

Adopt-a-Village International



Providing a hand up, not a handout, to break the cycle of poverty

FALL 2011

In this Issue:

Letter from the Chairman
Do You Need a Speaker?
AaVI Volunteer Spotlight
Taking the Simple Things for Granted
Ecuador Dental Clinic Update
Ecuadorian Dental Student Visits U.S.
Networking in the Peruvian Amazon
JLMF Partnership News
High School Student's Well Project

Our Mission:

The mission of Adopt-a-Village International (AaVI) is to partner with strategic leaders in developing countries to provide sustainable improvements in the basic human needs of impoverished villages. We accomplish this by providing a hand up, not a handout, to break the cycle of poverty.

Board of Directors:

Dave Ruckman, *Chairman*
Scott Perry, *Secretary*
Sam Erickson, *Treasurer*
Maggie Adams-Holway
Mark Backlin
Andy Baldwin
Darrell Fleck
Joe Mitchell
Karen Mitchell
Karen Yuan



Letter from the Chairman

- Dave Ruckman

Inspiration comes in many forms. Recently it came through the compassion of a nine-year-old girl named Olivia. Earlier this year, Olivia's mom challenged the family to consider the difference between a want and a need, emphasizing that there are people all over the world that do not have the basic things they need to live. That's all it took to get Olivia dreaming of how she could make a difference among the less fortunate. Olivia determined to raise \$200. She asked neighbors and family members for donations. Some of her friends even donated the profit from their lemonade stand. Before long, Olivia's goal of \$200 had been surpassed. In the end, this sweet young lady had raised over \$400. After numerous family discussions and some research online, Olivia decided to use a portion of the funds she raised to help Adopt-a-Village International meet needs in Ecuador and Peru.



Olivia has used a portion of her funds to purchase dental hygiene supplies – a tub full! I couldn't help but think about the hundreds of people who will benefit from her generous gift. Each year, we visit communities where we teach good dental hygiene and distribute toothbrushes and toothpaste. For many, it is the first toothbrush they have ever received.

Needless to say, this little girl with a BIG heart has inspired me. Nelson Mandela once said, "As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same." Thank you, Olivia, for seeing a need and following your heart to make a difference.

P.O. Box 26599, Colorado Springs, CO 80936
www.adoptavillageinternational.org 719.492.8736

Do You Need a Speaker or Presentation?



Most service clubs, such as Rotary International, Kiwanis, Lions Club and Exchange Club, meet at least once a month and feature a speaker. Is your organization, business, service club or other organization interested in what people like you are doing to make a difference in developing countries? We have a variety of well-informed speakers available at your request. Presentations can be altered to fit your time requirements and can include slides, handouts, and videos. To schedule, call (719-492-8736) or email (info@adoptavillageinternational.org) at least three weeks before your meeting date.

AaVI Volunteer Spotlight

- *Koreen Clay*

I've been the webmaster for AaVI since the Spring of 2009 and maintain the main website and the Spanish mirror site with the assistance of Jermina King, our translator. I especially like seeing the photos and videos from AaVI trips to Ecuador and Peru and hearing about the role that AaVI plays in supporting small villages there. Please contact me if you have information or photos that you want to share online or if you have questions or concerns about our website.



My other interests include jewelry design and stone setting, teaching English as a second language, studying Spanish, ballroom dancing and hiking. Formerly, I worked as a software engineer for a large software company and as a systems engineer with several aerospace companies in Colorado and California. Although I grew up and went to school in Pennsylvania, Colorado has been my home for the past 28 years.

Taking the SIMPLE Things for Granted

- *Darrell Fleck*

How often do you stop and REALLY look around you? We all have shelter. Hunger happens when our stomach growls. Boredom is easily overcome at the computer, the park, or by simply turning on the TV. Too hot outside? Just head into your air-conditioned home or any public building. Weather getting cold? Just flip on the heat. What we need is always available, either down the street or on the Internet.

Welcome to life in the U.S.A. Our papers and news programs scream about our poor, the unemployed, the bickering in Washington, or God forbid, the NBA being on strike! Obesity is now attributable to 50% of the US population, yet food is never far and quality healthcare is just around the corner.

