



**Canadian Central America
Relief Effort**

2009 Annual Report



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Who We Are

CCAMRE Vision Statement

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

CCAMRE Mission Statement

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

CCAMRE Mandate Statement

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

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



The Annual Meeting

Agenda – 2010 Annual General Meeting

June 26, 2010

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Call to Order | Chair |
| 2. Acceptance of Agenda | Chair |
| 3. Opening Remarks | Hilda Rossi |
| 4. Approval of the 2009 AGM Minutes | Karen Byrnes |
| 5. Reports from 2009 | |
| • Project Management | Ana Paredes |
| • Mission 2009 | |
| • Fund Raising | Rosie DeBiasi |
| • Financial | Marylin Hallgren |
| 6. Motion for Acceptance of 2009 Reports | Ana Paredes |
| 7. Approval of 2009 Financial Statement | Marylin Hallgren |
| 8. Election of Board Members | Chair |
| 9. Other Business | Chair |
| 10. Closing Remarks | Ana Paredes |
| 11. Adjournment | |



Letter from the President

In many respects 2009 was an extraordinary year with a number of surprises. Over and above the challenges of our mission work we were called this year to change the acronym by which we refer to ourselves. The large NGO, Care International demanded that we change our acronym to not include the word “CARE” in order that there would be no confusion with their larger and more recognized name. The correctness or appropriateness of this demand can certainly be questioned however opposing their position would have meant a legal challenge which we could not afford and the use of money needed for our mission work. The decision was made to comply with the demand and so the organization that had started as HPCARE (Halton Peel Central American Relief Effort) in 1998, and evolved in CCARE (Canadian Central American Relief Effort) in 2003 with our designation as a charitable organization, has become CCAMRE. Our full legal name of Canadian Central American Relief Effort has not changed.

Many will debate the reality of climate change but the evidence is clear that Guatemala and particularly the area of the Merendon Mountains is continuing to suffer from more frequent and more severe tropical storms. Spurred to action by the ravages of hurricane Mitch in 1999, CCAMRE has worked with the Ch’ortí Maya through the flooding of hurricane Stan in 2005 and the devastation of tropical storm Dolly in 2008 with the associated extensive mud slides and washing away of houses. 2010 has not started easily as tropical storm Agatha, the first storm of this year’s hurricane season has resulted in extensive flooding and loss of life throughout Guatemala.

Despite these continuing challenges I am please to say that many of our goals are being met. The 2009 Mission included a number of people from earlier missions and they were amazed to see the improvements in the Aldea of Timushan, the village where CCAMRE first started to work. The evidence we see of improved living conditions, health and dental care, and sustainable economic activities confirms that our activities are bringing notable life style improvement to these people. The improvements in Timushan were nothing but remarkable to the returning volunteers. The Faith and Hope (Fe y Esperanza) Community Centre is used constantly by many groups for meetings, bread making and sewing activities as well as for dental and health clinics.



Hilda Rossi with Dona Valentina of Volcancito

Mission 2009 was busy as in addition to all the normal projects we are involved in we continued to bag and distribute the items sent by container in late 2008. In addition to many tools and other implements we distributed food packages to 1500 families in 18 villages throughout the region of La Union. As usual our mission members were exhausted by the work.

As President and Founder of CCAMRE I am comfortable in saying that despite many setbacks we are reaching our goals and for that I must thank the Board of Directors and the many mission members for their hard work and devotion to our purpose. Although we may not like having to change the acronym we have used for our organization it is proof that our work is being recognized beyond our small community.

I have faith that with your help CCAMRE will continue to grow and the recognition of our work will also grow and be seen by many throughout the world. I continue to look forward with excitement to the coming 2010 – 2011 year and that we will expand the boundaries of our work with the Mayan Ch'ortí of the Merendon Mountains.

Yours in Faith

Hilda Rossi



Canadian Central American Relief Effort

Minutes - Annual General Meeting – January 24, 2009

(Note: The acronym CCARE is used since meeting occurred prior to change)

Location: White Oaks Public Library, Oakville, Ontario.

Board Members Attending: Ana Paredes, Hilda Rossi, Rosie DeBiasi, Marilyn Hallgren, Karen Byrnes (Absent)

10:20 a.m. Meeting opened by Hilda Rossi. Hilda gave a brief explanation of the beginning of CCARE with special thanks to Ana Paredes and Rosie DeBiasi for all their assistance. She stressed that all of CCARE's members are volunteers where no one is perfect and must regularly reassess one's self as a volunteer. It is important for CCARE to be a group coalition in order to maintain harmony and enthusiasm and avoid burnout by members who take on too many tasks. She briefly talked about the Mission work done by CCARE and how it is directed by the needs and approval of the communities involved. CCARE's help has extended beyond the Municipality of La Union to Guatemala City with the partnership of San Carlos University and its Department of Dentistry with the dental clinic in La Union, Guatemala.

Motion brought forward to accept the minutes of the General Meeting from 2007 by Della Redwood and seconded by Jennifer Connors. Motion brought forward to accept the minutes of the General Meeting from 2008 by Ana Paredes and seconded by Della Redwood.

