

Guatemala Partnership Administration Meeting
Sushi Hana Restaurant, Towson, 12:00 pm
Minutes – July 30, 2004

Attending: Bill & Bonnie Clarke, Tom Eastman, Bob Ferguson, Millie Kreider, Peter Nord, Sandi Rowland, Sally Sherrill, Steve Tisinger, Mike Weddle.

Agenda:

Prayer: Bob opened with prayer, especially for: Ajax Eastman, recovering from hip replacement surgery; and Peg Ferguson, in recovery from knee surgery and waiting on a CAT scanned lung spot.

Lindsay Letter: Bill relayed his daughter's break-through experience with teens in Mozambique who heard Lindsay's Guatemalan history lesson and registered the profound effect solidarity and advocacy can have on oppressed indigenous peoples who fight for dignity, human rights and social justice.

Project Reports:

Clinic: Bill presented updated Budgets for the HDV Clinic & Tech-Theolog School; Disbursement't Sheets designating cash outflow for the Clinic, My Healthy School, Lorena Stoves, Tech-Theo School, Sewing Project, and Scholarship Fund.

Disbursement checks go regularly by interbank wires now.

Psychologist Ivón Rodríguez has been replaced by a new psychologist.

Drug resources, Mike says in addition to the IMA box, drug donations are coming from Baer-McNeil and J & J. He continues to compare drug prices from Guatemalan and US sources as well, stating that some items are best purchased in country.

Pregnancy Tests, Mike questions why so many test kits (360/year) are used by the Clinic. Reflecting a large budget chunk, he will ask Dr. Patricia about this.

Fetal Doplar request, he plans to compare Ronaldo's price to the \$560 price tag on a US model that has different heads for a variety of applications.

Birth Control, alternative methods to pills, is a concern Sally wishes to raise with Clinic. Dr. Pat's certificate studies in lab technology are still being funded and Bill will inquire at what point funding is no longer needed.

Oral Hygiene: Steve reports that Florence Henderson and Peg Lloyd have amassed 300 brush/paste/comb packs and 600-900 tubes of extra paste to be donated to the Clinic in October. Follow up by the Clinic, with dental hygiene education, and a local source of cheaper paste or paste alternative will be needed. Mike gave Bill 200+ brushes donated by Dr. Mark DiNola of First PC of Cumberland. Mike will pursue further involvement by this dentist in the mission. Sally volunteered to see what St. Anne's of Annapolis is doing with dental care in Chichicastenango.

Scholarships: Sally reported there are 75+ scholarshiped students at this point. She has compiled and sent short bios w/student or family photos for donors and plans to send an August letter asking for renewed support for the coming year. Sally distributed new Education Support trifolds made by Sally and Betsy Jenkins. Betsy is planning an 11x17" scholarship poster for promotional use.

Sally's Aug letter will say sponsor's photos, but no gifts, are to be sent to students.

More information is desired about the Mayan Cosmovision in the Tech/Theol school's curriculum. Bonnie will share Ronaldo's thoughts on this after translation. Sandi will help. Our funding for the Tech/Theol school ends in 2005. Ronaldo is looking for additional resources to fill that gap.

Lorena Stoves: Towson PC is giving nearly \$5,000 to fund 55 stoves for indigenous villagers.

As “official thanks” for past TPC support has not met their expectations, it is important that this committee provide proper credit on Presbytery stationary to this church. Bonnie asked for members’ stove photos** from which she will make a display poster to accompany the thank you letter that she hopes Bob Ferguson will write after checking with Judi Forrester (POB Accountant) on the donation details. Bonnie would like photos by end of August so Thank You Poster can be presented at the Sept. 19th reunion picnic at Towson.

**Tom volunteered a photo. Does anyone else have good ones they can send me?

General Funding Disbursement: Bob proposed that undesignated receivables be disbursed into above budget categories based on a simple formula that reflects the budgetary needs seen so far. Bill volunteered to submit such a formula at the next committee meeting.

Fall Trip: (October 22-27, 2004) Steve reported a good group flight rate from Delta Air which leaves BWI an hour later than United. Depending on Ajax Eastman’s recovery, we may be 4 passengers short for the group rate. Bonnie will try to get an Ashland member on board. Sally, Millie and Betsy must decide soon if they are attending Spanish classes before or after our mission trip and advise Steve.

Devotions/Reflections will be at breakfast henceforth.

More deliberate interface with Mayans will be sought during village visits.

