

TO THE RESCUE

Coming to a Disaster Near You, the ERBUS

By Alison Jacques

Who doesn't need a Swiss army knife once in awhile? You never know when you'll need to whittle, turn a screw or open a bottle of merlot.

Deborah Yungner took that idea a step or two further, inventing and patenting a utility trailer that can help save lives.

She calls her ERBUS (Emergency Response Back-Up Utility Systems) the Swiss army knife of emergency response because this portable first aid station contains an array of life-saving tools. It generates electrical power and light, provides water purification, delivers heating or cooling to emergency shelters or existing buildings, including hospitals, and uplinks satellite communications.

"My personal passion," Yungner says, "is to make a positive difference in the world."

Yungner first came up with her groundbreaking idea in the early '90s while on a mission trip to then cholera-plagued Panama. With a strong technology and corporate business development background, she was accustomed



Emergency Response Back-Up Utility Systems deliver power to disaster areas.

Photo by Scotsman Imaging

ERBUS is able to transform disaster scenes by instantly forming command posts that can provide life-saving sustenance.

to solving problems.

But her idea, which reached fruition in 2003, didn't come without a lot of trial, error, thought, prayer, hard work and team building.

"It takes an entire team to bring your idea to the market," she says.

Yungner credits part of her product's budding success to exposure at various events, including the Minnesota Inventors Congress.

She's returning to MIC June 11-12 with the

ERBUS as the event's "showcase technology." She attended MIC last year as well.

"I was very impressed with such a long-standing and committed inventor's resource organization," she says.

She also was moved by the kindred spirits she met there.

"It was very inspiring to meet and connect with other successful inventors," Yungner says. "I gained (so much) information, education

and excellent business contacts that have been and will be an excellent resource for bringing our company and the ERBUS technology to the commercial market."

The ERBUS Sentry 5000 model can be transported by boat, plane or truck to virtually anywhere in the world. It can purify more than 5,000 gallons of river water a day, and can run up to four days without refueling.

Her machine has the capability to transform disaster scenes by instantly forming command posts that can provide life-saving sustenance.

Yungner has sold her ERBUS Sentry 5000 units to the states of New York and Texas, as well as a hybrid "green" version to the United States military. The units cost \$170,000 (not including an inflatable shelter), which is well below the third of a cost for a new fire truck.

She has built nine ERBUS Sentry 5000 units to date with funding through investors,

industry partners and customer orders. Her ERBUS Mobile Truck and Trailer System will include a shelter accessory and/or a shelter compartment on board the unit for rapid and immediate deployment. Those will cost \$90,000-\$125,000, depending on selected features and accessories.

All units are made in the U.S.

Yungner is taking orders for newer models with a market release scheduled for July.

As this issue was going to print, Yungner says she was working with Marketplace Solutions in Ohio as well as the Grace & Peuce Ministries to get ERBUS Sentry 5000s to the Dominican Republic to help earthquake-ravaged Haiti. ■

Visit erbusinc.com or call 612.998.1068 and minnesotainventorscongress.org

Yungner's Accolades

- ▶ Innovation of the Year
- ▶ Woman Inventor of the Year
- ▶ Minnesota's Top Minority Business Leader of the Year
- ▶ eWomen Network Business Finalist Award
- ▶ Minneapolis St. Paul Business Journal's Woman-to-Watch Award
- ▶ Governor's Minnesota Cup Finalist Award for the next Breakthrough Idea for the State of Minnesota

Yungner's Bio

- ▶ Held senior level executive business development positions in sales and marketing, developing major account growth and expansion strategies for large companies
- ▶ Led the nation's sales for National Computer Systems (NCS) in the education marketplace
- ▶ Named Minnesota's first Business Development Executive for Xerox Corporation in Government and Education
- ▶ Served as the president of Yungner & Associates, specializing in executive search placement services nationwide primarily in healthcare
- ▶ Formerly a communications consultant to Control Data Corp. and was involved in central research and engineering with the 3M Company
- ▶ Bachelor of science degree with an emphasis in business from the University of Minnesota

Inventor Deborah Yungner is working on smaller versions of her emergency trailer.

Photo by Scotsman Imaging

