | Renovations

Skill: HVAC tech and installers, Roofers, Diesel Mechanics, Commercial Electricians, Welders, Stone Masons

June TBD, Nov TBD | Renovations & Repair

Skill: General construction, electrical, plumbing, carpentry



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