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Children Of Honduras Trust

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CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers and supporters a very happy Christmas, as the season approaches to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the friend and saviour of all who accept Him into their lives. At CH Trust, working through the year on His behalf, we have continued to be amazed by the support received and the blessings amassing, in terms of the aid we will be sending out in next year's containers. As always, the 'shape' of the consignment changes as the Lord supplies and fine tunes what is required to meet the needs of our recipients in Honduras. I am sure you will be aware of the political problems troubling Honduras at the present time. In spite of the uncertainties, I am convinced that the Lord will clear the path in time for our planned Loading Day event in March. Please pray for peace and a just settlement of the ongoing leadership conflict taking place there. Dina has recently written to us commenting, "The economic



- EACH CHILD HAS RECEIVED A TOY -

crisis is very hard now. The expectations for next year are not good, because we did not have enough rain this year. Our water reserves are poor and production of food is very affected too. We are trusting in God and know that he will not leave us. However, all of us must be very careful with all our resources.”

The following article tries to briefly convey our perceived understanding of the political issues at stake in Honduras. This is largely based on articles published by the national press of Honduras.

HONDURAS – THE STATE OF THE NATION

Honduras has been in political and economic crisis since the end of June when their president, who was coming into the last six months of his term of office, was removed from power by the army and deposited out of the country. Since then the acting president has been grouped against the ousted president and the rest of the world.

Because of this action there has been a cessation of aid from most of the world. In the aftermath, the teachers, police, etc have not been paid. The city schools have been closed for 50% of the year. However, the rural schools have done better. There has also been growing lawlessness, some political, some gang related and some opportunistic. It is unsafe to travel on buses and taxis. The people with money are afraid to move from their homes and local businesses are suffering. This has resulted in many people going short of food, as they have no money.

The national elections should take place at the end of November, with the Government changing at the end of January 2010. The world politicians say that they will not recognise the results of the election if the ousted president has not been reinstated. This is set against a backdrop where the current Government are seeking to arrest the dismissed president for treason, fraud and other offences, if he steps outside of the Brazilian Embassy.

There are also two curve balls in the game. Firstly, the ousted president is very, very friendly with the Venezuelan dictator, President Chavez, who came into dictatorship by changing the constitution of his country. Many in the Honduran Administration have been worried by their president's actions, suggesting that he was trying to follow the same route, i.e. they feared that President Zelaya was intent on altering the constitution of Honduras to enable him to extend his stay in office for more than the statutory one term. This potentially could lead to a dictatorship. Chavez, in league with the Columbian drugs barons and with favour

from the dismissed president, appears to have enjoyed the benefits provided by the drugs trafficking route through Honduras, which has steadily increased. Secondly, oil has been found in northern Honduras. This could unsettle the power balance of the country, which is currently owned by 11 families.

At the time of writing, there is much diplomatic activity and meetings taking place to resolve this complex political tangle. The crucial issue is agreement to ensure that elections can take place on November 29th, which will be recognised on the world stage. If accomplished, the new president should assume power at the end of January 2010. It is our hope and prayer that the matter will be successfully resolved. If not, the near future remains very uncertain and a threat to our 2010 proposed shipping date.

LET THERE BE LIGHT IN GUANACASTE

In Guanacaste, the generator has been a great success. It seems to have revolutionised life in the village far beyond any expectation on our part. Extension of the working day, beyond daylight working hours, has facilitated many additional activities. In spite of political unrest, school has been open for all but three days. The college course and the adult literacy classes have been a great success. However, the workload for Cesar is severe since he is teaching most of the college lessons.

We are delighted to discover that the village has funded all the diesel fuel used by the generator. They have done this by organising two fund raising events. These appear to have been in the form of social evenings, where they have charged themselves about 45p each to attend. The events would probably have been a new experience for many, featuring light and music (enabled by the generator), in a village previously without an electrical supply.

The wind up lamps we sent in last year has been a great blessing. There is now a lamp in every home in Guanacaste village. We wondered how long these items would last. All seem to be going strong. The first one, which we took out two and a half years ago, is still working. These lamps are greatly treasured and used well and sparingly. Cesar is now looking for more lamps to bless families in other mountain area villages, where there is no electrical supply.

