



CHILD AID

SPRING 2007



Brighter Futures



Dona Loncha and her great nephew Ruben.



This wonderful woman, despite or perhaps because she was never able to receive an education, knows that the key to a brighter future for Ruben is education.



Celebrating 20 Years June 1st See page 3

Dona Loncha, A Woman of Great Spirit & Love

This is a photo of Dona Loncha and her great nephew Ruben for whom she provides daily care while his mom tries to find work. Dona Loncha never received an education. She had to drop out of school at age 7, but she wants more for Ruben. When Dona Loncha heard about Child Aid's Adventures in Reading Program at the Nancy Rittmaster Library in El Tejar, she wanted to be sure Ruben could attend. Standing a mere 4'11", she humbly brought Ruben to the first day of Adventures in Reading. Hoping to see what they would do, she asked if she could stay and watch. She was so excited watching Ruben take to the stories and activities that she kept returning with him. Soon, Dona Loncha was not content to just watch from the sidelines, but wanted to join in the story time with her Ruben. So every day, this grandmotherly woman would

sit with the other children and listen to the magical stories. She wanted to keep these special stories alive at home with Ruben until the next day.

This wonderful woman, despite or perhaps because she was never able to receive an education, knows that the key to a brighter future for Ruben is education. With your support Child Aid is working hard with its local partners to assure that Ruben and hundreds of other poor children have this chance.

The estimates of illiteracy in Guatemala run high, in some areas as many as 75% of the women cannot read or write, not even their names. In another vein, 60% of the children that start first grade do not finish, many never return to school. The sad reality is that without education they cannot improve their situation in life. They will con-

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Director's Note: Why Am I Scratching My Head?



I have included this picture to give you a sense of what organizations such as Child Aid confront and at times the frustrations we face. John Van Keppel and I are here walking through one of the cement block houses the Government built but later refused to let the people occupy. After paying to have these simple but fairly nice structures built, the Government decided it was not safe to settle in this area. So, the families have been forced to live in miniscule "temporary" structures literally next to these nice homes for now, over a year and a half. This is why I am scratching my head with a pained look on my face. If an efficient non profit such as Child Aid had had the money that had been wasted on these structures, an enormous amount could have been done. I wish I could say this was a rare occurrence, but unfortunately the developing world is littered with such waste and come to think of it I may actually be pulling my hair out and not simply scratching. When you support Child Aid, you can rest assured that no such waste or bureaucratic inefficiency will occur. ✧

Dona Loncha cont...

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tinue to perpetuate the cycle of poverty they were born into if they do not develop the skills to think critically, solve problems, or seek out other possibilities. They will raise their children as subsistence farmers, work seasonal harvest jobs, or migrate to the city in the hopes for something better. Without intervention, life will not improve for them.

Child Aid is partnering with various rural libraries in Guatemala to assist schools and communities in helping students develop better reading skills, and a love for reading. More than 250 children participated in our Adventures in Reading program in 5 different communities this past year. The program runs for six weeks during the school break (November and December). Students are divided by age group and come for an hour a day to have stories read to them, learn to choose books on their own in the library, read to other students in small groups, and even take books to read at home. One library had six hours of programming this year. The hour at the library includes at least one story and an associated activity. Some days they do an art or craft and other days they play a sport or other game while some of the older chil-

dren even write their own story.

"Students are divided by age group and come for an hour a day to have stories read to them"

"The Cat in the Hat", "Where the Wild Things Are", and "Clifford the Big Red Dog" are books that children the world over love to read over and over. Sadly, in Guatemala few children in rural areas have the opportunity to be exposed to these or any books. With your help, we are working to change this! ✧



Nunca Más en el Silencio

Imagine the joy and excitement of being able to hear for the first time in your life. 29 children between one and five years old were blessedly given this opportunity on February 28 with the gift of new hearing aids. The now annual event, *Nunca Más en el Silencio*, was sponsored by Child

Aid's partner CORAL and Beneficia Publica at the Casa de la Iglesia de los Pobres in Oaxaca, Mexico.

What allowed this amazing event to take place was CORAL's Early Detection Program. This program reaches out to rural communities identifying children at an early age when treatment is far more effective. Prior to this program these 29 children would have had little hope of hearing, let alone the opportunity for an education and a normal childhood. The ceremony also included current CORAL school students and parents proudly sharing their experiences and the joy of seeing their children have a fair chance in life.

As members of the growing CORAL community, CORAL will continue to work with the new parents and students through therapy and parent education. This education teaches proper care for the hearing aids as well as instruction for healthy social, psychological, speech and language development. Having a hearing aid is an important first step, but the comprehensive care that CORAL provides offers long term holistic success.

