

County donates ambulance to Africa

Past warden Dennis Roughley suggests move to support people in under serviced area

A land ambulance decommissioned by Simcoe County is still going to help save lives.

In its second career, the ambulance is making a move to Africa.

Simcoe County is donating a decommissioned land ambulance to the Village of Ongutoi, Uganda.

"Sometimes I think we forget how lucky we are to live in Simcoe County, where we have access to fresh water, clean air, healthy food and the latest in medical technology," said county Warden Cal Patterson. "Sometimes people in Uganda die simply because they cannot access the care they need."

The Simcoe County ambulance will be used at a 10-pod health centre the charity High Adventure Gospel Communication Ministries started building in 2010.

The ambulance will service a 100-mile radius, allowing more than 300,000 people access to the health centre's services, including a soon-to-be-constructed operating theatre and AIDS unit.

Dr. Linda Douville works with High Adventure Gospel Communication Ministries and said there is a desperate need for medical care in the Amuria District, where Ongutoi is located. She said thousands of people are returning home from displacement camps.

"There is urgent need for maternal care and pediatric care," Dr. Douville said. "Child death is prevalent due to untreated malaria, typhoid, TB and gastroenteritis. All of these conditions can be treated if prompt and accessible medical care is available."

Past warden Dennis Roughley presented the idea of sending the ambulance to Africa. The county's human services committee donated the ambulance to the village of Ongutoi in a presentation Tuesday.

The donation is possible through a county partnership with the Georgian Bay division of Royal Canadian Mounted Police veterans, Mr. Roughley, the RCMP Toronto North detachment and Dr. Douville.



PHOTO/STAN HOWE

Dr. Linda Douville of High Adventure Gospel Communication Ministries explains the importance of the donation of a Simcoe County ambulance to the village of Ongutoi, Uganda to a crowd gathered for the donation.