

One gift will help many

Greece Volunteer Ambulance donated an ambulance for a children's hospital in Haiti.

By **COLLEEN M. FARRELL**

Messenger Post Staff

Like so many good deeds, this one came about with a bit of luck and, some might say, a bit of help from above.

On Monday, Greece Volunteer Ambulance decided to take one of its older ambulances off the road and get a new one. The bus had no trade-in value, so that wasn't an option. On Tuesday, a woman in Pennsylvania called Bill Joyce, a member of Greece Ambulance, and told him she was in need of medical supplies that she can send to Haiti.

How about an ambulance? he asked. The woman "went crazy," Bill said.

Joyce, of Greece, who's on the ambulance board of directors, has been involved with InterVol, an area organization that connects medical professionals with those in other countries. Among its

efforts, InterVol collects unused medical supplies and sends them health care facilities and clinics in other countries. The group collected 384,985 pounds of unused supplies in 2005 alone.

And Joyce has been a big part of that.

"People in the EMS community know Bill Joyce does this all the time because I'm always scouring for stuff they throw away," he said.

Many of the supplies InterVol collects would go to waste in the United States because of its strict guidelines, he said, but can be used in developing countries.

An acquaintance of Joyce's met the woman from Pennsylvania, who was trying to help bring medical supplies to Haiti. He told her to call Joyce, she did, and then fate took over.

"As it turns out there's a higher being here pushing the buttons," Joyce said.

Now, a children's hospital in Haiti is getting an ambulance it desperately needs.

"They've been using backs of pickup trucks or dump trucks or whatever they could find to move kids," Joyce said.

On Sunday, GVA held a ceremony to gift the ambulance to the people from Pennsylvania. Joyce's grandkids gave it a final wash.

Before the bus left, InterVol contacted the physicians at the Haitian hospital to see what supplies they need. InterVol filled the ambulance with bandages and syringes and everything else.

"It's a neat thing and it's going to go to a good cause," Bill said. "To them it's worth a million dollars, and the ambulance is in great shape but there's no trade-in value (for us)."

The ambulance was driven to New York City and will be shipped to Haiti in about three weeks. The group from Pennsylvania is raising money to cover its \$1,900 shipping cost.

To Joyce, InterVol is a win-win for everybody. It saves hospitals money because medical recycling is expensive and has helped people all over the world.

"Giving (away) that ambulance is going to make a lot of people lives a lot better," he said.

Contact Colleen M. Farrell at (585) 394-0770, Ext. 265, or at cfarrell@mpnews-papers.com.