

Casa de Angeles

"House of Angels. Home of Hope."

Spring Newsletter 2014

Memo from Mickey

Once again, I write this message after many of the board members of the Casa de Angeles Foundation have had the opportunity to be in Guatemala this spring and to spend time at the orphanage. We were amazed by the energy of Sisters Elvise and Betsebe, the children's ongoing growth and progress, and the ever increasing number of children.

There are now 123 children!!! Our staff still consists of 22 members of the orphanage community, including seven ayudantes (helpers), two rotating armed guards (covering 24/7), seven teachers, a gardener, two nineras who take care of the most severely disabled children, Rosa and the two Sisters. All of the children continue to flourish in the love provided to them by the staff.

The major sadness of the last half year was the death of Julio. Julio came as an infant four years ago. He was growth retarded and had a number of physical challenges including the Down syndrome, an imperforate anus treated with a colostomy, and a cardiac defect with secondary pulmonary hypertension. Julio slowly grew and gained weight under the loving care of the Sisters. We were planning his trip to Spain where the university hospital was to undertake his "work-up" and perform corrective surgeries. Then, at the turn of the year, he suddenly died. This is not uncommon in children with these problems; nevertheless, this was unexpected. Julio's death has been a great shock and source of distress to the Sisters. (Please see over.)

WE NEED A NEW SOCCER FIELD!

The children of Casa de Angeles have soccer in their blood!

The 2-3 year old toddlers have an enclosed play area between Casitas 1 & 2. Each day after breakfast, they retire to this area and a number of soccer balls are thrown in for their "kicking pleasure." When these youngsters move to preschool and kindergarten, they again have their own enclosed play area and are provided more soccer balls for recess. By the time these children are in primary school, they have moved to the artificial turf soccer field that was built in 2008. This field is 24 m (84 ft.) long by 13 m (43 ft.) wide for five-on-a-side teams. This is the normal league team size for primary school, which was the age of our oldest children at the time that we had it built. Today, there are children on that soccer field from the time that school classes end until bedtime.

Our success under the tutelage of Coach Elvise has been nothing short of phenomenal. In the summer of 2012, Samsung Corporation held its first annual soccer tournament for primary school children. Our boys team made it to the quarterfinals, while our girls team WON the tournament.

In 2013, Samsung repeated the (Please see over.)

Memo from Mickey, cont'd:

Because of his problems, Julio spent his days in the "infant Casita" with the Sisters, so their attachment was that much stronger. The story of Julio is reminiscent of their relationship to and the loss of Chiqi some 18 months before, and has brought back all those painful memories. The Sisters can use prayers from all of the Casa de Angeles support family as they deal with this trauma, along with everything else that happens in each and every one of their busy days.

This is the 6th year utilizing our own on-site school. We have seven teachers in the morning, four of whom stay each afternoon to supervise homework and activities. They are teaching 40 preschoolers and kindergartners (ages 4, 5, & 6), 39 primary students (1st-6th grade), and 12 middle school students (7th-9th). Additionally, seven children are going out of the orphanage for schooling, five for trade school training and two to academic high schools. Sister Elvira continues to teach a special education class for the 12 older children with developmental delay as she feels she can "take them further" this way.

All of the care and progress provided by the orphanage has been possible only because of your support, both spiritually and financially. The Board of Directors, on behalf of the children, wants to thank you again for your generous support. You continue to change the future for an increasing number of well-deserving children.

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SOCCER FIELD, cont'd:

tournament. This time, our boys team made it to the semifinals, while our girls team WON! Also, in late 2012 the Barcelona professional soccer team came to Guatemala and held a two-week soccer camp for young boys. Coach Elvira managed to get five of our boys in among the 500 at camp. At the end of the session, the Barcelona team announced that they had chosen the young man they felt had the most potential as a soccer player. They chose our own Francisco!

In the fall of 2013, we had the privilege to be in Guatemala when the 10-12 year old league was coming to a close, and we got to witness our team winning the league and adding more trophies to the already full trophy room.

Now, our oldest children are graduating to seven-on-a-side team leagues and need to practice on a larger field. We have saved space in the complex for a 41 m (135 ft.) long by 23 m (76 ft.) wide artificial turf field, which is what is now needed. Our architect has drawn up the plans. The bid for construction is \$72,000.

So, we are asking that our always generous donors come forward once again to help us raise the money for the field that our children deserve. A few of you, having heard of this plan earlier, have already made significant donations to start us on our way. WILL YOU HELP?

FALL GALAS ANNOUNCED!

Mark your calendars for our two fall fund raising galas!

The Bay Area Dinner will be held at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Belvedere on Saturday, September 6th. Wine, nibbles and a silent auction will start at 6:00 PM with dinner at 7:15, followed by a slide show and dessert.

The Corvallis, Oregon, gala will be held on Saturday, October 25. They have a unique auction item. It is a week at a 7 bedroom villa in Puerto Vallarta, valued at \$7000, minimum bid of \$3500. Contact Peter Hinckle, MD, for more information: phinckle@comcast.net or 541.740.5788.

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FUTURE SOCCER FIELD SITE