



# Mission of Love



"You are not here to save the world, but are here to touch the hands that are within your reach."

## LOVE ENERGY AT WORK:

### One woman sends fiftieth Denton Program Airlift of humanitarian aid

Kathy Price is an everyday person like you and me, but with a big difference: she is sending airlift number fifty full of help for the destitute to Peru this January, 2009. Kathy is the founder and director of Mission of Love, an all-volunteer organization that works without large grants of any kind. She recognized the great needs of poor people early in her life. Serious illness struck her again and again, and while recuperating in Mexico, she answered a spiritual call to dedicate her life to helping others less fortunate. Since then, she and her volunteers have served Indigenous people in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, and the Sioux reservations of our own Great Plains. Mission of Love also helped the victims of 9/11 in New York City, refugees from hurricane Katrina in Louisiana and Mississippi, as well as groups of the hungry and sick in Africa and Asia.

Kathy goes beyond sending aid, because she takes herself and volunteers to build hospitals and health clinics, schools and vocational centers. Doctors, dentists, nurses and educators often accompany her to provide care and program development while the building goes on. She has even brought clowns to entertain the children! Kathy goes beyond building and short term care. She makes sure the clinics are permanently provided with medicines, instruments, and health professionals, and the schools with educational materials, sports equipment, and teachers.

How does she do it? And why? You might find the answer in a quote from an email I once received from Kathy:

"There is way too much suffering in the world. If only each and every one of us would just step back and realize how simple living really needs to be. Can you imagine the type of love energy we could create as human beings for our world. It is a basic 101 class in life."

A few decades ago, Senator Denton had a vision in line with Kathy's philosophy. He decided that perhaps the U.S. government and the military could do something better than just train cargo pilots with airplanes full of sandbags. "Why not send humanitarian aid instead?" he thought. Thus the Denton program was born and Kathy Price became its most frequent user.

Well, you might ask just what does Kathy do to prepare for each airlift? First off, you should know that Kathy is "of a certain age" like this writer. Despite the rickety backs and squeaky knees typical of folk like us, this is what Kathy does for each airlift:



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1. **Ask for donations.** This means calls of compassion to schools, hospitals, and businesses. There are also talks and slide shows at church suppers and club meeting halls, cake, flower, and craft sales. "Whatever it takes" is a phrase Kathy often uses.
2. **Pick up the donations.** This means cajoling friendly drivers and trucks to go and get the donations . Kathy often drives herself, and loads and unloads the cargo alone or with a few stalwart volunteers.
3. **Sort the donations, pack and box them, write up a manifest, palletize the cargo, shrink wrap the pallets.** You have to see in your mind's eye that this gets done without benefit of forklifts and other modern conveniences. Kathy hopes for a hand crank for Christmas. Santa, are you listening?
4. **Load the cargo on trucks and take it to an airbase.** For the Peru mission, this meant loading to trucks, each 48 feet long and filled from bottom to top. Then there was the long cold ride to the base in temperatures near zero.
5. **It doesn't end here, because then Kathy must work with the consignee (person designated to receive and distribute the cargo at its destination).** She and the consignee make sure the donations actually arrive in the hands of the people who need them. This can be a very tricky process because there are many unprincipled people along the donation's journey who would like to take it and profit from it themselves.
6. **There is more, because for example many donations contain the building material** Kathy and her volunteer crews will use to construct clinics, homes, and schools. So Kathy coordinates her calendar to arrive with her team in time to receive the airlift and start the work on site.

This fiftieth mission will go to Martha Betty in Peru and her group of volunteers. She is another Kathy who has worked all her life to help the needy, particularly Indigenous children in the mountains and jungles of her very poor country. This airlift contains such wonderful things as medical and dental supplies and furniture, educational materials and supplies, clothing, non- perishable food, construction materials and tools, and household items. These gifts are treasures for people who have practically nothing in the way of material goods, and who have no access to health care or schooling of any kind. The donations will light up the eyes and put color on the cheeks of children who will feel healthy for the first time without the constant weakening effect of parasites, infections, low nutrition, and inadequate clothing. Women who might have died in childbirth will now live because Martha Betty's medics have been able to take portable birthing kits with them on boats up the narrow tributaries of the Amazon basin. Children will carry their first very own pencils and notebooks to a school that previous



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**airlifts from Mission of Love have built. Elder people will have a bed upon which to rest out their last days in a hospice Mission of Love has furnished. Young people will learn trades using tools such as weaving looms and sewing machines and household items like cooking and construction implements from this airlift.**

**This is " the basic 101 of life". Are you ready to sign up for the course? Better hurry, because registration ends soon.**

**Mary Strong, Mission of Love volunteer**