Report on 2008 Missions in Guatemala

Ana Paredes, CCARE's Project Manager, reported on the work being done in Guatemala. The portfolio has expanded to cover a total of seven villages from 400-700 people. Ana Paredes covered and reported on the education, sewing, baking, dental clinic, Stan Committee, Volcancito seniors and the fertilization projects. A full report is attached with the minutes.

A report on the March 2008 and December 2008 missions was given by Hilda Rossi.

March 2008: Two mission groups staggered their time in Guatemala. The first group focussed on medical, educational and youth projects and the second group focussed on dental and clean water.



December 2008: Disaster Container. Unfortunately the container did not arrive while the mission members were in La Union and the goods could not be distributed at that time. CCARE purchased food supplies in Guatemala and food relief bags were made with the assistance of members of the Guatemalan army and distributed to needy families in Volcancito and Pena Blanca. A sewing group also ran in Volcancito for three days. A full report is attached with the minutes.

Fundraising Report

Rosie DeBiasi started out by saying that once you go to Guatemala and work on one of the missions, you have a better appreciation of the importance of the projects and the purpose of our fundraising. The small initiatives that are created and started here, and in Guatemala, can and do make a difference.

“A Grand Latin Evening” is being held in February. Everyone is encouraged to bring guests. The Walk, Run, Stroller Roll held in August needs more participation. Calendars were quite beautiful and are used as outreach.

Financial Report

The financial report was provided by Marylin Hallgren. Copies of the report showing an un-audited version of fiscal years 2006 and 2007 were reviewed. An un-audited and un-reviewed report for 2008 showed a loss of \$ 4,021.00. **Jennifer Connors presented a motion to accept the financial statements and it was seconded by Della Redwood.** It was pointed out that difficulties in receiving banking statements from Guatemala currently prevent the ability to provide audited financial statements. CCARE needs to have two consecutive years of being audited in order to be able to apply for other grants from CIDA.

CCARE's 2007 Financial Statements and the 2008 balance sheet are attached.

Amendment to the By-laws

A proposal was brought forward to make changes to Member's Meeting By-law number 7. Rather than having the annual general meeting within 30 days of the corporation's fiscal yearend, the proposal recommended the meeting be held within 6 months of the corporation's fiscal yearend, situated within the city where the corporation is situated or in such other city as may be determined by the Board of Directors. **Della Redwood moved to make a motion to accept the proposal and Rosie DeBiasi seconded the motion.**



2009 Mission

There will be two mission groups in 2009, each composed of five teams. The March 21 – April 5 group will be the Container Distribution and Sewing Teams. The March 28- April 12 group will be the Dental, Medical and Project Assessment Teams. Della Redwood is currently the Mission Coordinator. Della briefly discussed what is required from mission participants. Mission applications were handed out and must be returned by January 30th, 2009.

General Business

Barbara Danbrook has volunteered to take over as Membership Coordinator for CCARE from Della Redwood who has stepped down from this position. Marylin Hallgren accepted payments for 2009 memberships.

A concern was voiced regarding the type of fertilizers being used within the fertilization project - alternative synthetic fertilizers versus natural source fertilizers. Farmers use both. CCARE does not make recommendations for types of fertilizers to be used. CCARE was asked if they would support alternative sources. Board members suggested bringing this topic to a Board Meeting for further discussion.

Meeting Adjourned

The Life and Work of CCAMRE

2009 CCARE Projects Development Portfolio

Project development continues to be an important area of work with leadership and community engagement. The communities involved play a fundamental role in working together with collective initiatives toward reaching their goals and bring solutions to their immediate needs. CCAMRE is working in the villages of Timushan, Pena Blanca, Volcancito, La Vegona, Campanario and Taguayni Los Vasques and this is coordinated by CCAMRE Project Coordinator in Guatemala Mr. Santos Vasquez.

Education Project

The scholarship program is in its fourth years bringing opportunities to children and teenagers to finish their high school and post secondary education. Making this year the highest number of scholarships to be given to 30 young people from the villages of Timushan, Pena Blanca and Volcancito.



Sewing Project

The Women Sewing Project got started during the mission in Volcancito, providing basic sewing skills and incorporating life skills as an essential component of developing group dynamics and community engagement with a long term goal of creating a women's cooperative.

Dental Clinic

The dental clinic has been in operation for 2 years providing dental care to the children of La Union and the adjacent villages. This was possible with the support of the University of San Carlos by sending an intern to work at the clinic for eight months.

Rotating Fertilizer Project

This project has been in place for 10 years and continues to be a success in the communities of Timushan, Pena Blanca, Volcancito, La Vegona and Los Vasques – Taguayni. Each community member signs a contract and the loan is granted in May of each year and is pay back by February of the following year.

Baking Project

This project has come a long way and continues to be a success due to the true meaning of community engagement. The committee in charge of this project is a group of 5 individuals and each of them has specific responsibilities to make this project work; such as coordination of supplies, marketing, baking, selling and bookkeeping. Their bakes goods include bread, cakes, pizzas and cookies.

