

## **A Journey covering 2 Continents, 2 Host Families, 1 Organization, and 1 Remarkable Little Boy - Yvan!**

This month's newsletter is dedicated to Yvan, his host mothers, Holly and Amy (they provided the story line), and the many LLP Pilots, Staff, and Volunteers that made this story possible.



**Amy's Story:** The journey of Yvan begins in a mud hut in the African country of Cote d'Ivoire. When Yvan was born to a young mother his bi-lateral clubbed feet were something the village was not willing to accept.

His father rejected him at that moment and his maternal grandmother took him to hide him from his fate in the large capital city of Abidjan. It was there that she and Yvan remained homeless, begging for food as the vendors came into town every morning

to sell their food. At the age of three, it is unclear who found who, but Yvan was entrusted to a mission organization called "Children's Medical Mission West" out of Waynesfield, Ohio.

Holly and Mick Christini became Yvan's host family and eventually my husband Reeves and I joined them in the care for this child. Yvan was initially treated in Lima with sets of casts, changed every two weeks to begin the process of straightening out his little feet. In May 2016, Yvan had his first surgery in Lima where they cut his achilles tendons and recasted his feet. When those casts were removed, it was clear that the procedure was not good enough to send him back to an unquestionable fate.

Both Holly and I were told of a world renowned clubbed foot specialist at "The University of Iowa Hospital" named Dr. Jose Morcuendes. Dr. Morcuendes agreed to take on his case but the problem came with the transportation. Yvan was to travel to and from Iowa 5 times including another surgery. Two more follow up trips would be needed as well. I stepped Lifeline Pilots! These awesome men and women volunteer their planes, fuel, and time but mostly their hearts to this work. We were transported each time by kind souls who graciously put up with a child crying in pain (or just being an ornery 3 year old!), to assisting me as I cupped vomit from him in my hands flying over beautiful Chicago! We couldn't have done it without them.

This child now has a chance at life because of so many people putting such effort into one single child. His plight has changed many hearts that I know personally. I will speak on his behalf because he is only four years old at this time however I am sure that his gratitude is beyond recognition. I have documented his journey for him through a scrapbook returned to his family so that he never forgets. It was here in the USA where we taught him to pray, share, and love our fellow mankind and that everyone deserves a chance. I see him growing up realizing the gift he was given by so many. I see him becoming a GREAT man. I see him changing the world. I believe that because he has already started by changing the lives of those he has already come into contact with. Thank You, Amy Northrup.



Yvan on one of his many trips for treatment

**Holly's Story:** Yvan is a 3 year old from the Ivory Coast with bilateral club feet. Children's Medical Missions West in Lima, Ohio brought him to the US for donated care in Lima, Ohio. The doctor was able to do one surgery but unable to correct his feet. It is important to help correct his feet so he can have a normal life. In his country they have no treatment and children with deformities do not attend school. Some children with deformities are killed because the families feel helpless with no treatment available. A doctor in Iowa has donated his services but we (his host family) live in Ohio. We reached out for assistance to get back and forth to Iowa for his treatments. Thank goodness there are caring and generous people willing to fly us to Iowa. Hosting a child is by donation as well and gets expensive. If not for these services to fly this child to Iowa he would never walk normally and have been sent back to the Ivory Coast.

It takes a village to raise a child and in this case 2 countries and many kind hearted people to make it all happen. God Bless, Holly Christini



Amy and Holly with Yvan

LifeLine Pilots  
6100 W Everett Dirksen Pkwy, Byerly Terminal, Suite 302, Peoria, IL 61607  
Missions - 800-822-7972

[www.Lifelinepilots.org](http://www.Lifelinepilots.org)

STAY CONNECTED:

