



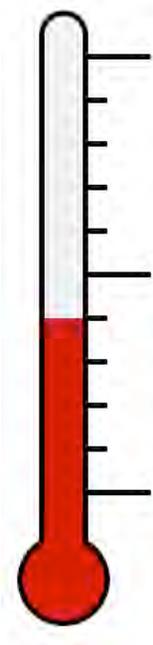
Empowering each other to serve  
the destitute elderly in the  
developing world

June 2011

Michael's House is a grassroots organization that is a registered 501 (c) (3) international non-profit charity, whose mission is to aid the elderly poor who have fallen through the cracks. We provide a community day center, hot meals, hygiene facilities, supplies for handicrafts, basic medical care, overnight shelter for the infirmed, pensions, eye glasses, surgeries, working farms with crops and animals, and funds for special projects. Currently, we are in Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Thailand.



*There is no vacation from hunger*



We are obligated for \$5000 monthly, so we continue to search for additional sustaining (consistent monthly) donors. Each month is a struggle to try and provide for the needs of the destitute elderly. We are usually \$2000 short! CAN YOU HELP???

We continue to strive to provide:

- Ethiopia-3600 meals a week...one enjoyed at the Michael's House Community Center with two additional meals to take home for an evening meal and one to share with a needy neighbor.
- Uganda and Tanzania monthly pensions for 24 "Grannies." (\$240 monthly)
- Uganda to perform essential surgeries to correct cataracts and fistulas.
- Thailand with basic foodstuffs, clothing and household items and dignity.

However, each month brings anxiety to our volunteer staff, as we often are not able to provide for the destitute elderly as promised.



#### UPDATE FROM THAILAND

Terry LaRose enlisted the help of the district government in Krasang to find us the most deserving recipients, some of whom we already knew and were helping. We came up with a list of 42 names, each of which, received a fairly substantial bundle of goods including food, basics like sugar and salt, and a new pair of shoes, blanket, dishes and so on. The response was superb, with most of the recipients in shock that anyone would want to give them free things, especially from a foreign country. Several of the recipients had recently run out of food and the donations were a true lifeline. The government helpers went above and beyond the call of duty, sending two trucks and a dozen people to help carry the supplies to the recipients. My niece, Malisa Suriye, and nephew, Taksin Suriye, also volunteered as sign holders, and for seven year olds, did an extremely good job.

The government has agreed to help as they had heard we were doing good things, and have honored Baan Suksek (Michael's House) with a community service award that will be presented at the next official provincial ceremony. The government has also indicated that when we are ready to break ground for an actual home for our elderly, they will likely donate the land.



#### TSERONIS-RWANDA "SEWING COOPERATIVE"

After the tribal wars in Rwanda, many women were left on their own to feed and clothe their families. They were often trained in the operation of sewing machines with which they could earn a living; however no sewing machines were readily available. Through the generous donation given by John and Jane Tseronis, Michael's House has been able to send the funds necessary to purchase sewing machines for the women's cooperative.



## Seeing is Believing by Michael Taylor

“The eyes are the windows to the soul.” It’s a very old proverb, but it speaks truth to me so often. I went to Addis Ababa to help at Michael’s House recently. Looking into the eyes of the elderly destitute at Michael’s House revealed so much, and sometimes more than I could take emotionally.

Coming into Addis from the airport at 4:00 am, all I saw was thousands upon thousands of sick, weak, old people lying on the side of the road. Whether they were dead or alive, I could not tell. Later that day, I went to Michael’s House. When the gate was open and we drove into the courtyard, all of these elderly people were lined around the perimeter clapping hands as a welcome. One old woman came to me with a bouquet of flowers she had collected and handed it to me and bowed before me. Then I saw her eyes. I saw her thankfulness most of all. I could see in her eyes her simplicity, her hopefulness, her joy, (yes, her joy). Because of us, all of us who support Michael’s House, she has food, she can wash herself and her few bits of clothing, she is protected, she has shelter and no longer fears wild dogs attacking her at night. Her eyes told me that she considered herself wealthy.

