



Award Winning

Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter

January 27, 2010

Official Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Malibu

Malibu Rotary Club President Holmes Osborne III

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Edited by Dr. John W. Elman

Pictures by Dr John W. Elman and Ron & Carol Cousineau

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- **Check Calendar on Malibu Rotary website MalibuRotary.org**

- **Malibu Rotary Club Website:** www.MalibuRotary.org

Rotary International Website: www.Rotary.org

Rotary District 5280 Website: www.rotary5280la.org

Rotary District 5280 “Rotarians Doing Business With Rotarians” Website: <http://yp5280.org/>

RI President (2009-2010) John Kenny

Rotary District 5280 Governor (2009-2010): Susanne Sundberg

Ron and Carol Cousineau Report the Latest on the BioSand Water Filters in Ecuador

By John Elman

Ron and Carol Cousineau, who live in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, first told us about the BioSand Water Filters that they had been working on in Ecuador when they visited the Malibu Rotary Club Sept. 9, 2009 (See Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter Sept 9, 2009 [on line](#)).

When they visited the Malibu Rotary Club on January 27, 2010, they were able to give an update of the project, and how Malibu Rotarians and others can get involved in this very worthwhile humanitarian project.



The Beginning

Fr. Joseph Naoum Bitar, usually known as "Fr. Joe," was ordained a priest of the Divine Word Missionaries in 1952, in Detroit, MI until 1997. That year, at the age of 70, he declared "I want to spend the rest of my life helping the poorest of poor," and found the place of the "poorest of the poor" to be in a barrio of Santo Domingo De Los Colorados, Ecuador. In 1998, Fr. Joe founded the Father Joe Poor Families Program which today helps 123 impoverished Ecuadorian families. It wasn't just that the people living there were poor, but health conditions were terrible, and part of this was due to the filthy drinking water.

Father Joe kept in touch with the people in his former parish in Michigan, who helped support the Father Joe Poor Families Program. The Cousineau family was among those supporters. The support was not just

money, but in hands on help in using known technology to help the health of these people, especially providing clean drinking water.

Ron is a mechanical engineer who retired from GM after 44 years. A viable solution for the drinking water problem would seem to be BioSand Filters (described below). Ron and Carol and others in the Father Joe Poor Families Program were working on the logistics of how make these filters in Ecuador and get them to the people who needed them. The Cousineau's first trip to Ecuador was October, 2008. Initially 320 filters were made using \$7500 in private donations from Father Joe's group. When they came back and talked to their friends in Michigan who were Rotarians, their friends said that they were sure Rotary could help with the BioSand Water Filter Project. Ron and Carol were not Rotarians, but became Rotarians to get this project to the attention of Rotary. The Pontiac Rotary Club embraced the project and inducted Carol Cousineau, early January 2009.

They were able to partner with the Rotary Club Tsachilas of Santo Domingo de los Colorados, Ecuador (District 4400), to serve 250 poor families and 70 schools where the Club has already built restroom buildings. They returned to Santo Domingo March 19 to train the team, producing 20 filters.



Here is a picture of the filter. This shows the 5 gallon safe water container, two of which are supplied for each home to receive the clean water, store it, and dispense the water safely from a tap. The tap assures that no contamination will occur from people dipping into a container with their hands or from airborne bacteria, pests or animals. Wilson, the designer of the table used to hold the container, was also a student in the training class in March and would like to start his own business.

BioSand filters seem to be the perfect solution to provide clean water in this area of the world:

BioSand Advantages

- **Functional – household size**
- **High User Acceptance**
- **User Friendly – easy maintenance**
- **Durable**
- **Sufficient water quantity – 60 – 80 L per day**
- **Affordable - \$42 installed w 2 containers (profit and fixed costs**

not included)

- **Limitations – dissolved substances pass through (fertilizer, pesticides, color, salt,)**

BioSand filters remove most pathogens from the dirty water:

BioSand Pathogen Removal

- >97% e-coli
- >99% of protozoa and helminthes
- 80 – 90% of viruses
- 50 – 90% of organic and inorganic toxicants
- 90 – 95% iron
- Most suspended sediments
- 30 – 44% reduction in diarrhea

*Chlorine disinfection improves health benefits

The BioSand filters use the same technology that is used in our city water systems, but it is miniaturized into self contained molded units for household use for a cost of \$50.00. Once installed these units should last for many years.

Gabriel Jiminez and Carol and Ron Cousineau celebrating the first BioSand filter made in Ecuador.

