



Rotary District 6600



This is the inaugural issue of the **MESA** newsletter, **MESA Worldwide**. The purpose of newsletter is to inform, educate and excite District Rotarians about the **MESA** efforts to alleviate the injustices of poverty and disease worldwide.

The next newsletter will be published in February 2004, and every other month thereafter. This is your newsletter, and we would like your help in making it the most effective tool possible. Your comments, suggestions and written contributions are not only appreciated but are necessary for it's success. Please send comments, updates or information to Mel Honig, e-mail: gaimel@msn.com.

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Director of Operations

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Newsletter Editor

MESA Worldwide



A NEWSLETTER OF MESA, A DISTRICT 6600 PROJECT

NEXT MEETING: January 13, 2004
Findlay Ford, 4 P.M.
Come early to the warehouse work session, 1
P.M.

Highlights from November 11th Meeting

Because of warehouse constraints there is a potential shortage of storage space. What is desired is a **MESA** owned/controlled storage facility of 10 to 15 thousand square feet that has a small office attached and a loading dock. The facility need not be heated, nor is a sprinkler system required. If you are aware of the availability of a facility please notify Ron Stoner at ronstoner@dacor.net.

As we find ourselves squeezed for space, **MESA** also is in the positive position of receiving more valuable supplies and equipment. We have to thank Kevin Walker, of Easter Seals, for his offer of used wheel chairs, walkers and crutches.

Our success in sending supplies, equipment (11 containers since June 2003) and vehicles (3 this past month), will create a shortfall of funds if the current rate continues. All avenues of raising funds (grants, fund raisers, Club contributions) will be looked into in order to avoid curtailing future efforts.

There is still time to make reservations to the Uniendo Conference, January 22 – 24, 2004 in Costa Rica. This Rotary International sponsored event is held in a different Central

American country each year. The purpose of this project fair is to establish contacts with Rotarians throughout Central America so that:

- Needs and resources can be matched, and;
- Projects are properly planned and monitored.

MESA is once again sending a large contingent of Rotarians and Rotaractors to the Conference. Andrew Timothy is coordinating travel arrangements. If interested contact Andrew at atimothy@lourdes.edu



Chuck Stocking addressing attendees at the November meeting

Stan Kujawa Visits MESA Projects In El Salvador

By

Ron Stoner, Director of Operations



Mothers recovering in a maternity ward, using 2 of the more than 200 Mesa supplied beds and mattresses

We can't often be there to see the help **MESA** gives to disadvantaged people abroad, but it's so satisfying when we do. Last month Stan Kujawa, Randy Diehl and I visited the maternity ward of a public hospital in El Salvador. Mothers nursed their babies on hospital beds and mattresses that **MESA** had shipped there only weeks before. The mattresses were no longer needed at a nursing home in Findlay, and the beds were too old-fashioned for the Ohio Veteran's Home in Sandusky, but without them this hospital might not have a maternity ward.

Later we saw kids recovering from hospital stays at Children's Wishing Star. The TV sets, toys, kitchen appliances, and furniture that make Children's Wishing Star such a happy environment for sick kids had all been shipped by **MESA**.

Our last visit in El Salvador was to the government-owned St. Vincent DePaul Orphanage – home to 281 children, most of them under the age of 5. We shed a tear or two when we saw all those beautiful kids without families. Ninety-nine percent of the children are malnourished when they are admitted to this orphanage, and the government provides only subsistence-level food. District 6600 Rotarians will help by fasting at one Rotary meeting, using the money saved to send the orphanage nutritious foods like egg noodles, powdered milk, baby food, Jell-O, and vitamins.

Visiting a developing country for even a day or two makes us realize how much we have of almost everything. Americans throw away so many things that could be treasures to people abroad. Seeing what good was done in El Salvador with **MESA** shipments gives real meaning to the phrase "international service." We don't have a Star Trek device to magically "beam" our throwaways abroad, but we do have **MESA**.

AROUND THE WORLD: Feeding Hungry Children in Tegucigalpa

We would like to salute Julio Viallalta, of the Tegucigalpa Rotary in Honduras, for his initiative in helping to supply nutritious meals to school children in the poverty stricken sections of his capital city. By supplying thousands of children with their only balanced meal of the day, Rotary is not only contributing food, but also giving their youth an incentive to attend in school.