We have obtained a quote for bulk buying the lamps that amount to £6.50 each. Unfortunately the lamps are not readily available in retail shops. If you want to contribute, please send a cheque identified for the purpose, to CH Trust at the

address on the front of the newsletter.

Wind-up torches are more readily available in the shops. These are used for people to move around the villages, go to church and even attend the outside toilet or latrine. It is pitch black by 6pm at night! The lamps and torches have extended the usable day and students can now do their homework in the evening. Cesar likes the safety of these lamps relative to candles. Fire in the home is fairly common in Honduras.

GUANACASTE SCHOOL VISIT TO "CHIMINIKE"

CH Trust and the Loughborough University Taekwon-do Society jointly funded this visit, for the children of three different schools. This account features Guanacaste School. Matt and Dani tell the story.

The school trip day started very early. Once again we were awoken to the sounds of the las Cañadas regulars – the cockerels, birds and geckos! Today we were heading to Chiminike, an interactive science museum in the capital city. The children were met very early in the morning, about 40 minutes walk away from the village (there's no way that the bus would've made it along the track to the school!) The journey was filled with songs, sick bags and children standing and staring at the sights of Tegucigalpa. Once we arrived, the children were split into groups and let loose on the various rooms of the museum. Every room had a different theme, with various interactive elements too. One of the rooms, for example, demonstrated the water cycle; a huge water channel filled the area. Here, the children could build bridges, make dams and even go fishing in it! It was a great experience, not only were the children able to interactively engage with some of the science topics they had learned about, but also have fun along the way. For some, it was their first experience of the city. Thanks to help from CH Trust and Loughborough Students Taekwon-do Society, we were able to not only fund the trip for Guanacaste School, but also take Sabaneta and Chiquistepe schools on the following day.

GLASSES FOR EVER

Veronica writes:

It was on my first visit to Guanacaste that I came across Ever, a 6 year old boy. He was sat at the back of the reception class. He appeared to be struggling to see the board at the front. Eventually, I had the opportunity to teach in Ever's class, during which time I sat him closer to the front. He still seemed to be struggling but was better at the front than the back. I mentioned my concerns to Cesar and the girls teaching in reception, recommending that he sat close to the board. There are no



- CHILDREN AT CHIMINIKE (THE SCIENCE MUSEUM) -

opticians or even a hospital close to Guanacaste. Even if there were, what would be the chances of him getting help? I was hoping that at some point in the future a brigade of opticians would come to Guanacaste to offer some help, I couldn't see what I could do.

On my return in August, this year, Ever was still at school. However, I was now teaching him in Grade 2. He seemed a bright little boy who enjoyed maths but it was obvious that he still had a problem with his eyesight. I remember giving something to him and the way he reached to the side of where the object actually was! I was almost certain that his problem could be resolved with glasses, but I was not 100% certain. I asked Cesar if anything had been done for him in the 18 months that I had been away - he didn't think anything had. It turned out, however, that a visiting medical brigade had seen him. He had been examined and did indeed need glasses - this was information that I didn't find out till much later, when I met with his mother.

I set about trying to find out how to enable Ever to visit an optician and made enquiries about the cost of the examination. The nearest optician was in the capital city Tegucigalpa - a journey of about 4 hours! It turned out the examination would be free and, if glasses were needed and purchased from that optician, then there would be a discount. Great news - I met with Ever's mum, who had just had a baby two months ago. She explained that she knew he needed glasses but there was no

way the family could afford them. I explained that the examination would be free and that I was willing to pay for the glasses and the cost of transporting her and Ever to and from the optician. She said she would be unable to make the journey because of the baby but her husband would be able to take him. The journey would be arduous, nearly a two-hour walk to get to the main road before getting a bus into the capital, another two-hour journey! Then the same journey back.

