Recently Shirley Bates and Jan Saunders were honoured with a Certificate of Honorary Life Membership for their many years of service. They have been supporting people affected by leprosy by raising funds and awareness in their local community for over 40 years!

Shirley began her service by attending the inaugural meeting of the Toowoomba Auxiliary/Support Group in October 1975. She was elected as Secretary at the AGM in 1981 and has continued on in that role to the present day. Each year Shirley presents all members of the group with a Comprehensive Annual Financial statement. Shirley provides the tea, coffee, milk and sugar for all the group’s functions, as well as organising change for various stalls. She is always on the door to welcome supporters, as well as working behind the scenes in the kitchen. After a tiring day at a function, Shirley will go home and within a few hours can report the proceeds of all their efforts. She has been and continues to be a wonderful, efficient, and unassuming treasurer. Bless you Shirley!

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Just 17, Rajesweri is one of the students studying electrical engineering at your Vocational Training Centre (VTC) in India. Thanks to people like you!

She is excited to have this opportunity as she has big dreams for her future: “I chose the electrical engineering course, as I knew there could be some good opportunities for me to pursue a career with the government when I qualify,” Rajesweri said.

But before starting at the VTC a year ago, Rajesweri had suffered years of heartache in her young life – from the day she first saw patches developing on her skin...

“My right hand began clawing and it became painful when I wrote,” Rajesweri said.

A correct diagnosis of leprosy finally came through The Leprosy Mission’s Vadathorasalur Hospital. Rajesweri started Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT) straight away.

“When I went home and told my mother I had leprosy – she said it was because of my bad behavior that I got leprosy,” she said.

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“When I went home and told my mother I had leprosy – she said it was because of my bad behavior that I got leprosy,” she said.

At the same time, Rajesweri was being paired to marry to a young man from her village. But when his family saw she had developed patches on her face due to leprosy:

“They said they would rather have their son marry my younger sister instead,” she told us.

But all these things did not stop this determined young woman. With a little encouragement from her father (who admitted that he had leprosy in the past), Rajesweri applied to study at the VTC in Vadathorasalur.

“I now want to finish my studies and get a good job first before I consider marriage,” she says.

Rajesweri has also received physiotherapy and self-care training. The clawing of her hands has reduced considerably. Her family also received counselling. “Now my mother is understanding of leprosy and knows that it is not a curse,” she said. All thanks to people like you!

“After getting leprosy, I never thought I would get an opportunity to study. Thanks to supporters like you, this has been possible. I thank you from the bottom of my heart!” - Rajesweri

Thank you for your labours of love

To join or start a Leprosy Mission Support Group or Auxiliary please contact Tim Collison FREECALL 1800 LEPROSY (1800 537 767) or email: engage@leprosymission.org.au

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The New Year is a great time to pause, think and pray about how we can best serve The Lord and people affected by leprosy and disability. Prayer, of course, is paramount. And you may already have something specific on your heart that you will do this year. But if not – you may consider these projects that will directly impact the lives of people affected by leprosy and disability in a practical way.

Perhaps you can inspire family and friends or your small group or church to join with you in providing financial support to defeat leprosy — one small project at a time! And bring Glory to God in the process!

What do you have a heart for?

For Education and Training in India:
- 1 Welding machine to support vocational training courses (and income generation for VTC) $1,000.00
- 60 Uniforms for Students $1,500.00
- 80 Student’s Food and Accommodation (20 lots) 4 students $2,000.00
- Student’s Spiritual Support (chaplaincy and devotions)* $2,000.00*

*Not tax deductible

For Safe Water, Training & Leprosy Prevention in Nigeria:
- 6 Self-Care Groups trained on Ulcer/disability Management (2 lots) $1,430.00ea
- 5,000 Pamphlets on Leprosy Prevention & Disability produced and distributed (2 lots) $1,725.00ea
- 8 schools Educated on Water Safety and Disease Prevention (2 lots of 4 schools) $2,000.00

For Training and Development for People affected by Leprosy in Nepal:
- 16 communities to be Trained on Health and Hygiene $260.00ea
- 12 Self-care Education Workshops for people affected by leprosy $1,050.00 for 4 workshops
- 4 Communities Trained on Disaster Preparedness (16 groups trained) $640.00 for 4 groups
- 2 groups of 12 Trained in Organic Farming (24 groups) $1,600.00 for 2 groups
- 12 Bicycles for Self-Care Group Volunteer Facilitators $135.00ea
- 4 Houses Modified to allow Disability Access $250.00ea
- Salary support for Andrew Sithling, project leader (5 lots) $2,580.00ea

For Training and Development for People affected by Leprosy in Nepal:
- 5 Leprosy Training Sessions for Health Workers, Community Leaders/Volunteers $860.00ea
- 10 Leprosy Awareness Raising Sessions at Schools in endemic areas $150.00ea
- 10 Leprosy Screening in Schools $720.00ea
- 30 Contact Tracing Activities (following up family and other contacts of newly diagnosed leprosy cases) $360.00ea
- 8 Self-Care Groups Trained in Prevention of Disability $2,150.00ea
- Salary support for Francisco Da Silva, project leader (5 lots) $2,600.00ea

Better Health for People with Disabilities in Timor Leste:
- 5 Leprosy Training Sessions for Health Workers, Community Leaders/Volunteers $860.00ea
- 10 Leprosy Awareness Raising Sessions at Schools in endemic areas $150.00ea
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- 8 Self-Care Groups Trained in Prevention of Disability $2,150.00ea
- Salary support for Francisco Da Silva, project leader (5 lots) $2,600.00ea

For The Rights for People with Disabilities in Timor Leste:
- 60 Community Level Training Sessions on The Rights of People with Disabilities $290.00ea
- 2 Buildings Modified to allow Disability Access $1,450.00ea
- 2 People with Disabilities Supported to gain Employment $450.00ea
- 6 groups Trained by Timor Leste National Disabled People’s Organisation in advocacy $1,550.00ea

For Elderly Leprosy Patients in Thailand:
- 30 elderly leprosy patients Accommodation and Care for one year $445.00ea

For Leprosy Mission Field Workers:
- In Nigeria: Salary support for Terver Anyor (12 lots) $1,580.00ea
- In Nepal: Salary support for Shovakhar Kandal (9 lots) $2,000.00ea
- In Papua New Guinea: Salary support for Natalie Smith (15 lots) $2,000.00ea
- In Timor Leste: Salary support for Nona Lisnahan (9 lots) $2,600.00ea
- In India: Salary support for Manivannan G (5 lots) $2,000.00ea

Please pray for these projects, that they will be funded and will change lives!
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Small projects – big impacts.

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| Training of Government Health Workers in Leprosy Detection and Treatment (3 lots) | $1,100.00ea |
| 30 elderly leprosy patients Accommodation and Care for one year | $445.00ea |

| **For Leprosy Mission Hospitals In India:** | **For Elderly Leprosy Patients in Thailand:** |
| Salur Hospital: | Training of Government Health Workers in Leprosy Detection and Treatment (3 lots) |
| Purchase of Medical Equipment for Hospital (3 lots) | 30 elderly leprosy patients given reconstructive surgery |
| Medicine for Leprosy Reaction and Ulcer Treatment (4 lots) | $1,900.00ea |
| Food for Patients (10 lots) | $1,950.00ea |

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