



Canadian Central American  
Relief Effort, Inc.

Annual Report

2006

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**Table of Contents**

CCARE Vision, Mission & Mandate Statements	3
Agenda for the Annual General Meeting	4
Message from the Director	5
Report of the 2006 Mission	6
Report of the Projects	7
Report of Fund Raising Committee	10
Financial Statements	11

## **Canadian Central American Relief Effort CCARE**

### **Vision**

CCARE is a community of Canadians working in partnership with a community of Central Americans resulting in improved lives in both regions.

### **Mission**

CCARE focuses on initiatives that enhance the capabilities of communities to become self-sufficient.

### **Mandate**

To share our resources of skills, knowledge and funds to work in:

- Relief effort
- Education and awareness building
- Partnership development
- Fund-raising
- Community Planning & Economic Development

**Canadian Central American Relief Effort  
CCARE**

Annual General Meeting

February 21, 2006

**Agenda**

Opening Remarks	Hilda Rossi
Reports from 2006	
• Mission 2006 Report	Heidi Grover
• Projects Report	Ana Paredes
• Fund-Raising Report	Rosie DeBiasi
• Financial Report	Jan Davies
Other Business	
• Membership	Della Redwood
• Question Period	
Adjournment	Hilda Rossi

## **Message from the Director**

## Mission 2006 Report

Fourteen volunteer traveled to Guatemala and worked with the indigenous communities of the Merendon Mountains, specifically in the villages of Timushan, Volcancito and Peña Blanca.

Mission objectives:

1. To provide basic health care services.
2. To provide basic dental health services
3. To assess current community development project
4. Start the construction of a community centre in the Village of Volcancito
5. To continue strengthening and establish new working relationships with local organizations

With assistance of the interpreters, CCARE mission volunteers worked on the following projects: basic health care services, basic dental health services, sewing project, education project, poultry project, construction project, women issues, men's issues and corn grinding inauguration project.

The mission encompassed a very ambitious work plan for community development. Mission member's enthusiasm and commitment made it possible for the success of CCARE's work.

Mission objectives were met, as health care services were delivered without any problem, follow up on current project, started the construction of the **Multi School Center** community centre in Volcancito, CCARE met with government representatives, as well as local organizations and communities at large.

It is important to mention that CCARE received 17 project requests from other villages.

## CCARE Project Development Report 2005

Community Centre in Volcancito

The construction of this centre has been made possible by a private donation. CCARE complied with the legal aspects of the purchase of the land and ownership of the Centre. Community leaders and representatives of the Municipality of La Union met and an agreement was made, that was later ratified by a lawyer.

The construction team begun it's work in **April 05** and the construction of the centre will be **concluded in March 06**. Inauguration of the Centre will be during mission 2006.

### **Health Clinic**

Preliminary work was done to coordinate health clinic days at the La Union Community Health Centre. Health team was lead by Dr. Ruth Matheison and Lorensa Durian RN, along with the medical team of the Health Centre.

Eight full days of clinic work was done in the mountains in the villages of Peña Blanca, Volcancito, and La Unión Health Centre. Three days of this clinic work was held at La Unión Health Centre and 803 people received health care services from 15 villages.

CCARE purchased two Physician Travel Packs from Health Partners International of Canada, and its contents met the medical needs of the population of the region. The remaining medicines were donated to the La Union Community Health Centre. CCARE has the support of the local health centre to continue its work at next year mission.

### **Dental Clinic**

The dental team was lead by Dr. Russell Grover and Mrs. Heidi Grover. Eight full days of dental clinic were provided, six days in the villages of Peña Blanca and Volcancito and two days in the Health Centre.

CCARE met with Dr. Garcia a local dentist that supports this initiative and the possibility of opening a Permanent dental clinic at the Health Centre was discussed. CCARE will follow up with the appropriate licensing bodies to initiate this process.