Nunca Más en el Silencio is a day that these 29 families will never forget. CORAL has made it possible not only for these children to end their world of silence, but to continue the healthy development of the children and their families. ♡



Come Celebrate Twenty Years of Joyous Work

For 20 years, the founders of Child Aid, Portlanders Rick Carroll and Nancy Press, have been *building brighter futures for the children of Latin America*. We will celebrate this 20-year landmark with Child Aid's first annual Portland gala on Friday, June 1, at 7:00 pm.

talent of many of our supporters. Call the office for more information so you can get in on the ground floor of this inaugural event (503-223-3008). ♡

The evening's events will include live entertainment, sensational Latin American cuisine and drink, art displays and live music all in one of Portland's most amazing downtown locations: The Wieden + Kennedy Atrium in the dynamic Pearl district. This is our chance to meet each other AND continue to support Child Aid's work in Mexico and Guatemala. The program will feature video highlights of the development of Child Aid's 20-year history of service, its powerful impact on thousands of children and their families, as well as recognition of the dedication and



Co-Founder & President Richard Carroll opens the door for you to join us at Wieden + Kennedy

Businesswoman Turns Passion for Reading into Work as Guatemalan Program Coordinator



Kristen Anderson

After spending fifteen years in the medical industry, first as a pharmaceutical sales rep and later as an event planner for physician training programs and medical trade shows, Kristen Anderson wanted to use her skills as an expert

“...she fell in love with the work of Child Aid.”

Kristen wanted to continue her work beyond her one year of volunteering. So, with the inducement of a small stipend, we are happy to say that Kristen will be with us for another year.

organizer and coordinator to contribute to something greater. She found that something greater in Child Aid.

Having been an avid reader her entire life, Kristen realized that working with Child Aid to promote literacy in Guatemala would be a perfect fit. In the spring of 2006 Kristen joined Child Aid as an unpaid volunteer coordinator. In the process of volunteering she fell in love with the work of Child Aid and we likewise with her skills and boundless energy. Fortunately for Child Aid,

As a volunteer for Child Aid, Kristen has worn many hats. She organizes the volunteer program, finding positions and coordinating orientation for the many volunteers that come to Guatemala. She plays an active role in coordinating fund raising events such as an ornament drive during the holidays and a health fair in April. She also is involved with the local Spanish school, PROBIGUA, answering all correspondence and leading the orientation for new students. Her Spanish has improved greatly and if you are lucky enough to visit Guatemala in the next year you will have the pleasure of meeting her in person. Thank you Kristen for all you have done and will do for the children of Guatemala. ♪

Karen Weber: Volunteer in Action

Karen Weber, an early childhood education specialist, was on a trip with her 3 children in Antigua, Guatemala. While studying Spanish at the school run by Child Aid’s partner PROBIGUA, she learned of the CEDIN preschool run by Child Aid’s partner FUNDIT. So she asked Kristen Anderson if she could visit CEDIN. Not surprisingly, Karen’s heart was stolen by the 108 exuberant children at this preschool for the poor.



Karen Weber

that would help supply such knowledge. Simple things such as having a parent or teacher read to a child as she/he grows up are not part of the shared experience of Guatemalan teachers or their young students. Nor is the importance of music and movement in helping young minds to grow. Most teachers in Guatemala receive only a high school education as preparation for teaching.

Fortunately for CEDIN, a simple visit was not enough and Karen offered to hold 2 workshops for the teachers of CEDIN. Not much, you might think, but in Guatemala teachers do not often get such opportunities to receive special training from a professional. Further, they have no background

of CEDIN to have access to the knowledge of this trained professional and they participated enthusiastically. But such sharing is not a one way street. As you can tell from the photo, Karen was also having a great time. ♪

Great Things Happening at Socorro

Child Aid has provided support to The Socorro School for over 5 years. It is a wonderfully successful school run by the Sisters of Bethlehem, a small order of nuns founded in Antigua in 1620, that provides quality education to the children of the rural indigenous poor. We are pleased and excited to report that this partnership has taken on a new dimension that we expect to have a broad impact on literacy in rural Mayan villages.



Beginning this year, Norma Guzman, Child Aid's Guatemalan Program Coordinator, is teaching a class in reading fundamentals and reading education to the first year students. The impact of this class will reach far beyond its 40 students. Many of these young women will return to their native communities throughout Guatemala to become teachers in public and private schools. As teachers, they will now have specific knowledge as to how to impart reading skills to the young children of their village. This is knowledge that they will put to use for years, impacting the lives of hundreds of children each year. In addition to this initial training Child Aid is planning to keep in contact with these young students and work closely with them to promote literacy for the children of their communities. This is just another way that Child Aid is working hard with its local partners to create the maximum impact with the support our friends provide. ✎

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Child Aid Receives Highest Rating from Charity Navigator

Charity Navigator, the premier independent evaluator of charities, has given Child Aid its highest rating of Four Stars! The four star rating means that Child Aid is classified as “exceptional” by virtue of the fact that it “exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in its Cause.” Child Aid is very proud of this recognition and we assure you that we take very seriously our responsibility to use your donations efficiently and effectively. As further stated by Charity Navigator,

“Givers can be confident that in supporting these charities rated highly by Charity Navigator, they will be supporting organizations that are fiscally responsible and financially healthy.” You can learn more about this rating by visiting www.charitynavigator.org. ✎

The Strength of the Human Spirit

As many of you may know, the survivors of the mudslides that destroyed Panabaj continue to live in “temporary” shelters behind the school in Tzanchaj. A year and a half after this tragedy, whole families are still forced to live on a 6’ X 6’ concrete pad with plastic sheet walls. Try to imagine a family with two children living in a 6’ by 6’ space.



larger and more functional. In other words, they were trying to make a home.

