

MESA

Worldwide



A NEWSLETTER OF MESA, A DISTRICT 6600 PROJECT, #3

NEXT MEETING: May 11, 2004
Defiance College, 4 P.M.
World Community Workshop, Jamaica

Highlights from March 9th Meeting

The Findlay Rotary Club has just completed their annual Wishing Star Benefit, raising \$82,000. They will also conduct their annual raffle on August 29th of this year. The grand prize will be a Ford pickup truck with a matching Harley Davidson motorcycle. The monies raised from the raffle provide much of the operating funds for MESA and the Wishing Star Program.

MESA is continuing a torrid pace of shipments of medical and humanitarian supplies and equipment overseas. Two ambulances (**Willard and Port Huron**) are being delivered to the Salvadoran Red Cross and a wheel chair adapted minibus (**Arlington/Findlay**) to Bloom Hospital in El Salvador. Earlier this year two fire trucks and a wheel chair adapted van were sent to El Salvador. Four containers have recently been sent to Cambodia (**Defiance**), Ghana (**Amherst**), Honduras (**Avon Lake**) and Honduras (**Findlay**), each con

Ron Stoner, Director of Operations, would like to personally thank **the Trilby, Fostoria, North Bremen/New Knoxville and Oberlin Rotary** clubs for their help in the warehouse.

A contingent of Rotarians lead by **Stan Kujawa (Findlay)** has returned from a successful visit to El Salvador. Below is Ron Stoner's article giving details of that visit. A more detailed article by **Sue Hunt** can be accessed from the District 8800 web site.

Rotarians are currently active in several projects.

- **Bob Haas (London)** and his team have completed their work in San Ignacio. For a full report please read Bob's article.
- **Dr Tom Brumley (Findlay)** has returned from Zambia. His team treated over 500 patients and preformed 120 eye surgeries in the two weeks. Arriving at the compound they found patients already camped out, waiting to be treated. Many of them traveled hundreds of miles, and many had to wait for days for treatment.
- **Feeding the hungry and providing clean water** was a subject much discussed at the March meeting. Some of those areas are:

- The need to provide a reliable water source to the village of Milagros in El Salvador. The cost to build a well is \$17,000.
- **Rich Carr (Maumee)** and 6 other Rotarians are delivering food for the needy at a project by a garbage dump in Guatemala.
- Continued nutritional support to the St Vincent orphanage in El Salvador.
- **Chuck Stocking** brought us up to date on **the Flour Power and Amaranth** projects he is working on. In a recently concluded test there was a 15% greater weight gain in young children fed with specially treated flour (Flour Power) as compared with those children fed untreated flour. In conjunction with the Consolidated Bakery in McComb, we are making special highly nutritious 'amaranth cookies'. These could be an important source of inexpensive, yet nutritious food.

The following articles are by Rotarians who have recently returned from conducting on going humanitarian projects in Central America.

MESA Rotarians Distribute Wheelchairs

By Ron Stoner

Thanks to District 6600 Rotarians, 280 handicapped El Salvadoran people have received life-changing gifts of new wheelchairs. Nineteen Rotarians and spouses of Rotarians from Northwest Ohio traveled to San Salvador, El Salvador, this February to assist the Rotary Club of San Salvador Sur in distributing the wheelchairs.

District 6600 Rotarians and spouses in the group included Stan and Pat Kujawa, Gene and Elaine Stevens, Randy and Anne Diehl, Don Manley, Dennis Bishop, Tom Klein, Tom Parke, PDG Jim Shrader, (all from the Findlay Club), Sue Hunt (Elyria), Arnold Haring (Mansfield), Jim and Jan Heinrich (St. Marys), PDG Jim Smith and Mel Barnett (Willard), Judy and Tom Riggles (Oberlin) and Ron Stoner (Bowling Green). Californian Fr. Charles Piatt and New Hampshire native Marcia Kimball were also part of the group.

The full 40-foot sea container of 280 wheelchairs had been purchased by generous contributions from several Rotarians in District 6600, especially Stan Kujawa and Don Manley, with assistance from MESA and with matching funds from The Wheelchair Foundation. Recipients included handicapped El Salvadorans of all ages from toddlers to octogenarians. Twelve were policemen who had been paralyzed by injuries incurred in the line of duty. One forty-year-old man received his first wheelchair after having been crippled by polio as a child. Wheelchair recipients were selected on the basis of letters, many handwritten, requesting the chairs and explaining why they were needed.

Over two hundred wheelchairs were distributed in a four-hour session at the Scout Building in San Salvador -- nearly one chair per minute!. Rotarians from District 6600 and from Club Rotario San Salvador Sur were joined by five young Salvadoran scouts and two security guards to spontaneously form an efficient production line for unpacking, and assembling chairs, helping recipients into them, making photographic records of the formal presentation, and adjusting the chairs to fit the new owners.

In addition to distributing wheelchairs, the group also visited other Rotary-assisted projects in El Salvador, including the Benjamin Bloom Pediatric Hospital, the Children's Wishing Star home for recuperating children, the St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage, and the housing project in the rural village of Milagros.

Sue Hunt's (Elyria Sunrise) full description of the trip to El Salvador has been posted on the District 6600 web site. A CD-ROM of photographs is available from Ron Stoner (ronstoner@dacor.net).



Findlay Rotarian Don Manley and Dr. Daniel Segovia, President of Club Rotario San Salvador Sur, present a wheelchair to a handicapped but happy Salvadoran woman.

This group of Rotarians from Northwest Ohio and San Salvador Sur unpacked, assembled and presented more than 200 wheelchairs in less than four hours on the morning of Saturday February 21.



On Receiving a Container of Humanitarian Supplies in Belize

By Bob Haas

The container of 94 desks, hundreds of adult diapers and 65 boxes of books arrived about six on Thursday afternoon at Sterling Freight (owned by a Rotarian). On hand were about ten San Ignacio Rotarians, and their wives as well, as nearly all of our team of 8 who had gone to Belize to rehab the St. Vincent Pallotti School in Unitedville.



Rotarians getting ready to unload school desks and books

We quickly unloaded the semi-truck, talking about how we would use the articles sent. The 94 desks would first go to the St. Vincent school, to any student who would need them. They had come just in time for the rededication of the school on the following Monday.

They weren't certain how to handle so many books and decided to hold a committee meeting to figure that out. Sunday afternoon, after we had taken the desks to Unitedville, we sat in one of the newly rehabilitated classrooms and discussed the books. It was decided to establish a book depository where principals and librarians could come and pickup books they felt they could use in their schools. Using a large room, with tables for display, as well as finding a central location was discussed. The diapers were to go to several homes for the elderly.

Since returning to Ohio, I got an e-mail from Tom Moran, president of San Ignacio Rotary saying that Sacred Heart School in San Ignacio, which co-ordinates some twelve schools, offered a room for this purpose. Principals were invited and within one hour all the books were gone. When Tom suggested to the principals that the larger schools should get more books than the smaller schools, they told him no, the smaller schools (rural schools), were poorer and needed books more. He asked for more books and more desks and again thanked us for the quality of the books sent.

MESA- Medical Equipment & Supplies Abroad; Leadership Committees

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