CCARE Newsletter

www.canadiancare.org

The disaster might be over, but the healing has just begun.

FALL/WINTER 2009

OUR VISION

CCARE is a community of Canadians working in partnership with a community of Central-Americans

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OUR MANDATE

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

- *Relief effort*
- *Education and awareness building and Medical Aid*
- *Partnership development*
- *Networking*
- *Fundraising*
- *Community planning and Economic Development*

RESPONSE TO DEVASTATION OF HURRICAN DOLLY

In the fall of 2008, an appeal was made for donated items so that some of the belongings the villagers lost in this horrific storm could be replaced. Many hearts opened, so CCARE was able to fill a large container that was then sent to Guatemala. The huge undertaking – sorting goods, placing them into suitcases and then finally packing the container - was completed successfully only through the hard work of a dedicated group of volunteers.

In December 2008, a small group of volunteers traveled to Guatemala in order to unload the container and distribute its contents. They stayed in La Union where they saw and learned about the destruction caused by Tropical Storm Dolly. To see sheer drops where families had lived, then perished, roads completely destroyed was a sobering experience. Although the container could not be delivered during this group's stay, they passed on accurate information so that the March mission members knew exactly what they would face. The December group, instead, helped to paint the Multi-Skills Centre in Volcancito. More importantly, with the help of army volunteers, they sorted food bought by CCARE donations into 1500 bags and distributed 79 bags in Volcancito and 84 in Pena Blanca.

CONTAINER MISSION 2009

In the fall of 2008 The Merendon Mountain region of Guatemala received continuous heavy rainfall for two months only to be followed by Tropical Storm Dolly. The resulting mudslides were devastating. Entire villages were completely buried, numerous people died, crops were ruined and the majority of livestock was killed. Thousands of natives in the area were left homeless with no food, no clothing and no possessions.

CCARE responded to this disaster by reaching out to our community with requests for donations of items desperately needed by the homeless and starving people in the north-eastern part of Guatemalan, the area most affected. The response was tremendous. CCARE succeeded in filling a 44' container with food, clothing, blankets & sheets, sleeping bags, towels and building tools. This relief container was then shipped to the area where CCARE mission members were on hand to receive, unload and distribute the supplies to those in most dire need, approximately 1500 people.

CCARE would like to express its gratitude to everyone who helped in this wonderful humanitarian effort.

2009 5KM RUN, WALK AND STROLLER EVENT

CCARE held its annual 5KM Run, Walk and Stroller Roll at Spencer Smith Park in Burington on Saturday, August 22. This event is aimed at raising funds for the Children on the Merendom Mountains assisting with educational scholarships and supplies, nutritional support, medical and dental care.

August 22 was cool and slightly overcast as CCARE volunteers gathered in the early morning on the shores of Lake Ontario in the heart of old Burlington in preparation of the event. The mist over the lake was slowly disappearing as participating runners and walkers young and old appeared at the registration table. Lively Latin music could be heard, runners were stretching and preparing, colourful face painting was being done, people milled through CCARE's information display, dogs were barking, laughter and excitement filled the air. Far away the children of the Merendon Mountains of Guatemala began their day like any other totally unaware what was happening on the shores of Lake Ontario or how it might affect their lives.

If you would like to know more about our missions and the work being done in Guatemala, please contact CCARE:

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Our group of runners and walkers though small were very enthusiastic, supportive and encouraging with the collections of pledges for this event. CCARE would like to thank all or volunteers, participants, race organizers and our generous sponsors and donors. Without all your support CCARE could not continue with their projects in Guatemala. Muchas Gracias!

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE AS A VOLUNTEER IN THE MERENDON MOUNTAINS OF GUATEMALA

By Dr. Richard Morris

This past April, I had the privilege of being part of a group of people hoping to provide aid to the poor of Guatemala. The mission was organized and supervised by a great Canadian organization, CCARE.

We provided food, clothing, and instruction in sewing techniques along with basic medical and dental services to the poverty stricken people of the Merendon Mountains in Guatemala. On the surface, we gave and they received. However, the deeper reality etched on every mission team members' face, was that we received more than we gave. The courage, gentile stoicism in the face of great odds, and mental and physical toughness of the Guatemala people inspired us all. As much as everyone did on this mission, one cannot help but feel they wish to do more. Being part of a mission such as this is a life lesson in how fortunate and privileged we are. It is imperative for us to share with our brothers and sisters in Guatemala. Just a smile is all the thanks you'll ever need.

CALENDAR SALES

Once again, as part of our fundraising efforts, CCARE has ready our calendars for the New Year (2010). This calendar has been reworked, with all new images of the people and area of the Merendon Mountains. The calendars are available now for only $10.00 and are well worth every penny. They are ideal for gifts or for your own use. Please contact Rosie at 905-273-5377 or any Board member to order your copy.

GRAND LATIN EVENING DINNER/DANCE 2010

The "GRAND LATIN EVENING" is one of CCARE's major fundraising events. It helps us to continue our ongoing projects in the Merendon Mountains of Guatemala. With your continued support throughout the years CCARE has been able to maintain our many projects such as scholarships, fertilizing project, sewing, medical and dental projects and help for the seniors. With your help, CCARE has given hope to the communities of the Mayan Chorti people of the Merendon Mountains.

DONATIONS: Now donating to CCARE has become even easier!

CANADA HELPS:

We are now registered with CanadaHelps which enables you to donate to CCARE on line, using major credit cards. Simply go to the CanadaHelps website at www.canadahelps.org and put in our full name Canadian Central American Relief Effort and follow the prompts.
There is also a direct link to CanadaHelps through CCARE's webpage at www.canadiancare.org.

Donations are always welcomed and are tax deductible. Please make your cheque payable to:
CCARE
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

By joining our events you are becoming part of CCARE's worthwhile cause.