

Dear Praying Friends,

2 things: #1. New posts have just been added to Ellie's blog at: <http://elliebomccracken.blogspot.com>; #2. Following is a portion of a recent update sent out by Athens teamie Susan Pearson.

Thanks for your continued prayers and support on our behalf.

Grateful,

Scott and Vicki

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<http://vimeo.com/1207537> (ministry video)

<http://elliebomccracken.blogspot.com>

<http://refminathens.blogspot.com> (refugee stories)

It was a cold, blustery, damp day in Athens, Greece today. Now, the rain seems to be falling ever so gently and no wind is blowing. I'm so thankful for my new hot water heater. Yeah, the plumber was finished installing it about 2 hours after I sent you my last update. I really enjoyed my hot shower that day ... and every day since. The birthday party was really fun, too. Which got me thinking about our shower ministry at the ARC ... every Friday, several ladies and their children come into the ARC for 5 or 6 hours and take turns taking showers, chatting, sharing a meal together. The children do crafts, color, and watch a Disney/Pixar/animated movie on the BIG screen in the BIG room with the BIG speakers (and not the dinky little tv screen in the children's room that only shows videos and not DVDs). They go home ... wherever that is ... an abandoned building, an 2 room apartment shared with 5 other families, a couple of open beds at a shelter ... but, they DO go somewhere ... clean, happy, warm ... at least for a little while. It always seems to be easier for the women and children to find a place to put their heads for the night.

On Tuesdays, the men come. This past Tuesday morning, when the male teammates arrived at the ARC ... there were already 120 guys waiting for a shower. Only 74 were able to get one ... the guys get an 8 minute hot shower and then the timer cuts the hot water off and it runs cold ... REALLY cold ... sometimes even that is not enough incentive for them to leave the water that is slowly ... ever so slowly ... rinsing out the dirt that has crept into their very pores, wrinkles, and creases in their skin. The dirt that covers them when they sleep in the park, under (or on) a bench, in a tunnel, on the sidewalk, in a doorway, wherever

they can put their body down for a couple of hours before the shopkeepers, police, neighbors, whoever, kick them awake and shoo them away. They don't have blankets. They don't have nice, clean, pressed clothes. They don't have a pillow. They don't have a nice soft mattress to lie on. And they don't have water, let alone hot water.

As the rain has started falling harder outside, I'm reminded that Jesus promised we would always have the poor with us. His father, in the old testament, told us to look after the widows, orphans, and foreigners. We offer so little at the ARC. Showers once a week to a very limited number of people. Tea on another day. A hot meal another time. English classes once a week. Children and baby rooms opened twice a week for kids to be kids. We no longer offer shelter. We are hoping to re- open a couple of NESTs (shelters) in the next month or so, but the problem is not renting an apartment for families and single guys (2 different apartments), that's the easy part ... the problem is KEEPING it rented. It takes a long-term commitment. While one time donations are great, the NEST ministry needs people, lots of people, that are committed to giving consistently (no matter the amount). God has always provided and in His timing, don't get me wrong. The NEST doors have opened and closed when He has told them to be done so. In the almost 10 years I've been here, I've seen at least 5 different versions of the NEST exist and months when it didn't exist at all. We feel that it is time for it to exist again.

If you would like to help ... pray ... donate, then please do!

Make checks payable to:

International Teams
411 W. River Rd
Elgin, IL 60123-1570

Include a note: NEST in Athens, Greece

Or you can now give online:

International Teams has made it a simpler process to give online, including recurring electronic gifts whether by credit card or bank transfer. If you decide to invest in the NEST using these secure online forms, it's only necessary to note "NEST" in the "where to give" section (no account number or other information needed). Go to www.iteams.org/give to learn more.

When I started writing this email an hour ago, I just wanted to tell you about what God has been stirring in my heart. It was not my

intention to end in a plea for finances. I know how difficult the economy is impacting all of you and I know how the economy is impacting Greece (that, too, has been in the news all week). I am most appreciative of ALL of your gifts ... whether in prayer or finances or packages or email or whatever I value your partnership with me and this ministry. God is using it to change lives and He's using you to do it.

For His Glory,

Susan Pearson