

THE DISTRICT

Nicaragua Water Well Trip Special Edition

May 29, 2013



Governor's Message

Fellow Rotarians,

I visited the area of Managua and Leon Nicaragua over the Memorial Day weekend along with a delegation from our district to view water wells made possible through an RI matching grant. Touring the area was a profound experience as we visited with people living in extreme poverty. Even in the midst of such deplorable living conditions, the people seemed pleasant, humble and very gracious. I am proud of every Rotarian in our district who has contributed to the Rotary Foundation over the years in order to support our outstanding humanitarian service. Thanks especially to David Standlee, Nicaragua Water Well Chairman and AG Rhonda Ellisor who served as our guides and have overseen this project for several years.

Peace Through Service,

Brenda

How it all started

- Started in **2005**
- First matching grant approved in 2006 with the Rotary Club of **Masaya**, Nicaragua
 - **\$40,500** to drill **27** waterwells
- Partnership with the Rotary Club of Tulsa and the Rainbow Network
 - Started drilling in **2007**
- Completed **40 wells** in 2009

Now

- The second matching grant approved in 2012 with the Metropolitan Club of Leon, Nicaragua
 - **\$35,000** to drill **15** waterwells
- District 5910 Clubs **sponsoring** wells:
 - Palestine
 - Cleveland
 - Beaumont
 - Port Arthur
 - RYLA
 - Angelina Community College

Drilling in Remote Villages

- *75% are hand pump wells
- *\$2,000 to \$2,500 per well
- *Dry season (6 months out of the year)
- *Sites determined by Leon Club
 - *100 to 300 ft. deep
 - *tracked by GPS
- *Maintained by Rotary Club of Leon
- *Wells are tested by University in Leon

District 5910 delegation to Nicaragua – May 2013

- 8 Rotarians
- Visit current drilling sites
- Identify needs for Future Vision projects
- Attend **Metropolitan Rotary Club of Leon** meeting

The Delegation



L-R Front Row: Chip Volz (Nederland), Bobby Simon (Nederland) David Standlee (Huntsville)

L-R Back Row: Julie Adams (Houston), Governor Brenda (Palestine), Rhonda Ellisor (Huntsville), Rhonda Herrington (Palestine)



Rhonda Herrington cranks the manual well to fill a villager's bucket.



Los Cedros Community

We visited Los Cedros where this well had just been completed. Electric service will be installed in two weeks to power the pump.



Los Ranchos Community

At each stop the community inhabitants came in their best dress and a spokesperson thanked us for the well and commented how their children were no longer sick due to the clean water.



The entire community came out to watch the drilling rig operation. Rotarians distributed candy to the children as they played in the water. Most wells are 100 feet or deeper.



Alcaldias San Rafael y Villa El Carmen



The Mayor of San Rafael (white shirt next to Governor Brenda) treated our team to lunch at Villa El Carmen on the Pacific Coast. Plaques were presented to Governor Brenda, AG Rhonda Ellisor and Water Well Chairman David Standlee naming them as “Honored” Guests of the City in recognition of their humanitarian efforts and support for the water wells drilled near Leon. The Leon area is home to over 6 million people.





OUR INTERPRETER Oscar Aragón

Oscar is President-Nominee of the Leon Metropolitan Rotary club and did an excellent job as our interpreter. He exhibited a high level of professionalism as we toured various sites in Leon and Managua. Thank you Oscar for a memorable and informative itinerary.

AG Rhonda Ellisor braved the waves for a photo op.



Lobster and shrimp are plentiful at the seaside restaurant owned by Rotarian Roberto. Lobster in garlic sauce...DELICIOUS!

Leon Metropolitan Rotary Meeting Hotel El Convento



Rotaract

We visited the Leon Metropolitan Rotary club on Friday evening and Governor Brenda was asked to induct two new Rotaract members. The club played The Star Spangled Banner and after exchanging banners, gifts were presented to the D5910 delegation.

Visit to Public Hospital



We visited the public hospital. The third floor serves as the pediatric unit and the burn unit is without air conditioning. Broken windows are easy entries for pigeons who fly freely around the waiting rooms. The Leon Metropolitan club is working hard to improve conditions at the hospital.



Following our visit to the hospital, we went to visit a woman who had a 2 year old daughter with Down syndrome and who also suffers from defective heart valves. The child can not be operated on and her medicine is \$30 per month which is a tremendous amount for the poor. Our District team took up a collection for the Rotary club to purchase two months worth of medicine. The family of six people live in a cardboard home and collect plastic bottles to sell and help support the family.

Masaya Volcano



The Masaya Volcano National Park is located 23 kilometers from Managua. It has two impressive volcanoes and five craters. The park is home to monkeys, deer, iguanas, parakeets and other birds. The Spaniards baptized the active volcano “La Boca del Infierno” or “The Mouth of Hell”. They planted a cross, “La Cruz de Bobadilla” named in honor of the Father Francisco Bobadilla. It was placed on the lip of the crater to exorcise the devil and a cross still towers over the crater today.

All Work and No Play Makes A Rotarian Dull



Governor Brenda treated members of the Water Well team to a limo ride. Nothing but the best I always say! The owner of the cart was tipped \$5 for the photo op which is an average weekly pay. The Senor is still grinning.

Homeward Bound



The Volcano bid us goodbye as we headed home to Texas. Thanks to our Nicaraguan hosts who made this trip meaningful and fun! Special thanks to Water Well Chair David Standlee and AG Rhonda Ellisor for being great guides and to our Interpreter Oscar for his assistance.

Is clean water really so important?

- **884 million people lack access** to SAFE WATER
- **2.6 billion people** are without adequate sanitation
- **One child dies every 15 seconds** because of a water-related disease
- **1.8 million children die** from diarrhea every year, more than armed conflict and terrorism combined