### **Sewing Project**

This is one of the successful projects. The interest among community members keeps growing among both genders. Both communities have their system of coordinating the sewing classes, the learning process has taking a little longer as these communities do not have the appropriate space to keep the sewing machines and they need to be moved around as the learning goes. The community is committed to continue with this project. CCARE paid an native from another village to go and teach in Volcancito and Peña Blanca. Mrs. Zoila Salguero has volunteers and has been instrumental in facilitating the continue skill training process. Once the construction of the community centre is finished, the community will seek local technical support from local NGO that provide sewing skills training.

### **Corn Grinding Project**

Construction of both corn grinding machines shops were concluded a few months ago, both communities waited for CCARE mission team arrival to have the inauguration ceremony. Each shop has the corn grinding machine installed and fully equipped, there is a community team that coordinates the management of the shop and responsibilities clearly outline on paper on posted on the wall (this work was done on

last year mission), particularly safety issues and rules. Not everyone is fully trained on how to operate the machines, so arrangements were made to have someone from La Unión to train them.

### **Education Project**

Ten scholarships were given to student of the Village of Peña Blanca and officially given to the parents. The scholarship is given as per academic year and it includes tuition fee, full uniform and shoes, school supplies and a snack. To apply the parents contact CCARE in La Union, fills out an application form, and this is discuss with the school teacher for input. CCARE estimates that applications will triple for next year. A scholarship has been giving to a young lady in Timushan for many years she has finishes her high school and now she has applied to go the the Nursing School, this desire was decided after CCARE send 6 women from Timushan to become Health Care Promoters. This has been possible by a generous donation, during many years from Ms. Mabel Lim from Toronto.

Teachers Professional Development, CCARE provided professional development to the teachers of La Union and topics presented were to promote positive academic success, health & education, parents committee, HIV prevention, abuse, reading marathons, art workshops, art and art craft, drugs and addiction, introduction of academic psychology, group dynamics, sport and recreation, career planning and adult education. Ms. Maria Carmen Romero a CCARE member in Toronto facilitated the workshops, the teachers were very interested and would like to continue addressing these topics.

Integrated Alternative School, CCARE met with representatives of the Ministry of Education and City Hall and discussed the projection of a integrated alternative School in the Villages of Peña Blanca and Volcancito. This is an important project and requires further discussion concerning funding issues and project development. Statistical information will be provided by local government to assess the situation and determine if this is a viable project, as funding must be secured.

### **Poultry Project**

This project has been a total success. 176 families from Peña Blanca and Volcancito received training on how to care for the chickens prior receiving them and afterward, to ensure that proper care and nutrition was follow up.

The chickens were given in the fall of 2004, in the spring of 2005 most of the families are eating eggs, and 60% of the families are selling eggs. For example, one family had 35 chickens, and was selling 4 dozens of egg per week; this had a major impact in this household income and the family nutritional intake.

Mr. Estuardo Salguero the poultry technician will continue to work with the families to follow up on chick's nutrition, immunization and projection of future impact. This project is to be **re-assessing** in 2006.

### **Women's issues**

Lorenza Duria RN and Andrea Taracena (interpreter) held a number of sessions addressing women issues of their interest and health teaching is a very important component of the health team. Subjects addressed were, family planning, birth control and sexuality, nutrition and healthy eating, hygiene, body changes, first aid and preventive basic practices.

Ana Paredes a certify Life Skills Coach used this model to facilitate the discussion addressing issues of group dynamic, decision making process, conflict resolution, community participation, commitment and responsibilities were addressed. Most importantly, this was an opportunity to identify what their needs were, both as individual and as community members. Parallel to that, commitment and support is equally important to achieve their goals. Some of the topic address as per community request will require follow up on mission 2006.

### **MEN ISSUES**

A male doctor facilitated a discussion and topic of sexuality, alcoholism and family violence were addressed as per their interest. The men were interested and this was a good opportunity to put these issues on the table and shared their experiences. It seems that men respond better when this discussion is facilitated by a male. Men still have many questions, however, these are very sensitive issues that require further follow up and CCARE brought this to the Community Health Care Centre Director to follow up for further assistance.

