

On March, 2006, two Rotarians from the Las Vegas Northwest Rotary Club, Cliff W. Marcek and Edmee S. Marcek received an Individualized Grant to travel to Chile and explore possible projects for our club to work on. We came back with many good projects not only for our club to pursue, but for any club in need of international projects. We traveled to Punitaqui, Chile and visited our sister club, Punitaqui Rotary Club. Punitaqui is located in a mountainous remote area North of Santiago in Chile. The Punitaqui Rotary club has a total of 9 very positive, enthusiastic, and hard working members. For the past four years, the Northwest Rotary Club together with many other Southern Nevada Rotary Clubs has sponsored many educational projects which have covered the most urgent needs of the schools in Punitaqui and surrounding villages. Their needs seem so basic and almost too simple to us, but to them, the lack of these basic school materials means the possible closure of their schools. Families in this area are extremely poor. Most families raise goats and chickens to support their families, and some others plant small fruit or vegetable gardens. These young children as well as their parents see education as their only way to a better life, and for the first time, they see our commitment to help them as a ray of hope. I would like to point out that these students have never had dictionaries, maps, basic school supplies, rulers, protractors, materials for science experiments, and the possibility to have a physical education program. The donation of a few P/E shorts and shirts made it possible for students to have a modest P/E program. The reason behind the need to implement a P/E program is to teach the students to play team sports and to create small tournaments among the different schools in the nearby villages. This activity will promote parent involvement and will offer the students an alternative to drugs and alcohol.

This year, the Northwest Rotary Club, in conjunction with the Punitaqui Rotary Club and the possibility of Matching Grants, has committed funds to sponsor a US\$ 13,000 project. Now I, the chair of International Avenue of Service at the Las Vegas Northwest Rotary Club and one of the recipients of an Individualized Grant, would like to ask you to please consider one of the following humanitarian projects and present them to your club. As stated above, the projects appear very modest to us, but to the people of the Punitaqui area, they are of immense value. I hope that together we can fulfill all of them. If you have any questions, please contact me at: edmee_marcek@ccsn.edu

Edmee S. Marcek

Chair of International and Director at Large.

Project #1 Water Hydrant

Install a water hydrant to provide water to a small area where families have no access to running water, electricity, or means to store water or afford to build a well. Families living in the small area live off a pension of less than US \$100 (51,503 pesos) a month. This project will cost US \$530 to complete.

Project #2 Sports Championship

In order to assure and encourage the use of recently acquired P/E equipment, Punitaqui Rotary Club members have organized a yearly sports and cultural championship. The plan is to invite all 11 schools that have received educational and extracurricular material and equipment from different Rotary Clubs of Southern Nevada. Following is a proposal to help fund the third educational and sports championship.

Championship Activities :

1- Ping Pong championship. It will follow the format of the Davis Cup of two singles, a double, and matches of three sets each.

- All eleven schools will participate in the competition and will place from first place to eleventh place.
- First through fourth place will receive medals. Fifth through eleventh place will receive certificates.
- There will an exhibition game half way through the championship. This exhibition game will be played by national champions.
- At the end of the championship, there will be a second exhibition game played by the local champions and national champions.
- There will also be mixed teams (boys and girls).

2 – Painting competition. Theme: “How do you picture the Punitaqui area in the future.”

Prizes: First, second and third place will receive a certificate and a small cash prize.

The paintings will be exhibited for the entire duration of the event and a jury will select the winner and the two finalists.

3 – Spelling Bee competition.

The words used will be chosen from books previously purchased with funds from different Southern Nevada Rotary clubs and donated to the schools of Punitaqui.

There will also be snacks for the participating students and a lunch to celebrate friendship. The cost of this project is estimated to be US\$ 613

Project # 3 Supplies for Old Folks Home

Provide the local old folks home with five bedpans, five bed urinals, one sphygmomanometer, one digital scale, and two digital thermometers. This old folk's home houses 22 old men and women who can no longer care for themselves due to health problems, lack of financial means, and lack of family members able to care for them. This place is run by a group of volunteer residents of Punitaqui and a nurse.

The total cost of this project is US\$ 530.

Project #4

Every year the members of the Punitaqui Rotary Club celebrate Children's week by visiting one school from the Punitaqui area. During this visit, Punitaqui Rotarians celebrate with the students by recognizing the best students and best academic achievers. These students will receive a backpack with the Rotary logo, school supplies, and a certificate recognizing their achievements. There is also going to be a tea for all the boys and girls of the Sali-Hochschilds school which has been this year's chosen school.

The total amount needed for this project is US\$ 554. This amount would allow the members of the Punitaqui Rotary Club to buy 22 certificates, 22 backpacks with the Rotary logo, 22 notebooks, 22 blocks of drawing paper, 22 boxes of color pencils (24 pencils per box), and a ping pong table (gift to the school).

Edmee, this budget seems unrealistically low. John

Project #5 Satellite TV Set

Provide a satellite television to El Durazno de Quiles School. This project would benefit a community located 70 Kilometers from Punitaqui, and it is geographically and socially isolated from the rest of the villages and the town of Punitaqui. Their only meeting place is the school. People who live in this area are extremely poor. They have no electricity, therefore, no televisions or radios. The school has become their main point of gathering. This year, the students from El Durazno de Quiles School presented the members of Punitaqui Rotary Club a proposal for a project in which there would be shared costs. In other words, they are asking for the installation of a television satellite, a television set and a DVD player. This has a total value of US \$530. The teacher, parents, and students of the school have pledged to fund the monthly cost of the television satellite.