We arranged an appointment for the next Monday. On the day of the appointment, when Cesar and I had returned home from school, Ever, his dad and grandmother were waiting for us. Ever and his dad had got up that morning and set off walking at 3am across the mountains to get to Cerro Grande, where Ever's grandmother lived. She was going to go with them to Tegucigalpa as Ever's dad was unfamiliar with the capital and his mother was going along to help him. From Cerro Grande they walked to the main road, another couple of hours, to get to the bus. The distances people have to walk are unbelievable. Ever's dad said it was quicker than waiting for the Guanacaste bus! Anyway the examination was done and Ever did indeed need glasses. I got a copy of the prescription, details of the optician and price for the glasses. We had to ring to check about deposits and how long the glasses would take. Once this was all decided, they set off for the return leg of their journey. A journey he would have to make again to pay the deposit and then again with Ever to collect his glasses!

A friend who had run a sponsored half marathon, gave me money from the proceeds that amounted to half the cost of taking the Guanacaste children on a trip during the course of my stay in Honduras. On arrival, it turned out the trip had already been planned and paid for! I checked with my friend and asked if I could use the money to help in another way. I was given the go ahead to use it as I saw fit. I finished up putting that money towards the cost of Ever's glasses.

Unfortunately, I was unable to see Ever in his glasses before I left. I am pleased to have been sent a photo of him wearing them. I'm sure that they will really make a difference to his learning at school and his life at home too.

NEW VISION FOR MARVIN

Dani and Matt write:

We got to know Marvin Daniel Banegas in the first few days at Guanacaste School. While teaching an English class, we noticed that he really struggled to see the blackboard. After speaking with Cesar, we realised that Marvin, aged 10, struggled with his sight. Sometimes he had been unable to participate in activities throughout



- EVER (WITH HIS NEW GLASSES) AND MARVIN -

his entire primary education. Cesar suggested going to visit Marvin's mother, Maria Leticia, to ask about his condition. She explained that Marvin had suffered with cataracts for most of his life. Despite various doctors and organisations promising to help over the years, he still desperately needed an operation to remove them. Whilst cataracts are almost unheard of in children of the developed world, they are more of a common ailment in Central America.

The only option to improve Marvin's sight was an operation. However, the costs of travelling to the city, the costs of the procedure and drugs were too expensive for his family to cover.

The operation finally went ahead on September 14th, Cesar emailed with this photo of Marvin and his mother, saying, "here is a photo of Marvin who has recently been operated on, which is why his eyes are a little swollen and red... He had the operation at the Hospital Escuela in Tegucigalpa, and already he is much better than before and can see well".

Thanks to the generosity of CH Trust supporters who gathered at Spondon Methodist Church on November 2nd, where over £800 was raised, more than enough money was made to cover the full costs of Marvin's operation. The operation, itself, was free. However, the cost of the hospital accommodation, medication and

transport produced a bill of £360. The remaining £440 will be put towards the purchase of an additional ton of full cream buttermilk. Many thanks to all those who offered their support.

LONGER TERM INVESTMENTS

TREES

As time advances, the trust is trying to engage in more, longer term, sustainable projects alongside of the direct aid it sends.

Banana and orange trees with fertiliser were bought with the money raised by selling tree cards at £5 each. These cards provided an alternative present to give to others. They have been given for birthdays, leaving presents and Christenings. The banana and orange trees are growing well. They were planted in May, at the start of the rainy season and will be coming into harvest during the next two months. The added benefit of these trees, especially the banana trees, which have a large root system, is that they secure the land, especially when planted on the hillside. So far we have given trees to needy families on one half of the mountain. Lourdes, Cesar's sister, also wants to give trees to families on the other side of the mountain for May 2010. This is the start of the rainy season when it is ideal for planting. Can we fund it?

There is a request to buy peach trees this next year, which cost about the same amount. A syrup is made from peaches which is very saleable. They also eat the peaches before they are ripe thus extending the harvesting season of the tree.

PLANTING CORN

We have just paid for ten families to be given corn seed to plant. We cannot import corn into Honduras as it is a protected main food crop. The cost was £3.30 per family. Following harvest, they will make tortillas with the corn once it has been boiled and minced.

We have also bought five chickens and one cockerel for each of three different families. These have cost just under £20 per family. We are hoping that the resulting eggs will provide much needed protein for the families and also, eventually, a saleable commodity to generate much needed income. We await the success of these two projects. If they are as successful as we hope, then we will increase the number of families receiving chickens in the New Year.

We are always looking for ways to make a long-term difference in the lives of people as well as short term aid. Both are essential.