Being wealthy can mean many things. For the person who has nothing, the person who has coins and some kind of shelter is wealthy. The person with the few coins thinks that the person who has a house is wealthy, and so forth. We Americans think in terms of dollars. Our people at Michael’s House think differently. There are some things that money cannot buy. Love cannot be bought at any price. Someone who cares is worth more than gold. Our donations, whether large or small, make it possible for these people to feel that they are loved in their last few years.

There is another elderly woman at Michael’s House who has HIV-AIDS. She comes every day at least an hour early to wait for her food and medicine provided by Michael’s House. Her old eyes gleam with gratitude and she never stops smiling.

Now let me tell you that there was the man who spoke English fluently. That was a surprise. He had been a science professor. Now, all he has is Michael’s House. He had become too old and feeble to continue. There is no Social Security or Healthcare program in Ethiopia. There is no pension plan.

And let me tell you about one more person at Michael’s House. This man escaped from Eritrea and walked to Addis Ababa. He is perhaps the thinnest man I have ever seen. He insists on helping to serve the others before he eats. Then he helps to clean up afterwards. This is a very feeble man. You can see that he is totally exhausted when he completes his “duties.” Others are able to do their part as well, like keeping the courtyard clean. There is never a scrap of paper on the ground when they leave. Most of these people are physically handicapped. But they try.

Eyes - So many old eyes. Some were blind. Yet, they all revealed thankfulness and joy from their souls for our care of them. Toward the end of my stay, an old man who could hardly walk, came up to me, knelt before me, took my hands and kissed them, and bent down lower to kiss my feet. I was truly humbled and my heart was breaking. Then I remembered that it was not just me standing before him. I represented you. He was kissing all of our hands and feet with love and thankfulness. I realized again: We are all that they have.



**A CONCERT BENEFITTING THE ELDERLY SERVED BY MICHAEL'S HOUSE – SAVE THE DATE! SAT NOV 5, 2011 6:15-10 pm (concert 7 pm)**  
**Westchester Community Center, Oella, Maryland**  
*Music –Silent Auction –Giving Tree- Refreshments*

Join us for an evening of music with Bill Staines, a world -renowned folksinger. If you wish to find out more about him, please visit his website:  
[www.acousticmusic.com/staines/](http://www.acousticmusic.com/staines/)

Tickets \$20 by October 15, \$25 after and at the door  
Contact Carla Johnson or FloJean Speck at [tickets@michaels-house.org](mailto:tickets@michaels-house.org)

**GOLF TOURNAMENT REPORT...** Recently Michael's House along with Hawkins Electric held their second annual fundraiser golf tournament at Blue Mash Golf Club. Although the final numbers are not yet in, the event was another wonderful success with over 70 golfers participating and a lot of fun was had by all. Certainly, a special thanks goes to Eric Shatzer and his staff at Hawkins Electric for their countless hours of work to make the golf tournament a great success.



In the event that you would prefer to receive your newsletter by email, please send us your email address in a short note to Michael's House at the address listed below. This not only saves us postage, but makes it very easy for you to forward and share with friends.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO TRAVEL TO ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**—If you would be willing to travel to Michael's House in Addis Ababa as a volunteer, we would welcome your help. Although, we would be unable to subsidize your trip, the extraordinary experience and your sense of wellbeing would far outweigh your personal expenses. Please give it some serious thought! You may contact Michael's House through our website.



**REPORT FROM BBC NEWS: The world's worst food security crisis continues in the eastern Horn of Africa.**

The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (Fewsnet) said areas of particular concern were in **Ethiopia**, Kenya and Somalia...large-scale emergency assistance was urgently needed "to save lives and treat acute malnutrition" in the region...the current humanitarian response was "inadequate". "This is the most severe food security emergency in the world today." In southern Ethiopia...the agency said, "poor households are unable to access the basic food supplies needed for survival".

**MORE THAN EVER YOUR HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED...JUST \$10. CAN HELP SO MANY.**

**Your continued support makes it all possible and secures one daily meal for the elderly poor. They have come to depend on the love and generosity from those of us more fortunate on the other side of the world. We cannot let them down!**

**Donate on the web or make checks payable to: Michael's House Inc, Post Office Box 856  
Burtonsville, Maryland, 20866**

**Visit us on the web at [www.michaels-house.org](http://www.michaels-house.org)**