

EWB Portland Maine Professionals

1/16/18 Meeting Minutes

Vice President Charlie Burnham opened the meeting with a welcome to all and updates as follows:

EL PROGRESO, ECUADOR: This is a water project that will start as water distribution project and may grow. The travel first team will head to Ecuador for the assessment on January 21 and will present their findings at the February PMP meeting. The second trip is being lined up for this spring. If you're interested and want to get involved, let Neil Franklin know (franklinn31@gmail.com) as this team meets separately for planning and completing the EWB requirements.

DEBRE BIRHAN, ETHIOPIA: Our portion of this project is the design and construction of a school for 1000 K-12th graders, with support for the latrine design and miscellaneous support as needed. Although travel has been challenging due to in country disruption, construction continues. They are making compressed earth blocks and plan to start installing the walls. Our in-country PM has been inspecting and repairing the foundation and rebar columns. PSU is working on the latrines. South Denver Professionals is supporting development of an experimental bamboo nursery. You can follow all projects and see the videos on The Community Project:Ethiopia Facebook page. If you have an interest in joining the team (traveling or supporting back home) let Nadia know (nglucksberg@haleyaldrich.com). Project team meetings occur separately and will provide an update at the chapter meeting this month.

STEM OUTREACH: Thanks to those who have volunteered and we are ready to start up with schools calling us to present to their students. If you would like to organize, get involved, or just take part, please let Kathy Hillman Reed know (khillmanreed@gmail.com)

HAITI BRIDGE TEAM: The Haiti Bridge Project is back up and running. The update from Cashman is they cannot donate the bridge until they've had it in position for a year (tax issues). As that date approaches, they have secured land in Perches (the original project) and plan to move forward there. They also have road work going on at Fond-des-Blances. We are hoping there will be opportunities for travel as soon as this spring. Please reach out to Nick Dempsey (Nicholas.dempsey@hdrinc.com).

FUNDRAISING: Next up is Portland Uncorked!. All volunteers and ideas are welcome. We will hold it at the Custom House in Portland on Thursday, March 8, 2018. We need everyone's help to make this a "go to" event to cap off Engineer's Week. Help includes getting friends and family to buy tickets and rounding up silent auction/raffle items. If you'd like to help with organizing the event, please contact Kathy Hillman Reed (khillmanreed@gmail.com).

EWB CHAPTER OUTREACH: We are supporting the EWB New Haven Professional Chapter, who needs travel mentors and REICs for their sanitation project in Nicaragua. First trip is in February. Their assessment trip will be shared with our chapter at our March meeting.

PMP WEBSITE/FACEBOOK: Many thanks to Will Turner for his time and efforts to update the PMP website and provide ongoing updates. Many thanks to Baxter Maitke for his posts on our Facebook page. We really appreciate all your work!

JANUARY PRESENTATION:

Wendy LePage, a scientist at Idexx US, served in the Peace Corps in Mali from 1991 – 1993. Wendy presented her experience as a forester working in Mali on issues that included deforestation/soil erosion, inadequate potable water, and poaching. She noted her main goals were to teach and teach others how to teach, increase the understanding of the community about Americans, and increase Americans' understanding of other cultures.

Wendy described her experiences with cultural differences, language and customs primarily. Her work revolved around finding ways to increase fruit production with grafting techniques, how to limit soil erosion with rock lines, and producing "health skirts" as a way to teach about the use of clean water to reduce the incidence of diarrhea and guinea worm infections.

Her presentation was followed by a great Q & A session.

NEXT MEETING IS TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2018 at 6:00 PM at the SEA DOG BREWING CO.,125 WESTERN AVE., SO. PORTLAND, ME.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Hillman Reed, Chapter Secretary