

FRIENDS OF HONDURAS SOCIETY/ SOCIEDAD DE AMIGOS DE HONDURAS

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

2008 was a fulfilling and productive year for Friends of Honduras. The highlight of the year was a much anticipated trip to Escuela Zea Aris Mendis in Retiro, Valle de Angeles in April. The members of the group who went included Iris Bos, Deborah Cooper, Dave and Bev Cook, Dave Philps and Bob and Heather Philps.

It was a wonderful trip and we were able to meet in person the children, teachers, principal, and community association of the school --- and to see the brand new washroom.

We took with us the balance of the funds raised in 2007 and early 2008 to finish paying for the completed washroom facility, and to purchase and install a water tower needed to supply water pressure in order to operate the toilets. The funds also paid for the newly renovated library facilities complete with shelving to house all the new supplies and books we purchased while we were there.

We also spent much time conferring and planning with Leda Chang, our agent, and accomplished much, pertaining to details for current and future work with the school. Leda and Rigo extended such a warm welcome to us and we enjoyed their very generous hospitality while we were there.

Highlights of the trip included:

- a welcome ceremony by the school complete with musical entertainment, a play, and speeches thanking Friends of Honduras for our support. The school also put on a lunch for us at great sacrifice to themselves financially.
- distribution of gifts, sports equipment, and clothing to the children.
- distribution of anti- parasite medication for the children.
- shopping for and purchasing text books and many other school supplies for the school.
- a ribbon- cutting ceremony at the opening of the new washroom facility funded by Friends of Honduras. As part of the ceremony we signed our names (and those of our Society members who were not able to be on the trip) to blank cement blocks on the new washroom walls.

--- a visit to a small orphanage where Leda provided lunch and we gave out gifts and sports equipment and spent a very enjoyable afternoon with the young boys there.

--- a visit to a small, rural school to distribute school supplies and donated items, with the possibility of future involvement.

--- a rather harrowing trip into the mountains to take clothing and gifts to the children and families of an extremely poor community.

Other achievements in 2008:

--- did preliminary work on a new, up-dated brochure.

--- did preliminary work on a DVD of the trip to use for educational and fund raising purposes.

--- reserved a domain name and began construction of a web site.

--- re-established a daily lunch program for the children of the school at a cost of approx. \$400- \$500 per month.

On behalf of the Society, I would like to express my appreciation to all of our generous supporters in Canada. Your gifts make all this possible! Thanks too, to the Society's Board of Directors, for all your hard work and dedication over the past year. May we be encouraged to refocus our efforts in the year ahead as we strive to help those in need in Honduras.

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert Philps, President