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# COUNTRY *Matters*



Village Missions of Canada





# A View From the Country

with Murray Graham, Executive Director



I have often described District Representatives (DRs) as the linchpins of our Village Missions ministry into rural Canadian communities.

A small but vital object that supports and holds equipment together, linchpin also means “a

person or thing vital to an enterprise or organization.”

In 2021, when travel and group activities were limited and we couldn't hold a staff conference, the DRs were definitely vital to the ministry of Village Missions!

They maintained the connection between our office and the communities where our pastors serve. They encouraged the missionaries and their churches to continue reaching out into their communities. They gave ideas on how to do ministry within the limitations and without the “props” that larger churches have.

The DRs listened well and provided insight for the pastors and churches when challenges arose. They encouraged the missionary families in a year when many pastors felt isolated and discouraged.

*As one pastor said, “It is amazing the effort that the DRs put into getting to know us, caring for us and being there for us when we need them.”*

And since both our DR couples are relatively new in the role, we decided to introduce them to you.

I respect these men and their wives and pray for and with them, often. As you read this issue of Country Matters, I hope you gain insight into their unique ministry and commit to praying for them, too.

Serving our Savior together,

*Murray Graham*

Murray Graham, Executive Director



GARY & PATSY SEMENYNA



GORDON & VAL ROWLAND

## A THREAT BECOMES A PROMISE



*Cariboo Christian Church,  
located in Horsefly, BC*

"If you don't behave, I'll send you to Horsefly, B.C." That's the joke their former DR sometimes made to Gary and Patsy Semenyna when he visited them in Wasa, B.C. Horsefly is one of the beautiful but remote communities where Village Missions has a partner church.

In 2021, Gary and Patsy did go to Horsefly—as new District Representatives!

The Semenynas stepped into the DR role in May, following a 7-year leave of absence from VM. Their district is unusual: it includes fields in the western provinces of British Columbia and Alberta and the eastern provinces of Nova Scotia and Ontario. 6,000 kilometers separate the farthest eastern point from the farthest western point. Visiting missionary families on fields so far apart requires energy and commitment. Supporting and encouraging them through an ongoing pandemic and restrictions is also a challenge.



It's a challenge the Semenynas are willing to tackle. They know the missionaries need a trustworthy confidante as well as insight, ideas and encouragement to carry on. They trust that God will empower and guide them.

Their first task was to meet the missionaries and start building a relationship with them. They only knew 2 of the 13 couples in their district.

As they traveled and interacted with the missionary families, Gary and Patsy were encouraged by their



obvious love for their communities.

*"It's good to see how God fits people into the right place for the right time," Patsy said. "We're impressed by the quality and commitment of these missionary pastors and wives."*

## BACK ON THE ROAD

After several hours of driving through the fields of central Manitoba, Gordon & Val Rowland pulled into the small community of Amaranth. The day was cold and windy, but Village Missionaries Jay & Kaylee Foster and the people of Amaranth Gospel Mission gave the Rowlands a warm welcome and a delicious meal.



Extensive travel is one of the most difficult aspects of the DR role for Gordon and Val Rowland. They were away from home 60 of the 90 days from September through November, and they traveled 13,000 kilometers.

Their district stretches from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains across farming country to the lakes and trees of northern Ontario. The VM fields are diverse, but they have a couple things in common:

- They have people who love the Lord and want to see a Gospel church in their community.

- Every field has people who need the Lord and people who are hurting.



In the fall, the Rowlands were very happy to get back on the road. They couldn't do field visits in the spring, so they were eager to see the missionary families in their district and interact with people at their churches.

*"We arrived in Ear Falls, Ontario, on a Saturday afternoon in late October. In the evening I met with Jonathan Elgby and the two elders of Ear Falls Chapel.*

*On Sunday morning we worshiped with the congregation, shared an update from Village Missions and listened to Jonathan preach the Word of God. It is always good to see the missionaries in action and observe how they are ministering to their community.*

*When the Elgbys asked us to stay an extra day, we readily agreed. Monday afternoon we walked along the beach of a nearby lake as the kids played. Back at the parsonage, we built a bonfire and cooked supper over it. We find it is during these informal times that the Village Missionaries relax and open up about challenges and discouragements.*

*Visiting Jonathan & Doralyn Elgby and their delightful family is always a joy!"*



# CREATIVE ALTERNATIVES

Village Missions of Canada couldn't hold a staff conference in 2021, but the DRs found other ways to give missionaries some much-needed rest and fellowship.

- In August the Semenynas organized a campout at Moyie Lake Provincial Park in B.C. Four missionary couples came.



- In September, eight missionary couples, the Rowlands and Murray and Deb Graham gathered at Gull Lake Center, Alberta, for a retreat.



The campout was important for Jordan and Ashley Wilson (Wynndel, B.C.), who joined VM in 2020. *"We enjoyed hours*

*of fellowship around the fire, played games, walked around Moyie Lake and rested. Gary encouraged us through devotions. Our favorite aspect was talking with other missionaries and forming friendships with them. Now we know we can call on them when we need help."*

Terry & Jane Baskin (Grindrod, B.C.) drove about 12 hours round-trip to attend the campout. *"We were greatly encouraged to hear from the other*





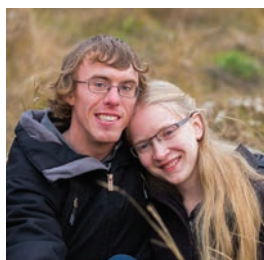
*Village Missionaries about God's faithfulness and how He continues to bless, provide and further His kingdom. The campout refreshed us and spurred us on."*

Brenden & Helena Peters (Boyle, Alberta) enjoyed the retreat organized by the Rowlands. *"We had been going hard for so long in the middle of Covid-19 restrictions, and the retreat allowed us to finally relax and catch our breath. We heard about how the other missionaries were doing and were reminded of how we could encourage one another to press on."*





## NEW MISSIONARIES



Last February we introduced you to Prairie Skies Bible Fellowship (previously called Gull Lake Alliance Church). We are thrilled that they now have their first Village Missionary couple, **Tyler and Candis Moll**! The Molls started serving there in October 2021.



