

SISTER CITY ANNUAL REPORT

Big Year for Sister City Projects

This has been a very busy year for the Brookline-Quezalguaque Sister City Project.

In February, Carol Caro, SC President, Maxine Shaw and Bambi Good traveled to Nicaragua for a planning meeting with the urban and rural residents of Quezalguaque. The meeting was a big success.

A new Sister City Liaison was selected—Pedro Ruiz Martinez.



Pedro has been involved in our projects in Quezalguaque for many

years. He was one of the delegation that visited Brookline in 1999.



Oneyda Yamilet Osejos Alvarado

A new director for the library was appointed by the Mayor. Oneyda Alvarado has taken charge and increased the use of the library and the trips by the mobile library to 5 rural areas.

The first planning meeting between representatives of Brookline and the urban and rural areas of Quezalguaque was held. More than 40

people attended and made decisions about the next projects we would work on together.

In early June, Sarah Johnson and Peter Stringham led a delegation of public health and medical students from the Boston area to Quezalguaque to begin a study into the causes of the high incidents of renal failure in the area. Late in June, Richard Segan arrived to spend a week with the students and their Nicaraguan counterparts to insure all was proceeding as planned.

Arch O'Reilly visited Quezalguaque in October to follow up on our many projects: art classes, housing project, library, block factory, student letter exchange and plans for a new school and expansion of emergency room at the Health Center.

Chronic Kidney Disease Study in Quezalguaque

In the summer of 2008 the Brookline Sister City Health Committee coordinated a team of more than 50 people in the US and Nicaragua to study the epidemic of Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) in Quezalguaque. Two students from the BU School of Public Health, two students from the Harvard School of Public Health and a medical student from BU worked with a team of 5 local Nicaraguans in July and August screening 774 randomly preselected adults in all 24 hamlets in Quezalguaque.

The sample included one adult

from each household and everyone with symptoms of CKD. The team measured kidney function, blood pressure, blood glucose and blood lead. Kidney function was measured with portable, handheld devices. They also administered an extensive questionnaire that covered work history, geography and personal habits. The team was able to examine 72% of the males and 92% of the females in the preselected sample.

To date we have found that the adults in Quezalguaque have severe CKD at a rate more than 10

times that of the US and the rest of the world.

The data is of high quality. A group is analyzing the findings to plan treatment for people with CKD to slow its progression. Members of the Health Committee will return to Nicaragua this December to report on the study to the town, local health officials in Leon and the Ministry of Health in Managua. We will continue our work with researchers in Leon to discover the root causes of the epidemic.

Brookline-Quezalguaque Sister City Annual Appeal



Elementary School for Soledad Nueva

Soledad Nueva is one of the rural areas in Quezalguaque. Currently there is no elementary school for children in grades 1-6. They use a room in someone's house when it is available otherwise they must meet outside. (\$17,000 have raised \$5000)

Health center

Expansion of the emergency room at the health center in urban Quezalguaque The current space is barely adequate. (\$12,000)

A rural health center is able to be staff because we pay for transportation cost for nurses and a doctor 5 days a week. (\$3,000)

Library

Mobile Library - offers service to 5 rural communities (\$1,500)

Library books, supplies and building maintenance (\$1,000)

Art Classes - art teacher's salary and art supplies (\$1,800)

Brookline-Quezalguaque Sister City Project is a totally volunteer organization. All funds raised, with the exception of our two mailings every year, go to support our programs in Quezalguaque.

Please send checks payable to: BQSC to Brookline-Quezalguaque Sister City Project, c/o Carol Caro, 27 Elba Street, Brookline, MA 02446. We hope you will be as generous as possible.

BQSC IS A 501© (3) TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATION.

All donations are tax deductible.