Volcancito Senior's Project

This project was set out to provide basic daily needs to a group of seniors of the village of Volcancito. The goal is to provide food, medicines up to 4 times a year. A number of challenges made this effort difficult due to tropical storms that hit the region, however, CCAMRE managed to get the good to these families that gave them much of the needed supplies.

Communal Construction Building Supply Depot - CCAMRE / GBAC Stan Committee Project

After a long process we are happy to report that this project has concluded and the community of San Jose de Churirin made the most of the building supplies by building



10 houses among community members. Committee Chair travelled to the region throughout the project time line and monitored the project accordingly. The community of San Jose de Churirin extend their heartfelt thank you to the people of Canada. This project was conducted in conjunction with the Guatemala Business Association of Canada or GBAC.

Fund Raising Report

Like all charitable organizations, CCAMRE relies on personal and corporate donations as well as fundraising activities. Fundraising is vital to CCAMRE to ensure that our ongoing projects to help the Mayan Ch'ortí of the Merendon Mountains in Guatemala continue. The success and availability of all the projects is based solely upon the success of the fundraising activities and donations. This year's activities included "A Grand Latin Evening", Theatre Evening, Run, Walk, Stroller Roll and 2009 Calendar sales.

A Grand Latin Evening

Our 9th annual major fundraising event was held at Le Treport hall in Mississauga. "A Grand Latin Evening" was blessed with a clear, storm free day which ensured a great turnout for this event. Le Treport had recently completed renovations to the hall and everything looked sensational. This year CCAMRE provided a snack table to greet our guests before dinner and it was well received. Our guests were entertained by a very talented harpist before and during dinner. A member of Havana Express experienced a major medical issue that day and the group was unable to perform. Fortunately for CCAMRE the band found us a replacement group Azucar who were amazing. Arthur Murray Dance Studio-Toronto performed numerous Latin dances to the delight of our guests. The Silent Raffle was very successful and special thanks to Nancy Tracy for assisting with the making and transporting of all the baskets and items. CCAMRE would like to thank everyone who helped with making this event so fun, entertaining and successful.

Run, Walk, Stroller-Roll for the Children of the Merendon Mountains

ON August 22nd CCAMRE held its annual Run, Walk, Stroller-Roll at Spencer Smith Park in Burlington. With the help of Kelly Arnott of VR Pro, Running Room and all our volunteers, we had a busy day with not only the event but also face painting, balloon



blowing and breaking the piñata for the children. This year we increased our advertising with posters throughout Burlington, used local Burlington web sites and had a more visible display on the VR Pro web site with hopes of increasing our number of participants. It is always a challenge to hold activities that are family and community friendly and unfortunately our numbers have not been improving. Those who came enjoyed a great day for a run/walk and enjoyed the food and activities.

Theatre Evening

Thursday, April 30 CCAMRE presented the Village Players Preview Night of Noel Coward's HAYFEVER at the Village Players Theatre on Bloor Street. The playhouse charges \$500.00 for the evening and CCAMRE sold tickets for \$16.00. The performers were exceptional and the play was extremely well done. We had a fairly good turnout despite the bad rain storm and everyone was thoroughly entertained.

Calendar Sales

CCARE calendars have always reflected the beauty of the people in the Merendon Mountains and revealed the life of the Mayan Ch'ortí to help others comprehend the environment of need and the resilience of the Mayan Ch'ortí. The Calendar group does an amazing job and has a talent of out doing themselves every year. Thanks to Bonnie Fuller, Diane Keating and Barbara Danbook.



Our Appreciation

A heartfelt thank you from CCARE's Board of Directors to our members, sponsors and supporters

In Canada:

- Dr. Diamond Rattansi of Sherwood Photocopy, who throughout the years has sponsored our Walkathon/Run by printing our event pamphlets free of charge.
- Mr. John Cipressi of Le Treport Banquet Hall, who continues to donate the premises for our yearly Grand Latin Dinner and Dance.
- The Rotary Club Mississauga Airport for their continuing support on our ongoing projects to help the Mayan Ch'ortí in the Merendon Mountains.
- The Canadian media for their help in sharing our work and events with the community.
- Ms. Kelly Arnott VR-PRO and Running Room for the support of our Run, Walk and Stroller Roll.
- Ms. Eva Moran for her continuing contribution support to maintain CCARE's Website.

In Guatemala:

- Mr. Santo Vasques, CCARE's Coordinator in La Union, Zacapa
- Lic. Arely Camey, CCARE's legal Representative in Guatemala.
- Mrs. Lorena de Salguero, from the Women Office of the Municipality of La Union, Zacapa.
- Mr. Francis Salguero Mejia, Major of La Union Zacapa
- The Community Health Center of La Union, Zacapa
- The University of San Carlos of Guatemala in Guatemala City.
- The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, of Zacapa
- Dr. Rogelio Garcia, of La Union Zacapa, for his support to the Dental Project
- Dr. Antonio Salguero, Medical Surgeon of Gualán, Zacapa, for his support to the medical Project
- The Rotary Club of Gualán, Zacapa.
- Dr. Jorge Alberto Guerra, of Gualán Zacapa, for his support to the Dental Project