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Rotary District 6380

Newsletter

December 2015

District Website: <http://rotary6380.org>

District Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/rotarydistrict6380/>



Henry Dotson
District Governor
2015-2016

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Details at
<http://rotary6380.org>

Feb. 5-6
Assistant Governor
Training

Feb. 9
PETS Orientation
Brighton MI

Feb. 11
PETS Orientation
Troy MI

Feb. 16
PETS Orientation
Chatham Ont.

Feb. 20
One Rotary Summit
Troy MI

March 10-12
Kalamazoo MI
PETS 2016

March 10-12
Great Lakes Rotary
PETS

April 14-17 RYLA
Camp Copneconic

April 16
District Assembly

May 13-15
District Conference
Chatham, Ont.
Update your passport or
your enhanced driver
license.

June 29
Meet the Governor

Foundation Challenge Match

■ Janet McPeck

District Rotary Foundation Chair

We are very pleased to announce a very special opportunity for our district. A generous Rotarian in District 6380 has committed to match any contributions to the Rotary Foundation that comes out of our district above and beyond last year's contribution level. This is like our very own Bill Gates match! This donor is willing to match up to \$50,000!

We had a very good year last year, thanks to the generosity of all of you. Our giving last year was a total of \$334,780 – inclusive of Annual Fund, Endowment Fund, polio, all giving to the Foundation combined. Now all we have to do is to keep the momentum going.

As a double bonus, this generous Rotarian's contribution has been designated for the Annual Fund-Share, meaning that half of it will come back to our district for us to spend on projects, whether is it District Grants, Global Grants Scholars or other things that are the most important to us!

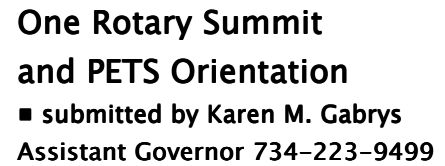
There is nothing special you have to do for your donation to qualify for this match – other than to give more to the Foundation than you did last year in any way that you choose, and to encourage members of your club to do the same. We have new members and those who didn't give last year who will want to be part of this exciting opportunity, so remember that it is a great time to get them involved.

Update: We already have over \$10,000 in “new” donations pledged to this campaign.

Thank you all for what you do to support our Rotary Foundation.

2016 District Conference registration opens
January 1, 2016.
More details in January newsletter.





Leaders

Leadership

legacy inspire bring Success foundation drive want take skills made lead become know world set vision missions achieve leave invest example conversation purpose like happen understand born future needs unique character talked trust come along choice invested stimulate journey status worth vision quo debate difference things results physical establish ideas others strengths leaders focused use mental just spiritual daily way change need emotional alone Without Manifesto challenge leadership make set Character develop person and journey

Rotarians Make Medical Mission to Guatemala

■ submitted by Rhonda Panczyk Assistant Governor 2015–2016 District 6380
Rotary Club of Rochester, MI

What does it take to prepare for a medical-dental trip to Guatemala? A lot! Just ask the four Rotarians from District 6380 who are in Guatemala from November 29 until December 7.

For weeks, work has focused on identifying, sourcing and ordering the medications and supplies needed to treat the wide range of patients and conditions the team expects to see. In addition, large quantities of prenatal vitamins, anti-parasite medication, and oral care products are needed to help maintain health and wellness. Meticulous paperwork is required to move these items through customs.

The fact that the medical clinic is located in a very remote area of northwest Guatemala necessitates detailed logistical planning to support the project once the team lands in Guatemala City. Heavy-duty trucks that can navigate the rutted dirt roads are needed to transport team members and supplies for the 11-hour drive to the clinic. Coordination with village health promoters is critical to determine which villagers will arrive at the clinic on which days. Meals need to be planned and ingredients purchased in advance since food availability in the area is virtually nonexistent. The planning team strives to anticipate and prepare for every detail. Fortunately, much has been learned from a long history of previous medical-dental trips.

The details may be mundane but, through all the planning, excitement builds over the opportunity to do what the mission was established to do — to help the Mayan people of northwest Guatemala improve their lives.



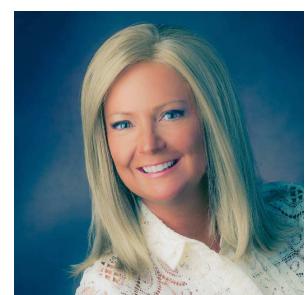
Jay Eastman, M.D. -
District Foundation,
Rotary Club of
Rochester



Linda Eastman -
District Literacy Chair,
Rotary Club of
Rochester



Gerry Jackson - Past
District Governor,
Rotary Club of
Davisburg



Rhonda Panczyk -
Assistant District
Governor, Rotary Club
of Rochester

It is with great excitement that I get to share this news with you on behalf of the Rochester Rotary Club. Past club President Jay Eastman, M.D. and wife Linda Eastman, members of the Rochester Rotary Club have supported important projects in Guatemala for over ten years. Recently, Linda Eastman had the opportunity to attend the graduation of a young Mayan man who received a scholarship from The Rotary Foundation, enabling him to attend nursing school. The Rochester Rotary Club served as the flagship club for this endeavor, along with several other humanitarian projects in Guatemala, through the Future Vision Global Grant which was approved in 2012. Here is an article written by Linda about her experience when she attended Graduation Day in Guatemala. – Rhonda Pancyk

November 21, 2015
Quetzaltenango, Guatemala
written by Linda Eastman

What a day! The anticipation was building with every mile we put behind us. Francisco and I arrived at the deserted church at 7 a.m., where the baccalaureate service was to take place. Outside the front doors stood a solitary humble family. In the midst of that family stood a man — son, husband, and father — dressed head to toe in a crisp, starched white uniform, pride beaming from every pore. I leapt out of the truck, running to give Mateo an enormous hug, barely able to contain the joy and excitement I felt.