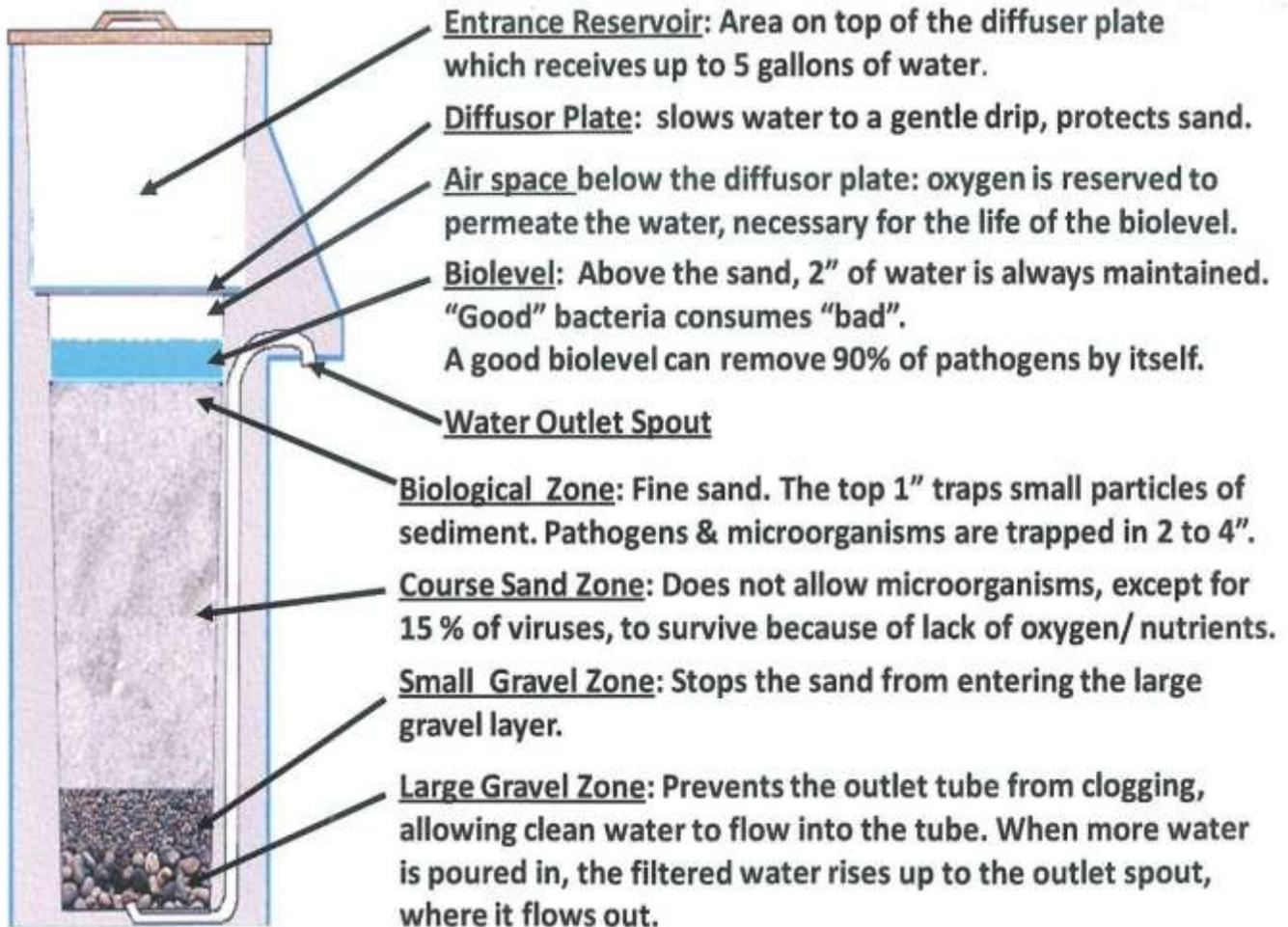


(Below) After installing the first BioSand Filter in Ecuador Ron Cousineau had to prove to the recipients that this technology actually worked, that the BioSand filtration system actually did produce clean, germ-free, delicious drinking water.



The Need: Point of Use Filtration

The Solution: A BioSand Filter



There are a couple of Youtube presentations showing the BioSand filters:

<http://ca.youtube.com/watch?v=tv4NDTVQe9w>

Here's another:

Another BioSand demo in English:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppN3UJt8xGY&feature=related>

Carol and Ron were there when the first BioSand Filter was installed in Ecuador. Now they are trying to get other Rotary clubs and Rotary International involved. Rotary District 5280 is one of the districts involved in Ecuador water projects.

Ron said that he sees the Rotary Biosand Filter Project in Santa Domingo, Ecuador to be in 3 phases:

The first phase involved getting a Rotary Foundation Simplified Grant which involved 9 U.S Rotary Clubs along with the host Rotary Club Tsachilas of Santo Domingo de los Colorados. This was done November 2009 and 150 filters were built at a cost of \$7500. He said that there has been some problem this year in manufacturing the biosand filters. Electrical power is needed to manufacture the biosand, and there has been lower electricity generation this year in the region because a drought has lowered the rivers used to generate hydroelectric power.

