



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

Family to Family

Familia-A-Familia Newsletter

October 2013

What Takes Place at a Typical FTF Board Meeting?

Family-To-Family is fortunate to have the sponsors and donors who respond so generously to the needs of the poor whom we serve in Guatemala. We are also very blessed to have a base of operations (St. Thomas More Parish) and board of directors who volunteer their time and professional expertise to make the FTF organization function as it does.

Just what kinds of business does the board work on? We thought it might be interesting for readers to "sit in" on a typical board meeting. Following are a few (not all) of the agenda items that were taken up for discussion at a recent meeting:

Administrative: Adela Tambriz, our field operations manager is overloaded with work!

She manages everything from monitoring the progress of well over 100 sponsored families to major projects such as weaving, baking, and agricultural classes plus reforestation and a coffee plantation. How can we help ease her administrative burden?

Financial: Recent donations from the Aurora NW Rotary and the Rogers High School Interact Club will be channeled to the trout raising project via Fr. David Baronti.

Our Guatemalan program manager (Natalia De Leon), travels long distances over bad roads to the Highlands every month. This has been a substantial expense for her in the past. We have now begun an allowance to cover some car expenses for her.

Many needs exist for available funds, such as self-help, housing, and new projects. Information from Adela is needed to help determine the best use of unrestricted funds.

Web site & Marketing: Our FTF web site (www.familytofamilyguatemala.com) has been updated and board members will explore methods of linking it to other sites.

New FTF posters have been designed and a possible 2014 FTF calendar printed. Additional photos (for the calendar) need to be taken during a visit in November.

The Sisters of Charity of New York (SCNY), along with Natalia, have helped in the marketing of weavings by arranging for the Mayan Hands organization to accept samples of the products produced by the women engaged in FTF weaving projects in the Highlands. FTF appears to be well suited to meet requirements that *"the women should be self-governing, have a board, and function as a coop."*

Existing/New Projects: Whereas earlier FTF projects involved the production of items that appealed to specific individuals (e.g. weavings), more recent projects have focused upon products that have a wider, but more competitive appeal (e.g., fruit, cows, coffee).

The Tourist gift shop & Lake Xecaquiscan project is turning out to be one of the most exciting FTF ventures to the staff and families in Guatemala. The gift shop has not even been designed yet, but families have already participated in making trails, planting trees and preparing the lake area for tourist activities. This is a new type of venture for the families of the area and they are really getting behind it.

Site of the Xecaquiscan Lake Project



Upcoming Visits & Events: Four members of the FTF Board of Directors will be traveling to the Highlands on Oct. 31st for a short visit. They will be meeting with Adela, Natalia, and others, and visiting various projects, including the Xecaquiscan Lake site. They will also be taking some portable solar lights to help determine if a solar light project might be a viable undertaking for families in the area.

Christmas Gifts for Families

Each year many of the sponsors include an extra \$15 as a Christmas gift for their family. If you wish provide a gift for a family this year, please include it with your December payment, and add a note to the effect that the extra is for a Christmas gift.

Prayers for Dave

Thanks for your prayers for Dave Dodroe, who has helped us with so many projects in Guatemala. He is doing much better, and even considering a return trip to Guatemala.

Sponsor Visits their Family

Dr. Frank and Carolyn Walchak of Spokane had a unique opportunity to visit the family they sponsor during a recent trip to Guatemala. The two participated in a medical trip wherein 127 children had cleft lip and palat repairs. They said that meeting their family in the village of Ixtahuacan was, however, the highlight of their trip.