**Gull Lake, Saskatchewan**, has about 1,100 residents and many young families. Prairie Skies Bible Fellowship is the only Evangelical church within a 50-kilometer area. There is great potential for ministry in the church and the wider community.



In September, Crossroads Congregational Church in **Northfield, Ontario**, welcomed their new missionary family: **Jae and Eun Park** and their two daughters. This church has

partnered with Village Missions since 1996. The Parks have 15 years of ministry experience in S. Korea, the U.S. and Canada. They are excited to be on their first Village Missions field.

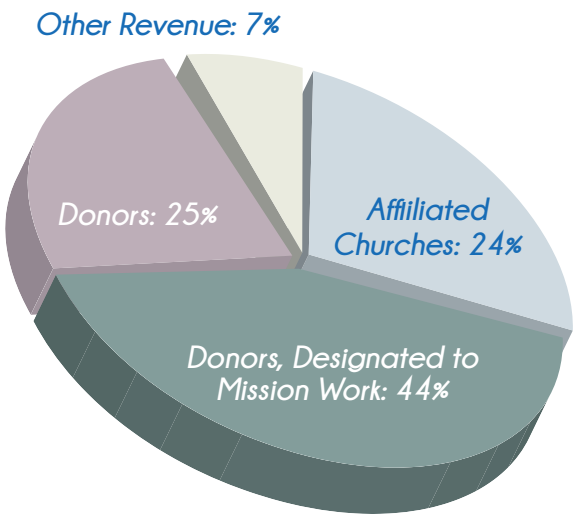
## VM BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Ernie Munchinsky, Hal York, Chairman Lee Gregory, Kevin Bedford, Richard Semenyna

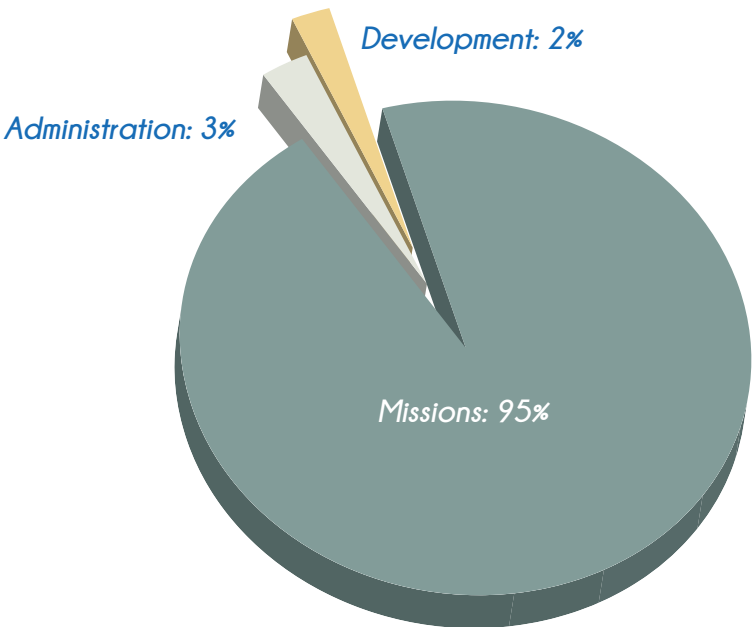
Income by Source

\$1,216,358



Operating Expenses

\$1,117,323



<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Missions	\$1,056,140.70	95%
Administration	34,411.57	3%
Development	26,770.73	2%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,117,323.00</b>	<b>100%</b>
Excess of Revenue over Expenses for the Year		\$99,035
Fund Balances—Beginning of Year		\$412,890
Fund Balances—End of Year		\$511,925

<b>REVENUE BY SOURCE</b>		
Donors	\$303,780.00	25%
Donors—Designated to Mission Work	529,237.00	44%
Affiliated Churches	293,831.00	24%
<b>Other Revenue</b>	<b>89,510.00</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>1,216,358.00</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>TOTAL NET INCOME</b>		<b>\$99,035</b>

## **We ❤️ Village Missions 2021 Campaign**

In June, we launched a revised website and giving platform. This made it possible to successfully hold our first online auction, which launched the "We ❤️ Village Missions" campaign. Even though we couldn't host our usual banquets, you gave faithfully and generously to Village Missions of Canada. By the end of 2021, we had received \$83,045. Thank you! We are grateful for the generosity of each ministry partner who gave.



Village Missions helps missionary pastors in rural areas know that they aren't alone. Yes, they are in small communities and very far from each other, but they are part of the Village Missions family. Through the ministry of the District Representatives, these missionary families are supported and encouraged. They receive

wise counsel. They are prayed for and loved. With this kind of support, they are in a good place to help their churches thrive! Please give a gift today to partner with Village Missions in the work of supporting missionary pastors and strengthening country churches.



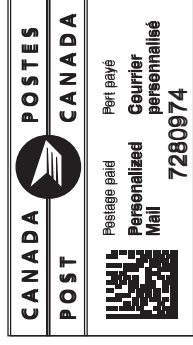
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