



Did You Know?

- Honduras is a relatively young democracy.
- The Honduran military returned the country to civilian rule after a new constitution was approved in 1982.
- Of the seven Honduran presidents who have been democratically elected since 1982, six have been from the Liberal party and only one from the Nationalist Party.

Buenos Aires Elects New City Council and Independent Water Board

As community members from Buenos Aires gathered Monday afternoon there was a feeling of great anticipation mixed with fear and anxiety. The city council of Buenos Aires had been essentially non-functional for the last four years due to a rift between the only two churches in the village. Not only had the village been divided, but close family relationships had been damaged due to differences of opinion over doctrine. None the less, the possibility of potable water in Buenos Aires, was enough to bring the feuding parties together for a common cause.

The Detroit chapter of Engineers without borders has offered help with the village's problem of water quality and quantity. Several years ago parcels of land were given to every villager by the Honduran government so that coffee farm workers could own their land and homes. These small lots of land, though perfect for con-

struction, have remained untouched because there has been no way to bring water to the new neighborhood. Everyone in the village agreed it was time to put away the angry fists and pick up pickaxe and shovel.

There were many prerequisites for the water program including: a functional city council, an independent water board, a supervisory committee to review the entire process and a thirty percent female constituency on the water board. Over 100 residents of Buenos Aires gathered to provide input and make their vote count. At first, the majority of the villagers were quiet, simply sitting in their chairs with their hands folded in their laps. But, as village elders stepped forward in support of the water project, the conversation turned toward the positive as hope took up residence where rancor and resentment once resided. The villagers smiled, cheered and



clapped as each member of the city council and water board was sworn into office. It was an interesting process to observe and a privilege to witness the poor of this mountain come together to determine their own destiny. It is the kind of thing that people who work in development strive for their entire life. Women were placed in key positions of responsibility. The teachers of Buenos Aires, obviously held in high esteem by the villagers were asked to participate in roles that ensure transparency. Surely the hand of God was present during this meeting as the many individuals of this community quickly disappeared into the ONE body of Christ. What a blessing!



Detroit Chapter of Engineers Without Borders to Facilitate Water Project

Next Monday, the second of February, the Detroit Chapter of Engineers without Borders (EWB) will be sending five people to Buenos Aires to perform engineering and community assessments for a future potable water project. Their group was responsible for the implementation of a similar project in a village called Las Glorias close to Siguatepeque, Honduras. During their first trip, team members will meet with the villagers, city council, water board of Buenos Aires as well as municipal leaders and a Honduran clean water organization. The team will be assessing possible water sources in the area, performing laboratory analysis of those water sources and project feasibility. They will also be evaluating the health factors within the community that affect current as well as future water quality. There are many issues that must be resolved before such a project can be undertaken. Legal matters such as water rights, right of

passage through private properties and fair water distribution are only a few of the issues that will be addressed during this trip. Once the assessments are finalized, and the feasibility of the project is determined, the group plans to present their findings to the entire village. Community leaders will accompany the group throughout their visit to Buenos Aires. It is admirable that they are willing to lose several day's pay in order to volunteer their services for the good of their community and their children's future. Certainly clean water at the tap will have tremendous health benefits, especially for the most vulnerable such as children and the aged. It will significantly reduce the costs the clinic incurs in treating waterborne illnesses. We would ask for your prayers for a successful and productive trip for the EWB assessment team and the people of Buenos Aires.

You Touched a Life Today - Bringing a Face to Your Charitable Works

Little Elder could have never imagined how your charity would touch his life forever. Elder's mother was at the end of her rope and the knot she had tied was about to give way. Elder had been to multiple specialists over the span of four months because of "spells" that left his body limp and lifeless. His mother and father had spent ever last penny they had even selling land to pay for his many medical bills. Still Elder was getting worse day by day. One night as I arrived at my gate from a long day's work, I found Elder and his mother Lucia waiting for me. It was early November. Lucia was clutching a thick packet of medical studies and began speaking before I could even open the door to the truck. You could see the desperation in



her eyes. She was sure that her son was going to die because of the fainting attacks. The family had been to see several heart specialists and had been told that the child had heart damage due to Rheumatic fever. They had paid for echocardiograms, EKG's and other expensive medical treatments to no avail. Elder was getting sicker by the minute and his "spells" were becoming a daily traumatic event. It struck me as odd that the physicians had never ordered any laboratory tests on Elder and that the results of his EKG and echocardiogram were actually non-conclusive. It also seemed strange that the doses of heart medications he was taking were for an adult more than three times his weight. I made a quick telephone call to Dr. Sebree in Salina to discuss the case before making an appointment with a friend who is a pediatric neurologist in San Pedro Sula. I wanted to make sure that it was an appropriate next step. Dr. Sebree gave me clues as to how to proceed with a pre-appointment work-up which included a CT scan and labs. Thanks to so many who have been so generous, paying for the tests was not a problem. There was enough money to pay for the operating expenses of the clinic **and** to find out what was truly wrong with Elder (all in a timely manner)! By the time we reached the neurologist's office the following Monday, the only other test required was an electroencephalogram which revealed the child was having partial seizures. After four months of anguish, Elder was given the correct treatment for his epilepsy and has been "spell" free since early December. Thank You so much!

Green Parrot Coffee Chosen to Host Regional Excellence Cup Competition

Getting the word out about Green Parrot Coffee to international coffee buyers just may get a little easier in the next months. Every year, the Honduran Institute for Coffee (IHCAFE), hosts an event called the Excellence Cup. Internationally recognized coffee judges come to Honduras to "cup" or classify competing high grown and strictly high grown coffees which are then sold by electronic auction in July. This year, IHCAFE has bestowed upon Green Parrot an unusual privilege. Francisco Castillo, IHCAFE's chief agronomist at the central office in San Pedro Sula has asked us to host the regional coffee competition. Generally speaking, the Excellence Cup is designed to showcase the producers of the highest end quality coffees in Honduras. Because the Institute considers the Green Parrot Coffee project unique in its

approach toward fair trade and direct market access for small producers, it has decided to call international attention to our efforts. At this time, we are very busy preparing several lots of coffee from the premium strictly high grown farms in our area. We have guaranteed a fair trade price to those producers who have chosen to participate in the regional competition. If the coffees receive high marks at the regional level, they will continue on to the National competition and then sold for a much higher price at auction.

**Dr. Jose Oviedo Continues to Recover from Serious Motor Vehicle Accident**

As some of you may be aware, our Dr. Oviedo had a very serious car accident on December 23rd, the night of the staff Christmas party. He suffered a head trauma, severe facial lacerations and two broken arms. Those who saw the vehicle in which Dr. Oviedo was a passenger, can not explain how anyone could have survived the accident. Dr. Oviedo had friends who worked at the public hospital, so after any life-threatening brain injuries were ruled out, he was transferred to the Mario Catarino Rivas hospital in San Pedro

Sula. However, the surgical schedule at the public hospital was critically overloaded, so board members of Fellow Man International of Honduras quickly set about asking for favors among colleges. One week later, in a private hospital in La Lima, two board members and a volunteer orthopedic surgeon placed a rod in Dr. Oviedo's right humerus, as well as plates and screws in his left forearm.

It has been a little over a month since the accident. Dr. Oviedo is recovering very well....slowly but surely. He never lost his sense of humor, even the night of the accident. As he ran through his list of allergies with me before we reached the hospital, I asked him if there was anything else that didn't agree with him. He quickly responded, "yes, car accidents".