



W. 505 St. Thomas More Way
Spokane, WA 99208

Family to Family

Familia-A-Familia Newsletter

February 2007

Operating Room Equipment on its way to Guatemala

In October, our FAF newsletter mentioned that Dr. Jerry Olmsted, a Spokane physician and surgeon, wanted to donate his entire operating room equipment to a hospital for the purpose of serving the poor. It also noted that FAF was in the process of making arrangements to ship his anesthesia machine, operating room table, and other items to a needy hospital in Solola --- the same hospital where the Spokane medical team did cataract surgeries last April.

The arrangements for boxing and shipping the 19 pieces of equipment entailed a little more than expected. All items had to be boxed in specially treated made-to-order wooden containers for ocean shipment. Letters of invitation and manifests were needed, and arrangements had to be in place for a resident customs broker in Guatemala. And funding had to be secured for special crating of the items and for the ocean shipment.

Thanks in large part to gifts of time, talent, and funds from some generous individuals, the shipment is now on its way! Maureen O'Keefe and Roy Munyan, (Sacred Heart Medical Center) tested, disconnected, and helped transfer the equipment to C W Products Co. in the Spokane Valley. Ron Johnson, the operations manager at C W Products, had his people design containers and pack the items into five crates weighing nearly two tons. His firm donated all but \$500 of the packing cost of \$1,652. The ocean shipment is being handled by DHL Global Forwarding, and an anonymous donor has contributed \$4,913 to cover that cost, plus the remaining \$500 packing cost.

Some receiving storage and handling costs will still be incurred in Guatemala, and there may be unexpected challenges ahead. But the bulk of the funding has been covered, and the shipment is on its way. Aren't some people just wonderful! Thank God for people (like you) who will give of their time and resources to help the poor.

The shipment is scheduled to leave Miami in May, but may not arrive in Guatemala until September. We'll try to keep you posted on its progress.

Trout Eggs Arrive Safely ----- Thanks in Large Part to TSA

Over the past years, FAF has transported many thousands of trout eggs from the Spokane Hatchery to our trout ponds in Guatemala. Taking live fish eggs onto a plane was never a problem. The eggs, in trays in a small cooler, are covered with ice to keep them moist during the long flight.

But times have changed. The new airline safety regulations no longer allow ice to be taken through the screening checkpoint. The option of dumping the ice out before check-in and refilling the cooler with ice from a fast food restaurant (e.g., Wendy's) was not feasible because the restaurant ice is chlorinated, and the chlorine will kill the live eggs.

Thanks to Jim Spinden, the Security Director at the Spokane Airport, and his accommodating crew, a solution was worked out. The TSA agreed to receive a bag of chlorine-free ice the night before departure, screen and store it, and have it ready to reinstall in the FAF fish egg container after it was passed through security the next morning. It worked, and the eggs arrived in great shape. Now the 60,000 fingerlings have hatched and are on their way to adulthood.

Clinics Grateful for Large Supply of Medicines from Spokane

It seems that no one goes to Guatemala from Spokane without pushing the baggage allowance to the limit. Gary Franz's trip last month was no exception. Gary is the chairman of the Guatemala Commission and makes several trips to Guatemala each year.

In addition to taking supplies for the sister's convent in Novillero and a chocolate-making project in Ixtahuacan, Gary took several items for FAF. These included a computer power supply for Dr. Jose Miguel, some materials for Dave Dodroe (who is constructing the bakery in Ixtahuacan), and a large supply of medicines for the four clinics in the Spokane mission area.

The medicines were funded from contributions of sponsors and St. Thomas More parishioner envelope donations to the FAF Clinics and Health account. They included an extensive range of supplies from multivitamin and ibuprofen to amoxicillin, items that can be expensive to purchase in Guatemala. FAF was able to capitalize on some volume discounts thanks to the assistance of Sacred Heart Medical Center Pharmacy, which supplied the medicines.

Sr. Immaculata Burke was delighted to receive the shipment of medicines. In Gary's words, "The sisters were very grateful for the meds - what a huge donation." Their thanks belongs to all of you who contribute to the FAF clinic fund.

Christmas Party

Many of the families on the FAF program attended the annual Christmas Party, held in Chwi Patan in mid December. The training center was decorated with red and green streamers and balloons. On the walls were posters that our FAF program manager, Adela Tambriz, had prepared. They showed families involved in various sewing, cooking, and other training courses. As a gift from U.S. sponsors, each family received a bag with some pots, pans, and material for sewing. The photo below shows Adela speaking to the families as the celebration gets under way.