Let me back up a little to ponder the significance of this moment. I first met Mateo when he was a schoolteacher in a very remote village called San Ángel in northwest Guatemala. Karen and I were in the area doing a midwife training for a small group of traditional birth attendants. Karen is a neonatal nurse practitioner, and we were asked to come to San Ángel because a baby was just born there and was struggling to survive because of a birth defect.



Mateo had heard that our organization, Casa Colibrí, offered training for village health promoters (VHPs). He asked if he could attend the next one because, in the absence of a VHP in his village, he was the go-to person for health problems and related questions, and he did not feel confident with the knowledge he had in this area. We said, "Of course!" and invited him to the next one.

Mateo walked many hours in the dark, over mountainous terrain, through the tropical jungle to reach our clinic by 8 a.m. After about an hour's time, it became obvious that this young man was a cut above the rest. Every time Jay, the trainer, introduced a new topic, Mateo caught on immediately. With hands-on demonstrations, this remarkable teacher not only grasped the concepts, but he would then turn to his fellow students and help them understand how to master the task at hand. He was a born learner and a natural teacher.

A seed was planted. We had been trying to find a health-care provider to staff the clinic for several years, to no avail. Every prospective candidate, after learning where the clinic was located and how electricity, clean water, satellite, and Internet had not reached that area yet, declined the offer of employment. What were we going to do?

Since Mateo had clearly demonstrated his eagerness to learn and his ability to comprehend quickly, we asked if he would be interested in attending nursing school with the goal of staffing the clinic after graduation. Mateo had a wife and two small children to support, and this would mean leaving his family for several years to study in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala's second largest city. His family would only see him during school vacations. Since this was a sacrifice for the whole family, it had to be a family decision.

After considering carefully what this would mean for all of them, Mateo's wife, Josefina, supported the idea, believing that the end result would be worth the sacrifice. But in order for the family to survive, Casa Colibrí would have to pay a monthly salary to support Mateo and his family. In addition, Mateo would need a scholarship to attend the University and pay for room, board, books, transportation, uniforms, school fees, and supplies. We pled our case to Rotary International, and as part of their Future Vision Global Grant program, Mateo was awarded a comprehensive scholarship.

As with any college experience, there were trials. Before he could even begin, Mateo had to take a course in basic computer science. He also had to purchase a suit, tie, and dress shoes, a school requirement. Entrance exams were daunting, coursework was rigorous, professors were demanding, sleep was always in short supply. There were times when Mateo longed to be home with his wife and sons. Four years seemed endless.

But Mateo persevered. And yesterday he stood before me in his dress whites, beaming with pride.

People began to gather, dressed in clothing reserved for the most special occasions. To my surprise, many of Mateo's classmates were indigenous, too. The University of San Carlos is the most prestigious university in Guatemala, so it was gratifying to see that its doors were open to all Guatemalans, regardless of ethnicity.

Continued next page

Graduation continued from previous page

At last, the moment had arrived. The graduates made their procession up the two aisles, flanked by underclassmen dressed in navy pants, white shirts, and navy sweaters, standing at attention. They formed four bright-white rows in the front of the church. One of their classmates sang three beautiful, inspirational songs, and the pastor of the church gave a stirring message that seemed to apply to each graduate and guest in attendance. Parents were called up front for the pinning ceremony. Mateo lost his father, tragically, during the Guatemalan Civil war, so in his absence, Mateo gave me the honor of affixing his pin on his uniform. It was official. Mateo was now a professional nurse!

Parents were asked to put their hand on their graduate's shoulder and pray over him or her. Mateo's mother, Teresa, and I each took a shoulder. After the prayer, there were lots of tears, hugging, congratulating, and broad smiles on the faces of everyone in attendance. The joy was palpable!

The ceremony ended as the graduates recessed, each carrying an ivory-colored porcelain lamp with a lit candle symbolizing the light that they will bring into the world through the education they received.

It took my breath away! I love graduations because of the hope and promise they represent. This graduation was extra special because Mateo's full-time presence at the Casa Colibrí clinic in the hinterlands of Guatemala will bring health and healing to some of the neediest people on the planet.

There was one more event — the academic graduation ceremony put on by the University. This ceremony took place in the National Theater, a stunning building with Greek columns and 10-foot carved wooden doors. It was characterized by all the pomp and circumstance befitting such an occasion—the national anthem, speeches by university dignitaries clad in academic regalia, students taking an oath to their profession of nursing, the bestowing of diplomas, and the recessional — 48 brand-new nurses carrying their beautiful, brightly shining lamps into the world.

I took in every detail and pondered it in my heart. Looking around that auditorium with its majestic ceiling, crimson draperies, and crystal chandelier, it stood in stark contrast with most of the families in attendance that day. While a few guests were dressed in finery, most wore the humble attire of hard-working campesinos. One could only imagine the collective sacrifice represented in that room.



After applause, picture taking, and congratulations, Francisco and I invited Mateo and his family to a special dinner in his honor at a local hotel. The dining room was decked out for Christmas, with elegant linen tablecloths decorated with poinsettias and boughs of holly. I made a toast to Mateo, expressing our pride in his great accomplishment, acknowledging his family's sacrifice, and thanking them for allowing me to share in this unforgettable experience. Mateo was so overcome with emotion that he had to pause, choking back tears, and wiping his eyes with his napkin. He thanked us for believing in him, even when he didn't believe in himself. He was so grateful for the opportunity and for our unwavering support.

I hope that this detailed account of Mateo's graduation will allow you to feel a measure of the joy, pride, and satisfaction that I had the privilege of experiencing.

*Su amiga,
Linda Eastman*