Smiling faces school children in Tegucigalpa

The problems facing Julio are not only to raise the money, but also to find safe sources of food. When becoming aware of this need at last spring's **MESA** District Conference, Stan Greene, the Waterville Rotary and International Services of Hope (ISOH), immediately stepped in. In the summer of this year 20 tons (40,000 pounds) of #2 yellow food grain corn was delivered to Julio in Honduras. This corn was then ground into corn meal, a basic food **staple** in this impoverished nation.

What is surprising is how little it cost to send this valuable resource to thousands of hungry children. ISOH contracted with the U.S. government to obtain the surplus food grain at no cost. They also stored it and loaded the shipping container. Shipping costs from Waterville to Honduras was approximately \$4000.00, of which **MESA** paid \$400.00 and Universal Heart of Tulsa (an arm of the Tulsa Rotary), paid the rest. Ron Stoner, the Director of Operations for **MESA**, helped to coordinate the shipment of corn.

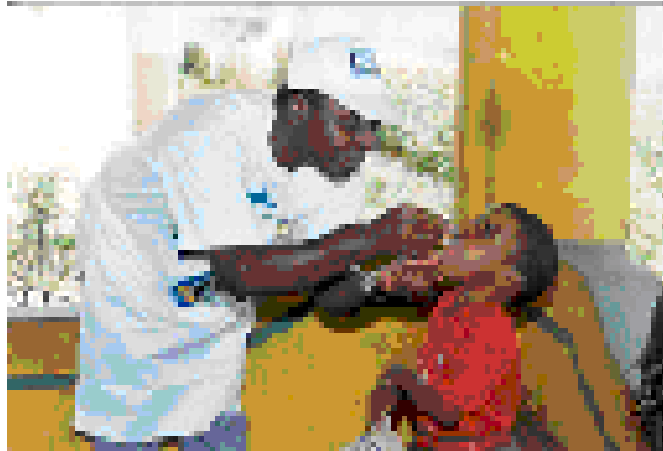
Mel Honig Editor

MESA NEEDS YOU You Can Be a World Champion!

We need your help! **MESA** is currently involved in numerous projects in Central America and Africa. Opportunities to help those less fortunate are ever present. The upcoming **Uniendo Conference** is an important networking tool to help us identify needs and make the contacts necessary to have successful operations. The continued participation of the Rotary Clubs of District 6600 is critical to **MESA's** success.

If you would like to help contact Ron Stoner, e-mail ronstoner@dacor.net, or attend our next meeting on January 13, 2004, at Findlay Ford in Findlay, Ohio. Findlay Ford is located at 12000 CR 99, ½ mile east of I 75, Exit 161. There is a work session in the warehouse starting at 1 P.M. Once again contact Ron if you want to participate in the work session.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL: Polio Plus Update



Child receiving oral vaccine in the Republic of Congo

In 1985 Rotary International launched its Polio Plus campaign to eradicate polio worldwide. Three years later, with the Polio Plus campaign as a stimulus, the World Health Assembly resolved to join in the fight. In that year there were 350,000 cases of polio reported in 125 countries.

The causative agent of poliomyelitis is a virus that inflames the gray matter of the spinal cord. The disease takes two forms, abortive or acute. In the abortive form, the illness is mild and the spinal cord is not affected. In the acute form, the illness is characterized by, fever, sore throat, headache, vomiting and sometimes stiffness in the neck and back. Long-term affects can be atrophy of muscles and possible paralysis. This is primarily a disease of the young, with children much more susceptible than adults. During epidemics pregnant women are especially susceptible.

There is no cure for polio. Until Dr Salk came out with the poliomyelitis vaccination in the mid 1950's there was little we could do to protect ourselves from this disease. The Polio Plus campaign, whose purpose is to rid the world of polio, is now in its 18th year. The success of this campaign is staggering. In 2002 there were 1919 cases of polio reported in 7 countries. This is a 99.43% reduction in polio incidence since 1988.

The fight against polio continues. This year Rotary International has surpassed its goal of raising \$80 million dollars by June 30th. It takes more than money. Rotarians throughout the world are involved. As an example, two medical teams of Rotarians from the United States, Canada, England and Denmark are in Ethiopia in an effort to have every child under the age of 5 immunized against polio. These teams are giving valuable training and education to Ethiopians, and also providing needed medical services and equipment.

We are winning the battle, but the war is not over. In Ethiopia no new cases have been reported in two years, but not far away in Niger and Nigeria, new cases are occurring every day. Like smallpox one-day polio will also be eradicated, hopefully in the near future.

Mel Honig, Editor

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