Future Trips:

Summer Youth Trip (7/23-7/29/04) has 4 chaperones and still needs 1 other plus about 11 older youth (high school junior or older). Bonnie will update the travel brochure to reflect this and promote this opportunity through Mid-Week Mail. Other places to advertise are the website, Bill’s Mission Update letter to churches, and Presbytery meetings.

Fall Picnic: The reunion is Sunday, September 19th at Towson PC at 3:00pm. Invitation will be made through the Midweek Mail (deadline = Aug 15th) by Millie to any scholarship or mission participants as well as to any interested in this mission. Admission = a “covered dish”. Brief committee updates and perhaps a partial showing of “A Precarious Peace” can be featured. Please let Millie know which update you might be prepared to give. Bonnie will furnish copies of Margarita & Josefina’s Ordination Stories, updated trifolds, mission trip brochures, photo boards, the video, and the Presbytery’s video projector.

Noemi’s Travel Challenges: Peter offered to set in motion, in January, an alternative route for helping Noemí Cuellar de Similox to visit us in April of 2005. GA (María Arroyo) could advocate for her through the Synod of Guatemala (Carlos Lara) to contact the US Consulate with whom the Synod has a relationship. We hope to host Ronaldo & Noemí here end of April so that they may present at the Presbytery April 28th (is that the correct date?).

New Business:

Mission Name Change: Bob suggested using the term, Guatemala Companionship Mission to reflect the truer nature of our relationship with the Kaqchikel Presbytery. The group seemed amenable to this. This will entail changes in our promo literature / website as well.

Orientation for new mission participants needs to be more complete. Whoever is willing to update and amplify this, please check with Bob, Bonnie & Steve who have material already available. A fuller orientation schedule should be in place by early fall so that the winter mission participants are advised in advanced when they must attend.

Secondary Travel Insurance for Mission Participants is available for free through GA. Judi Forrester issues application forms upon request.

Committee Organization: Millie suggested this group streamline its meeting plans; how to choose meeting times/places, communicating them, rotating duties of moderating and minute taking, etc. Some participants are already using an email distribution list to communicate broadly. Mine consists of the present company and lindablack@aol.com, kkovacs498@aol.com, and HiBetsy106@netscape.net. Let me know if you need my list or whether others should be added. A tentative meeting date for September was suggested by Steve for Thursday, Sept. 9th, 5:30pm at Bob Ferguson's. Please respond to all your intentions and whether you can moderate (prepare agenda and moderate discussion) or take minutes.

Peter added the Presbytery could furnish us with an e-mailbox. Let folks know if this is preferred, at the September meeting.

Guatemala Networking: Peter informed us of a Canadian contact some of us met in 2001 at Margarita's ordination; Kathryn Anderson, kand@ns.sympatico.ca, (902) 657-0474. She heads up "Breaking the Silence" network which supports women's organizations of Mayan presbyteries. *Weaving Relationships*, [available through Wilfrid Laurier University Press] is her book about the spiritual meaning of solidarity. It compliments the training given to 6-month volunteers, such as Moira Peters, to work in the 3 communities around Labor de Falla. We wonder to what use her network's \$2,500 to the Kaqchikel Presbytery is dedicated. Kathryn was prepared to find accompaniment protection for Margarita if her pre-election safety looked compromised last summer. Might we work together in Guat?

Peter also suggested we explore our unofficial status as a mission group under the GA. Are the money-transfer issues over? How could a relationship with Carlos Lara's Synod help us, the Kaqchikel, and the Synod? Who will represent us at the GA's March, '05 meeting in Guatemala? Can this be on the Sept. meeting agenda? Several people had left before this was brought up.

Health Promoter Compensation: Several issues concern us here. Does their profit on drug sales from the village medical box (*botiquín*) promote dishonesty or re-create another social injustice to the poor? How are other H.P.'s paid (such as in the Luke Society). Should H.P.'s be used to give dental care instruction and supplies to villagers? Can the K-Presbytery change payment methods mid-stream without devastating this trained cadre? How much do they "earn" now? Can the Companionship pay the H.P.s' salaries or incentive fees? Bill, Mike and Sally will discuss this further before the October trip so that the issue can be coherently addressed with Ronaldo.

Next Meeting: Proposed for Thursday, Sept. 9th, 5:30pm at Bob Ferguson's. Please RSVP soonest.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned about 4:00pm.

Minutes Submitted: by Bonnie Clarke, Aug 2, 2005 by email attachment.