Phase 2 will cost \$8500, and another 150 filter will be made and delivered. It is difficult to install these filters in some of the terrain where vehicles cannot go.

Phase 3 will involve District to District participation in the BioSand Filter project.

District 5280 has several projects in Ecuador. Bill Wishard will be going there in March with our District 5280 group, and our newest member, Pompeya Monteros, who lives in Ecuador part of the year, is there now.

Carol Cousineau sent a letter to Margo Neal and John Elman after the meeting addressing specifically how the Malibu Rotary Club can be involved with this project. Some of the highlights of that letter are printed below.

First, I should mention that membership in the Father Joe Poor Family Program is based on need. The Poor Family Program does not discriminate and Poor Family Members need not be Catholic, and many are not. That is in keeping with Rotary philosophy. The administrators, Monica and Esperanza, are Caritas volunteers who distribute the monthly support and who also volunteered, and we trained, to become monitors at no cost to us. This makes our project the least expensive of them all.

Your contribution would be a check made out to Pontiac Charities, to be held in a special account for our project. That money would be matched by the next District Grant, which we have been assured we will get. So, for instance \$500.00 would become \$750.00. The filters and two 5 gallon safe water containers per unit, cost around \$60.00 each, so a donation of \$500.00 would provide 12 families of five or more with 20 gallons of water each day - enough for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth, bathing and washing clothes! The filters are expected to last at least 50 years without the need to add any expense except chlorine - available and inexpensive. That means each family will have more money to provide more nutritious food for their families, since they don't have to pay for propane to boil their water. It will mean more time to spend with their children, rather than boiling or foraging for firewood. With great improvement in the health of all the family members, fewer cases of diarrhea and stomach flu from bad water and parasites, the parents will better be able to hold down a job and provide for their families, children will be able to attend school more days and have a better future.

We are excited about this project because we anticipate that this is just the beginning. All over Ecuador, there are families struggling to survive, with a high infant mortality rate, because of bad water. This successful project will be a shining example and model. Rotary is the perfect vehicle for getting the word out about BioSand and accomplishing the goal of providing safe drinking water for the world. **BioSand** is one of the four methods of purifying water recommended for Third World Countries by the World Health Organization. (We have researched the others. Since they provide only a small amount of water for drinking, are small and ceramic, so more susceptible to breakage or deterioration, or adding so much chlorine that the people won't drink it, the concrete BioSand is by far the best choice for all but mountainous areas, where a more expensive plastic version of BioSand is an alternative.)

Guests and Other News from Last Malibu Rotary Meeting

Two guests Malibu Rotary Club President Holmes Osborne were at the last Malibu Rotary Club meeting: **Victoria Blackwood**, the insurance broker, whose office is in Woodland Hills and who lives in Santa Monica and **M.C. Saulcedo**, who works with Holmes in the financial industry and met his wife of 49+ years when they were both students at John Adams Middle School in Santa Monica. He now lives in Chatsworth.

Geoff Ortiz has contacted the Malibu Boys and Girls Club and now only will the students chosen this year for RYLA come to speak to our club, has requested that students who were recipients of the RYLA camp selection last year will also come to Malibu Rotary Club meeting to talk about their experience.

The Malibu Rotary Club was locked out of the projector cabinet and our speakers had to give their presentation by holding Ron Cousineau's laptop in the air. *Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter* bulletin editor/writer appreciates the Cousineau's ability to e-mail pictures shown in this edition. He also was able to copy a DVD the Cousineau's were going to show about the project which was shown on Ecuador television and which can be shown on a future date. It is in Spanish, but is easy to follow, as the Cousineau's are speaking in English and a wonderful 14 year old translator reports what they are saying. John hopes the Audio-Visual cabinet, and the key that was given to David Baird, all are functional for next week's meeting, when John is giving a presentation about the Malibu Rotary Club website which requires use of the projector and connection to the Internet.

Margo Neal will not be in Malibu during all of February while she takes on her job of writing a daily newsletter for the 5,000 volunteers at Whistler during the 2010 Winter Olympics.

PROJECT TRIUMPH



Project TRIUMPH program was conceived by Ilan Magdali of the Newbury Park Rotary Club. The program brought 10 teenage Arab and 10 teenage Jewish students from Israel to a leadership camp in Simi Valley where they all learned to work together, develop leaders skills before returning to Israel to use what they learned back home. Most of us feel helpless in trying to find a solution to the constant war in the Mid East, but at least this program is trying to do something. Sponsorship of this program has been mostly from the Newbury Rotary Club and Rotary Clubs in District 5240. Malibu Rotary Club was the first Rotary Club in Rotary District 5280 to support this project

Please see Malibu Rotary Club Website www.maliburotary.org for latest Calendar and future speakers.