- A FAMILY RECEIVING CHICKENS AND COCKEREL -

CECIA'S STORY

Cecia has been part of our history for many years, although we did not know her personally. She was brought up at the La Finca orphanage, where our work in Honduras began. We helped to clothe, feed and educate her when she was younger.

In her late teens, she found the move from the secure life of the orphanage, where food, shelter and safety were the norm, to fending for her self very hard. She now had to find her own accommodation and food. This meant finding a job, not easy in Honduras. She managed and eventually met the love of her life. He disappeared, (as often happens in Honduras), when she became pregnant with her son Joseph. They survived by living in a rented room in the mountains. Cecia managed to keep a job until Joseph's asthma deteriorated and frequently placed him in hospital. The level of care now demanded prevented her from working. Glenda and Terry came to her aid while visiting their family one Christmas. They became involved when Joseph had a bad asthma attack. They brought Joseph and his mum back to the Valle. Throughout the night he was treated with a nebuliser. This timely action by our own Doctor Lovita helped to save his life. Thankfully, the nebuliser was available because we had sent several out in the containers. In

the morning he was taken to the hospital in the city where they discovered that he was suffering from pneumonia.

They found that the room where Cecilia and Joseph lived was damp and the mattress they slept on contaminated by growths of black mould. They decided to help by finding a better room for Cecilia and her three year old son in another property, which they and David from England rented and paid for a year. Glenda's family found her a newer mattress and other items for her new room. The location was nearer to the Valle de Angeles. The room was arranged so that the bed backed onto the owner's wood cooking stove on the other side of the wall. This kept the bed dry and warm. Joseph's health improved and Cecilia managed to get a part time job. They continue to thrive in their new accommodation. Joseph has not had to be hospitalised again and Cecilia continues to be in employment and self-supporting. It only took a little help to transform their lives but what a difference it made.

KEEPING THE RAIN OUT!

We received a request for a new tin roof for the kinder and kitchen at Sabaneta School. The existing roof was tile and in a severe state of decay. This meant that the roof leaked every time it rained. During the rainy season the rain is very heavy, causing flooding within the schoolroom. This often meant that the children were paddling rather than learning. Could we help?

It was a large funding project. The likelihood of the government giving this small mountain school a new roof was none existent. The morning after I received this request I took a phone call from a long-term supporter from France. Were there any special needs, as they wanted to donate some money? Fifteen minutes later the money was promised and an e-mail sent for the planning of the new roof. Now they have a new shiny metal roof, which keeps them all dry despite the weather.

Whilst writing this I am again reminded that many children, as well as adults, get very wet going to and from school and work. It is too hot for a raincoat but the rain can drench the walker in a matter of seconds. They can often start the day very wet. Understandably, umbrellas are excellent for this problem but few can afford them. Can we help to give the day a good start?

SMOKY KITCHENS

Matt and Dani, when visiting the mountain schools of Sabaneta and Chiquestepe, found the kitchen buildings full of choking smoke from the wood burning cooking

stoves. They reported that the smoke was so bad that they could only stay inside the building for a few minutes. The ladies, often with toddlers, are working in this atmosphere for many hours each day. They are the volunteer cooks, who cook the lunch for the school children from the supplies we send.

Two chimneys and plates have been bought for Sabaneta and Chiquestepe schools to exit the smoke out of the building when cooking for the children. The cost of a new chimney and cooking plate was £35. The old chimneys had lots of holes in them. In Sabaneta, it was the ladies who dismantled the existing cooker and remodelled the new plate into place. Well done! At Chiquestepe, a man and his wife are seen fitting their new chimney and cooking plate. All the cooks appreciate the difference to their working conditions.

TOILETS AT SAUCE NOW COMPLETE

Last year, you may remember that we told you about the building of new block built toilets that we had erected at Sauce school. We now have pictures of the installed toilets and wash basins, which were sent for the purpose, in last year's containers. They also have tiled floors and are tiled half way up the wall, again gifted from England. What a difference! They do look good. The toilets now flush much better than the original 'bucket and chuck it' system.

