



Doing Good That Is Good

The newsletter of FARMS International

August 2018 - Great Outlook for FARMS International

Providing revolving entrepreneurial loans to poor Christian families - Galatians 6:10

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the precious name of Jesus!

Executive Director's Update

This newsletter contains some exciting and important developments at FARMS International. On May 1, 2018, we added a new staff member to our mission. **Scott Clifton, who had previously served on the FARMS board of trustees for three years, became the Assistant Director for FARMS.** His position is corresponding with my last five months as Executive Director. **After nearly 34 years with FARMS, with 25 of those as the Executive Director, I will be retiring at the end of September.**

Serving the poor through FARMS has been a wonderful privilege, not only for me, but also for my wife Pat. We remember so well the visit of Gareth Miller, the founder and Executive Director of FARMS, to our home in Minnesota in 1983. He came all the way from New York City to ask us to consider partnering with FARMS wherever God called us to serve as missionaries. When it became clear that it was the Philippines, he was 100% supportive. His encouragement meant so much to us as a young family. While we served on the field, he was in constant contact with us through thoughtful letters. He also, visited us up in those rugged mountains during our last term. Little did we know that was going to be the last time we saw Gareth.

It was in February 1991, that a man came to the door of our mountain home in Sagada, Philippines. He had a telegram for us. Gunny Miller, Gareth's wife, sent a short message that said Gareth has passed away at the age of 61!

We were greatly saddened, and shocked. Later we found out that he had lived with a serious heart problem most of his life. The only remedy, as his condition worsened, was a heart transplant that he refused. Gunny shared that **Gareth felt there probably was a "younger man that needed that heart,"** and he was happy to go home to his Lord and Saviour, Jesus. He died a few months later.



Gareth Miller, founder of FARMS International



Bangladesh. Joe Richter and Scott Clifton with members of the FARMS committee working among Bengali believers.

Later that year our work was finished in the Philippines and we returned home. **The board of FARMS immediately approached me about serving as the Executive Director.** I had the field experience they wanted, but we felt that after a furlough, we would be heading back to a new mission field. Therefore, I said I would help them find a candidate. After more than a year of searching, it was apparent that God was calling us to serve with the (continued p.3)

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Meet The New Assistant Director

Hello-

My name is Scott Clifton- and you'll be hearing more from me in the time to come! Here's a bit about me! I grew up in a small town in Wisconsin, attended college in Duluth, Minnesota, graduated with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, and have lived in Duluth ever since. I have a beautiful wife, Sara, and we have 2 young children. I enjoy outdoor adventures, playing music, and using power tools. I am a follower of Christ and am striving to glorify Him in all I do.

Although I became a believer at a young age I didn't understand many of the basics for some time to come. The turning point was when I served as a counselor at a bible camp the summer after my freshman year of college. For me, that summer was a spiritual awakening and set me on a trajectory to deepen the knowledge and convictions that accompany faith in Christ. I served two more summers as a camp counselor, was involved in campus ministry, volunteered as a youth leader at a local church and then became the youth director for that church. During that time, God revealed more to me about my strengths in leadership and vision casting. With the birth of our first child I transitioned out of youth ministry. Since then, we have added another baby to the family, and last fall we launched a shop that sells locally handcrafted goods in Duluth called Makers Mercantile. All the while I was employed as a design engineer at Cirrus Aircraft for six years until this May when I left to pursue ministry with FARMS.

Sara and I have known Joe and Pat Richter now for nearly a decade, and they have become like family to us. It was only a matter of time before they introduced us to FARMS, seeing as it is such an integral part of their lives. As someone who has felt drawn to missions, hearing about the vision of FARMS made me want to learn more about the organization firsthand.



Joe and Pat Richter with Scott, Sara, Cedar (3 yrs), and Treg (1.5 yrs) Clifton



Scott and Sara Clifton at their shop, Makers Mercantile

I was able to travel with Joe and Pat four years ago, visiting a potential location for a new FARMS program in Ecuador. This experience emboldened my conviction for missions while simultaneously solidifying my admiration for the principles by which FARMS operates. Namely, the fact that FARMS seeks to help the poor generate income in a way that preserves dignity and independence. Also, I was drawn to the way that FARMS strengthens the local church through the generous giving of the loan recipients. Three years ago, I joined the Board of Directors for FARMS. It was the next step for me in serving an organization which I identified with. It was clear to me that FARMS resonated with what God was stirring up in me, so I jumped at the opportunity to serve on staff. Joe put me to work quickly, as I was on staff for less than a week before we set off for 25 days in India, Thailand, and Bangladesh to visit five FARMS programs. I saw how the programs operate and was able to meet many remarkable individuals, including loan recipients as well as the committee members which administer the loans. There's nothing quite so effective as on the job training! (Continued)



Nagaland, India. Rev. Bikau (left) is the secretary of CFHH, the committee that administers FARMS loans.

If you are interested in having Scott visit your church, group, or business please contact him at sclifton@farmsinternational.com

As Joe retires this fall, I will begin serving as the Executive Director. I have some big shoes to fill but am thankful that we are able to work alongside each other, for a time, to travel and make introductions, as well as learn everything behind the scenes that keeps the organization running strong. I am confident that God is training me well under Joe to fulfill the role he has called me to. In addition, I see an incredible opportunity to **Continue, Expand and Connect** as it relates to the ministry of FARMS: **Continue** in the work that FARMS is invested in, **Expand** to more places of need around the world, and **Connect** the organization with younger and future generations. I'm looking forward to meeting the people who faithfully support the work that God is doing through FARMS.

In Christ,

Scott Clifton

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mission. The rest is history and a good history at that. It has been a great privilege serving with FARMS International.

This time of overlap with Scott Clifton is providing for a smooth transition. We are all very encouraged that FARMS will continue to be a biblically based mission with a clear vision to help the poor of God's kingdom to be productive and generous. Our approach disciples Christians and spurs evangelism and church planting in places of great need. Scott clearly has this same vision. We look forward to growth and even greater impact in the years ahead. Pray for this transition time and for an anointing upon Scott and his wife Sara, to carry on the vision.

Our future role with FARMS will be as consultants. We also look forward to continuing our call to encourage the poor of God's kingdom wherever God leads.

Yours in Jesus,



Joe and Pat Richter with Belene and Luke. Our first term (1984) as missionaries to Sagada, Mountain Province, Philippines



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