We all need to look beyond our little world; that's where **Adopt-a-Village International** can enter your life. AaVI focuses all of its energies in regions of the world where the things we take for granted are not an option. Imagine if your world changed: you no longer have the comforts of protective shelter, you are always foraging for the basics of food, shelter, water, and access to healthcare. Imagine a world where 30% of the children die before reaching the age of 12 years old. Imagine a world where basic dysentery leads to many dying. Imagine not ever having a paying job. Imagine spending seven days a week trying to provide the very basic of needs for your family. This is the world in which AaVI works day in and day out to bring about positive change!

Become a change agent; get involved. The belief that you do not have time, do not have skills, or do not have money are nothing but excuses. Everyone from very young children to the eldest of the elderly can make a difference. (See the article about Olivia on the front page or Hannah on page 5). I urge you to find a way to be involved, travel with AaVI to make a difference, write a check, run a fund raiser, spread the word, offer services based upon your expertise, or share some of what we take for granted. **BE ENGAGED. You can make a difference!**

Dental Clinic in San Juan, Ecuador

- Scott Perry

I am pleased to report that the dental clinic located in San Juan, Ecuador is making tremendous progress. With a primary goal of having the clinic adopted by Ecuador's rural clinic program, we were pleased to hear the recent news that the Ministry of Health has assigned a rural dentist to work in the clinic on Sunday and Monday mornings. At this time, Adopt-a-Village International is supporting a second dentist to cover the other three days that the clinic is available to the community. Dr. Gerson Roberto Alulema works at the clinic Monday through Thursday from 4 to 7 pm and on Sunday from 1 to 5 pm. He is compensated at the rate of \$500 per month and provides his own supplies and medicines.

We also learned that a Letter of Agreement was signed at the local level between the President of Malchingui, the Asociacion de Juntas Parroquiales, and CIMAS to continue to develop the delivery of dental services in the San Juan clinic. The community has decided to charge a reasonable fee for services with proceeds benefiting building and equipment maintenance.

On behalf of Adopt-a-Village, we wish to thank all of our supporters that have made this clinic a reality. Should you, a family member or friend be interested in visiting Ecuador on a dental trip next August or attending one of our upcoming board meetings, please contact me at 719-548-1618 or scottperry@q.com.



These pictures were taken at the dedication of the dental clinic in San Juan, Ecuador.

Ecuadorian Dental Student Visits U.S.

- Scott Perry

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, Evelin Johana Tupiza Cumbal, the dental assistant who is working in the clinic in San Juan, Ecuador, has traveled to Colorado Springs to work with Dr. Roger and Marcia Allan in their dental practice during the month of October. Dr. Allan plans to teach Evelin new dental skills and procedures that she can use in the clinic in Ecuador. Evelin speaks very limited English, so this is a great opportunity for her to pick up some additional language skills while she is visiting as well. Roger and Marcia have graciously welcomed Evelin to stay in their home.



Planning and Networking in the Peruvian Amazon

- Karen Yuan

Iquitos, Peru, "Gateway to the Amazon" was the first stop our team of four made on a strategic planning and networking trip this past April. AaVi co-founder, Joe Mitchell, chairman Dave Ruckman, long-time member Jack Thomas, and I met with established in-country partners as well as new individuals, villages and organizations in the Peruvian Amazon to develop collaborative relationships and a strategic plan. Much to our delight, expectations for the trip were more than exceeded.

Leaders of the Rotary Club of Iquitos (RCI) Carlos Acosta (President), Juan Simon (Past President) and Hugo Chacaltana (Incoming President) escorted our team by boat to several villages and AaVi project sites along the lush and muddy banks of the Amazon River. We visited each of our project sites and were updated on their status. Community investment is critical to project sustainability, so we took every opportunity to ask questions relating to ongoing commitment. Future projects were also identified.



Children in Centro Arenal have fresh water!

Networking was a key aspect of this trip. Megan Thomas and James Escobedo told us about CONAPAC (Civil Association for Conservation of the Peruvian Amazon Environment) and accompanied us to one of its Adopt-a-School communities, Nuevo San Juan de Amazonas. CONAPAC's primary work is rainforest conservation through education. I am hopeful that through future collaboration, the work of both AaVi and CONAPAC can grow and benefit the communities we serve.

The most endearing part of the trip for me was the strengthening of AaVi bonds with our Iquitos Rotary friends. Evenings were spent with Rotarians, Hugo, Carlos, Juan and their wives at Juan's B&B, our base in Iquitos. Meeting family members, attending a Rotary meeting, sharing stories and laughter, and working together created an excitement for future plans that was almost palpable.