### **CCARE Stan Relief Committee**

CCARE and community members met on October 5, 2005 and established the Stan Relief Committee and this committee was established for a period of six months with the support of the Canada Guatemala Chamber of Commerce CGCC.

The committee was mandated to do fund-raising until January 31, 2006. Fund-raising initiatives included dinner dance, selling friendship bracelets and donations. The committee was very successful and 24,000.00 were fund-raised in a period of two months.

CCARE and the CGCC will travel to Guatemala in March 2006 and visit the region of San Marcos particularly the area of Ocos that was hard hit by the hurricane. The funds will be use in a community development project with the intent that the whole community benefits from it. The team traveling to San Marcos is mandated by the Stan Committee to do an assessment to determine how best to use the funds, in conjunction with a community consultation. The committee recommends that the funds are used as follow: to re-habilitate a damaged school or health centre, or/and to purchase block making machines for the reconstruction needs, however, this is to be determine upon the team assessment late March 2006 and a report will follow.

Thank you to Oscar Palma, Ricardo Castillo, Ricardo Wever and Mario Cuellar from the Canada Guatemala Chamber of Commerce and to all committee members for your support and great work.

### **REPORT OF THE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE**

In order to implement projects in the Merendon Mountains of Guatemala, a main component of the activities of CCARE through the year has been fundraising.

As in previous years, we rely on our fundraising efforts to continue our work in Guatemala of improving the lives of the Mayan Chorti communities. In the past, we have had success in our annual events – The Latin Dinner and Dance at LeTreport Banquet Hall in Mississauga, the walkathon in Burlington and luncheons. We have also raised awareness throughout various surrounding schools and churches in the area. Through this awareness, we have collected donations of much needed items – hospital/first aid equipment, school supplies, garden and household equipment and funds.

Our main sponsors of our fundraising events over the years have been the, John Cipressi of Le Treport Banquet Hall, Rotary Club Mississauga-Airport, St. Michael Catholic Church, Appleby United Church and Sherwood Digital Copy Centre, many companies and generous citizens have made the difference in our growth, their contribution is very much appreciated. Their support and along with support of our number of volunteers has continued throughout 2005.

The year commenced with The Grand Latin Dinner and Dance in January 28<sup>th</sup> at Le Treport Banquet Hall in Mississauga with the continuing and generous support of John Cipressi. We are grateful also to the support of Lita Gonzales, Casino Rueda Dancing Company, Carmelina Brown School of Dance, Latin Energy Co., DJ Eugenio Isabella for donating their time and services. In addition, numerous individuals and businesses donated items for a raffle. The combined efforts of these parties and the volunteers made the evening a rewarding event for both, the just under 500 attendees and for CCARE.

In August 27<sup>th</sup> we had an amazing success with the Run/Walkathon for the Children of the Merendon Mountains of Guatemala held in Burlington. We were grateful to the Rotary Club Mississauga-Airport, Sherwood Digital Copy Centre, Le Treport Banquet Hall, Running Room, VR Pro, Mary German Fitness Instruction, as an additional sponsor to this event along with a number of ongoing sponsors. This event is growing and is becoming a more recognized event each year. We again had numerous volunteers and donated prizes, which ensured a fun and enjoyable time for all participants.

Unfortunately, Guatemala was hit with further devastation this year October 05 because of Hurricane Stan. CCARE was quick to respond. We grouped and created CCARE's Emergency Relief Committee with the support of the Guatemalan-Canadian Chamber of Commerce and many volunteers who assisted in full force on raising funds for areas hit by this latest catastrophe. In Toronto, a dance was held and Guatemalan-made bracelets were sold to raise funds as well. In addition, donations of needed household and personal items along with food were collected and shipped to Guatemala.

The production of the yearly CCARE calendars increased slightly to meet the demand. The sale of CCARE's Tshirts has been part of this fundraising.

It has been a busy year for fundraising. However, we hope to increase our efforts in 2006. We welcome new ideas for raising awareness and fundraising.