

## ***The Ann Campana Judge Foundation Fall 2013 Newsletter***

### ***Visit from Alex Uriel del Cid Vásquez***

Alex Uriel del Cid Vásquez, with whom we have worked for twelve years, visited us for eight days in October. Alex is the technical wizard behind our Honduras projects. He lives in Omoa, on the northwestern coast of Honduras just west of Puerto Cortés. He currently serves as a councilor for the Municipality of Omoa (analogous to a US county); the municipality paid his airfare. Alex gave presentations on his water work to the Oregon State University student chapter of Engineers Without Borders (see photo below) and to a group of development professionals in Portland. Both talks were well received. He also met with a number of students. One of my undergraduates will be meeting with him in Honduras in a few weeks.



Alex is currently an elementary school teacher but he trained and is certified as a water technician and worked for Save The Children in the Honduras interior for about six years. After moving to Omoa, he started hiking the Sierra de Omoa and encountered many isolated small villages without potable water. He put his STC training to good use, working with villagers to develop water systems. It's ironic that Alex's own school (100+ students) has neither potable water nor sanitary facilities – a tribute to bureaucratic oversight. We are going to rectify that situation pretty soon.

Alex also had some time for relaxation. Here he is with Mary Frances and her faithful steed, Shadowfax. He visited the gorgeous Oregon coast and also experienced snow for the first time (that was a *must*).



### ***ACJF Projects and July 2013 Visit***

We continue to undertake our own projects in Honduras. Following on the heels of our small project in Brisas del Rio Cuyamel [see <http://is.gd/BKQhmY> and <http://is.gd/ox6c20>] we undertook and finished a larger village water project (c. \$20,000) in Los Mejias, a village of about 310 persons and 45 *casas* in the rugged Sierra de Omoa that runs along the northwest coast of Honduras. On July 3 I attended a gala celebration to officially dedicate the project. Below is a picture of the pageant and amigo Rolando López, villager Roberto Mejias (whose family graciously hosted me in June 2012), and mason Jorge Chávez standing in front of the village's 5,000 gallon tank.

The villagers erected a sign advertising their village and welcoming visitors. The sign also touts that they are producers of the best coffee of Cuyamel National Park. I can vouch for that.

And I even got a diploma!



**Pageant in Los Mejias, 3 July 2013**





We also initiated a water project in Las Palmas, in the same general area (Sierra de Omoa) as Los Mejias, and about the same size. The villagers are anxious to finish the project by Christmas 2013, just a few weeks away. Despite the fact that the rainy season is ongoing (it lasts from about early July to the end of the calendar year, give or take a few weeks) they seem determined according to Rolando, who called me on 30 November to provide an update. The pictures below show Alex, Rolando, Jorge and Gustavo Cabrera (a ranger/environmental scientist in the local national park) checking out the water supply situation.

Alex and Rolando are also shown addressing the Las Palmas villagers on the importance and responsibilities of the of the  *junta de agua*  (water committee). They insist that women be represented; two were elected to the five-member  *junta* . Both men are master motivators, and I joke that Rolando is one step removed from everyone in Honduras. Alex is committed to sustainable projects. He impresses upon the villagers the need for maintenance and funds for same. He also trains the villagers thoroughly. We are indeed fortunate to have such dedicated friends working with us. Believe me when I say that the ACJF's work in Honduras would be impossible without these two men.





In addition to Las Palmas, we started a water project in El Tamarindo, a small village (approximately 150 persons) in the Sierra del Merendón, a mountain range just northwest of San Pedro Sula, the financial capital of Honduras. The village is in the Municipality of Choloma, a region of about 250,000 persons and a major manufacturing center. El Tamarindo is isolated from the rest of the municipality and does not have potable water. The villagers started building their own project but ran out of money and materials. Alex checked out their work and was impressed with what they had accomplished. We have decided to fund the rest of the project. The villagers were energized by our decision and will finish the project by March 2014. We hope to get the municipality to donate a 5,000 gallon tank.