Bernabe, when he is lucky enough to find work, makes at most \$2.60 a day. Andrea along with the daily chores of a home and 2 children tries to make 2 pieces of tipica (crafts) to sell for 65 cents each. The family lost everything but their lives when the mudslide wiped out their

village. Their home has no water or electricity.

In spite of all this, there is their garden of hope, a ringing testament to the human spirit and how it can create beauty and turn a barren patch of earth into something to feed a starving soul. It is a humbling experience to witness such strength. ✧

“
...they were trying
to make a home.
”

Perhaps the most moving sight I recently saw in this community of abject poverty was a beautiful little garden. This garden was created by Andrea Petzey Ajcot solely to beautify her family’s living environment. It serves no other purpose. It was created by Andrea, her husband Bernabe, and others when they left their 6x 6 slabs of cement to build structures, though dirt floored, that were a little

Join Us - Child Aid Guatemala August 2007: A Trip to Remember

In our newsletters you read about wonderful and exciting things going on in Guatemala. So, why not join us and see these up close and personal on an educational/inspirational tour of Guatemala. This trip will explore the cultural and natural beauty of Guatemala, its Mayan people and the programs that Child Aid supports. During the trip, participants will have the opportunity to live with a local family and receive personalized Spanish instruction. We will visit and spend time with children and adults who are also learning at a number of Child Aid supported libraries and schools. We will be based out of the beautiful colonial city of Antigua, making short trips to visit a variety of other communities. The trip is being scheduled for August 2007 and we would love for you and your friends to join us in this exciting and adventurous endeavor. Whether you are fluent in Spanish or are a complete beginner, this trip will open your eyes, ears and heart to the reality of Guatemala. The language, culture, natural beauty and Child Aid programs will offer a once in a lifetime experience that you are sure to enjoy. Please contact Child Aid if you have any questions or would like to reserve your space. ✧



One Mother's Story

Senora Rosito Leyto was very happy when her daughter Marisol was born. She was such a good and quiet baby, nothing seemed to bother her. However, Rosito eventually became concerned when Marisol did not begin trying to speak. In response to her concerns, Senora Rosito received poor medical advice, a very common occurrence for parents of the hearing impaired. There was no improvement, so Senora Rosito sought further help. Fortunately for her and Marisol, this time she came in contact with an individual who had been made aware of the services provided by CORAL. The following is Senora Rosito's simple but moving description of what then happened.



Senora Rosito Leyto Gil and Marisol

"By fortune the social worker very kindly referred us to CORAL where we were given an appointment for an E. E. G. The results were sad, my legs were trembling and I asked myself why me? The result was profound deafness and so I was given another appointment with the Director of CORAL in order to attend the school. This was very hard.

great effort you will have good results. My relatives and people that surround us already have observed great advances, because she goes to the beautiful school of CORAL. The strategies to help socialize her have been of great help giving her a good base so that in a future she can defend herself." ♫

Thanks to God a school exists like CORAL. I have learned that my daughter is a normal girl, that with some hearing aids, patience and the dedication of dad and mom, she will speak, of course with time. I learned to face family and society at large, thanks also to the Director Teresa Towers Zurita for accepting my daughter. They gave Marisol hearing aids and taught us how to take care of them and to carry along the maintenance kit.

Thanks also to the teachers and all the personnel of CORAL that made it possible for Marisol to enroll at the school of CORAL. The strategies that have been provided have been of great help, to carry on life with tranquility, it is not easy. It is difficult, but with

Help us be More Efficient

We ask for e-mails for several reasons:
• It saves on the rising cost of mailings

- so even more money can go to programs.
- It allows us to keep you up to date through our e-newsletter.
- It allows us to make you aware of special needs and circumstances.

So, please help us by providing your e-mail addresses when possible. We promise we will not inundate you with constant pleas but we will keep you informed, thank you.

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What is Child Aid ?

Child Aid helps poor children by establishing partnerships with grassroots community organizations in Latin America working to remove barriers to their children's health and education. These community organizations have identified crucial needs and developed strategies for positive change. They lack the financial and technical resources and the experience in organization building that Child Aid provides. After helping a local group sustain itself and grow, Child Aid moves on to assist somewhere else. In this way, we're helping to create organizations that have a lasting and measurable impact... Building brighter futures for the children of Latin America.



Child Aid Partner Organizations



CHILD AID

Centro Oaxaqueño de Rehabilitación de Audición y Lenguaje, A.C. (CORAL)
Oaxaca, Mexico
Kathleen Maloney, Coordinator

Fundación para Desarrollo Integral de El Tejar (FUNDIT)
El Tejar, Guatemala
Silvia García Pérez, Director

Proyecto Bibliotecas Guatemala (PROBIGUA)
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Building Brighter Futures for the Children of Latin America
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