Since returning from our trip, and much to our delight, with the help of our Peruvian Rotary friends and CONAPAC, the AaVi board has voted to adopt two new villages in Peru: Nuevo San Juan de Amazonas and Centro Arenal. More information about these villages will be available in our next newsletter. Stay tuned!

We visited many villages seeking to identify two communities for our organization to adopt. Learning about the livelihoods, education, health-care, resources, leadership and perceived needs in each community was fascinating. I was especially excited to know what clean and convenient water from a community tap would mean for children and men. Children often succumb to dehydration associated with water borne diseases such as dysentery and sometimes cholera. These are associated with contaminated fresh water. Men, laboring in the tropical heat on their yucca (manioc), or rice farms, knowing of the poor water quality, drink very little water. As a result, the men develop frequent dehydration-induced headaches. Can you imagine the joy and comfort of being able to drink water freely when laboring for hours to sustain your family?



Heat, hard labor and inadequate hydration due to unsafe water can cause headaches.



Rotary Funded Water Storage Tanks at Independencia – (left to right) Carlos Acosta, Dave Ruckman, Jack Thomas, Karen Yuan, Juan Simon & Hugo Chacaltana

Judith Lombeida Medical Foundation Partnership News

Mark Backlin, an AaVI board member and President of the Judith Lombeida Medical Foundation (JLMF), went to Ecuador from September 17-26 in preparation for a dental/surgical trip scheduled for Salinas, Ecuador from November 6-11, 2011. During this trip, Mark signed a formal agreement with the Ecuadorian Ministry of Defense and Ecuadorian Air Force that establishes mutual and cooperative participation between the Ecuadorian Air Force and the Judith Lombeida Medical Foundation for the next two years. This critical agreement paves the way for the Ecuadorian Air Force to fly the medical team to Salinas for free this November as well as outlines depths of support by their Air Force. In addition, Mark met with two public hospitals in the Salinas area to ensure patients are getting the word about the upcoming medical mission as well as to ensure all aspects of the upcoming mission are ready. The November mission will involve 21 United States participants, about 10 Ecuadorian participants, and will treat about 50 surgical patients and 250 dental patients. Finally, Mark had numerous meetings with Ministry of Health and customs personnel in Quito to ensure we are up-to-date regarding country access for our United States volunteers and their supplies/equipment.



JUDITH LOMBEIDA
MEDICAL FOUNDATION
Serving the medical needs of Ecuadorian people

In addition, Mark explored future possibilities for AaVI that included a potential site in the jungle of Ecuador (about 4 hours east of Tena, Ecuador) as well as meeting with a major university president and staff in Quito, Ecuador. This university has outreach programs across Ecuador and has agreed to help find areas of need that meet AaVI goals and philosophy. This was an initial meeting and there will be more dialogue in the near future. Please

contact AaVI for more information on how you can be apart of what JLMF and AaVI are doing together in the needy villages of Ecuador.



Local High School Student's Well Project for Peru



Typical water source in the villages in Peru

A local high school student was given a challenge: develop a project that is near and dear to your heart that will also help those in need. Hannah Mitchell, a sophomore at Rampart High School in Colorado Springs, knew immediately what she wanted to do for her project: raise money to install a clean water well in a village in Peru. She has many friends and family members who have been involved in Adopt-a-Village International's work in the needy villages of Peru and has heard stories about how important a clean water source is to the health and wellness of the people in these villages. Clean water prevents such problems as dysentery, intestinal worms, dehydration and

sometimes even death. To install a well in a needy Peruvian village costs approximately \$6,000.00, and Hannah has determined to raise \$5,000.00 before the end of January. Wouldn't you like to help Hannah reach her goal? Please send tax-deductible donations to AaVI on behalf of Hannah and the people she hopes to help in Peru. Simply designate your donation as "Hannah's well project" in the memo line of your check and mail it to AaVI, P.O. Box 26599, Colorado Springs, CO 80936. ***You CAN make a difference!***



Please help Hannah to provide safe drinking water to a needy village in Peru.



Adopt-a-Village International
P.O. Box 26599
Colorado Springs, CO 80936



AaVI is going GREEN!

Want to receive our newsletter electronically?
Please send a request to:

gogreen@adoptavillageinternational.org



Visit the Adopt-a-Village International web site!



www.adoptavillageinternational.org

Check us out on Facebook!