### ***Blasts from the Past***

My aforementioned visit to El Tamarindo was the serendipitous outcome of my trip to see old friends, Don and Doña Marroquín (see below), who had hosted me and University of New Mexico students at their compound in 2003. We had helped them and their fellow Nueva Florida villagers build a water system. Don Marroquín had encountered Rolando López several months prior to my visit. One thing led to another, and Don Marroquín insisted that I visit them when I arrived. It was a wonderful experience. The water system we helped build? Still works like a charm!



I also ran into Maria J. Valdez, Executive Director of the Texas Water Mission [<http://www.texaswatermission.org>], a group we funded to drill some wells in central Honduras. She had some board members on a trip to assess projects. We all had a delightful chat at Zamorano [<http://www.zamorano.edu>], a private agricultural school



outside Tegucigalpa where TWM was having some water samples analyzed and I was visiting colleagues on non-ACJF business. Maria, her board members, and I discussed collaboration.

### **Other Projects Completed/Funded**

Towards the end of 2012 we granted El Porvenir (<http://elporvenir.org>) \$14,872 for its *Sanitation Project in El Rodeo, Nicaragua*. It is scheduled for completion on 31 December 2013.

Our support of Steve Schneider, who produced *Water Supply Well Guidelines for Use in Developing Countries*, continues. Hundreds of hard copies (5 x 8 inch booklets, spiral-bound, on weatherproof paper) have been distributed, not to mention hundreds of downloaded PDFs. Steve produced a second edition of the guidelines [<http://is.gd/lw4ELU>] and is working on a third edition. A Swahili translation (cover below) was recently produced [<http://is.gd/FDaMbN>] and distributed at a conference in Kenya last summer. A Mandarin translation is in progress, and French and Spanish versions are planned.



As I have mentioned before, we have supported Steve (\$500) and are acting as a collection agent for tax-free contributions. His work is drawing raves worldwide and our logo is right there on the back cover!

### **Finances**

2013 has been a good year in terms of accomplishments. We have about \$20,000 in the bank with about \$10,000 of that committed to projects. We have collected slightly over

\$3,000 so far in 2013. There are still four weeks left to make your contributions for tax year 2013. You can write a check to the ACJ Foundation and mail it to the ACJF (3359 NW Poppy Drive, Corvallis, OR 97330) or use PayPal for a secure, online credit card transaction. Visit <http://www.acjfoundation.org> and click on 'Contributions'.

Our 2012 990-EZ form was posted last May; visit our website and click on 'Financials'. You can see what we've done with limited funds. Recall that we have no paid staff and all Board of Director travel is self-funded. Other than fees to the State of Oregon, PayPal for credit-card processing, and our Internet hosting we don't spend much money for administration.

### ***El Fin y El Futuro***

That's the end, as in the newsletter, and the future, as in our plans.

I hope to take a brief trip (one week or so) to Honduras in late March 2014 - the dry season. If I do, I will be back in a few months with more news. I will visit next summer as well. On these trips I will discuss additional projects with Rolando and Alex, and when we identify some, seek approval from the ACJF board. Dealing with the lack of clean water and sanitation at Alex's school is certainly a top priority. There are also about five or so villages in the municipality that still need and want potable water. So for the next several years, our work in Omoa is cut out for us. That is good, because we are becoming more familiar with the region and its landscape – not just the physical, but social, cultural, political, economic, etc.

I have been fortunate enough to have been interviewed and asked to write about 'hydrophilanthropy' and the work of the foundation. Last month my editorial was published in the November 2013 issue of *Water Well Journal* [<http://is.gd/3i3Yct>]. An interview just appeared in *National Driller* [<http://is.gd/mRxnJV>]. In a few days I will be a keynote speaker at NGWA's Groundwater Expo in Nashville [<http://groundwaterexpo.com/>]

As I am wont to say, the ACJF punches above its weight.

Thanks go to the ACJF's other Directors, Loring Green and Mary Frances Campana, who have been with the ACJF since the beginning. None of the above would have been possible without their work. But our donors are those who make us go – no money, no work!

Enjoy the holidays and the new year! Thank you all for your continued support!

- Michael