AQUABOXES

Once again Wirksworth Rotary Club provided us with Aqua 30 boxes to send to Honduras. These contained water filters and sterilising tablets to provide safe drinking water. None of the water in Honduras is safe for drinking except the bottled water, which only a small percentage of the people can afford. The filters provide safe and nice drinking water at the various places throughout the country, where we supply. The boxes are placed in schools, a clinic, a college, feeding centres as well as individual filters for homes. It is difficult to quantify the effects of these filters but I know that they are greatly prized and have improved the health of many in Honduras. Thank you.

VERONICA'S REALITY EXPERIENCE HONDURAS STYLE! COCKROACHES - THE FINAL FEAR

I was feeling fairly confident about being back in Honduras, it was my third visit after all and, without getting too complacent, I felt quite at ease!

Unlike my first stay in Honduras I had great confidence that my accommodation was reasonably 'bug' free and I didn't need to suffocate under the sheets at bedtime

to save myself from things that crawled in the night. As I drew the curtains ready for bed, I was sure the black thing I glimpsed out of the corner of my eye on the curtain would be something quite innocent - Wrong! As I looked more closely I could see the antennae twitching and the shiny brown armour of my nemesis - the cockroach! I backed out of the room and went to summon immediate aid. My pathetic plea was swiftly responded to as my host came to remove the beast, which had of course made a swift get away. My heart was in overdrive as I knew from past experience that it would surely re-emerge once the lights were out!

I should add, that immediately prior to my arrival in Honduras, I had spent a couple of days with my sister and her family in Orlando. Here, I voluntarily opted for an adrenalin rush at a water park where I was dropped more than three flights through a trap door onto a water slide that was nearly vertical.

As I lay in bed, imagining what horrors this cockroach was going to inflict on me, it seemed illogical that I could reason away any fears I may have had at the water park in pursuit of 'fun' and yet here, I was summoning a pregnant woman from her bed to come and save me! I felt ashamed and decided that the fear was all in my head. As I was going to be there for a month and would no doubt return in the future, I better get to grips with all the wildlife and stop being such a baby about it. This was just as well as I was to face large centipedes, snakes and poisonous lizards before my month was up. I can honestly say, I still don't like cockroaches. However, I can now dispatch them myself and I have stopped suffocating myself to sleep with the covers tucked around me, mummy style, in order to protect my face.

CHILD EDUCATIONAL SPONSORSHIP AT STATE SCHOOLS

The sponsorship scheme continues to do well with over 360 children sponsored in primary and secondary education. Education is not compulsory but is recognized as a very valuable opportunity, often denied to children who do not have access to outside help, due to the high hidden costs involved. It is these children that we try to help with sponsorship. Your £50 donation has provided a school manual, currently costing £14 for primary students and £20 for secondary students; shoes; uniform; rucksacks and school supplies. For the older children, who attend college in the city, we also give help towards bus fares and, if necessary, a watch.

All the ministries taking part in the scheme have expressed their sincere gratitude towards all our generous donors. They report that many of the families make

great sacrifices to educate their children, as they regard it as the best investment they can make to lift the children and themselves out of poverty.

At this time of year we are considering sponsorship for 2010. The school year runs from February to November. Thus all the school clothing and supplies are promoted in the shops during January. We need to send out the sponsorship money by the end of November, to get it to the Pastors with adequate time to buy/procure the appropriate uniform etc. for the children early in the New Year.

The two options available are:

- a) sponsorship for a full year (£50) or
- b) a half-year option (£25) where, to cover the year, we match 2 sponsors to the same child.

Please would you make any cheques payable to “CH Trust” and send to Jennifer at the address on the front cover of this newsletter.



- LOOK AT OUR SCHOOL SHOES FROM ENGLAND -

Here are some extracts from letters received from the youngsters we have helped in 2009 and hope to help in 2010:

11 year old Elia lives in Comayagua, a poor district on the edge of the capital, and has received sponsorship for the first time this year.

"I hope that all the kind and generous people who are helping me are well and may God keep you in good health.

I am the second of 5 siblings, the youngest is a boy and there are 4 girls. We live with my Mum because my Dad is in prison. She works in a place, which is a house for people who have been deported from the USA. She stays there overnight, with the two youngest children. We others stay at home. In the daytime she stays at home with us. Sometimes she irons clothes for other people because she can not manage on what her first job pays her. Life here in Honduras is hard, as we poor people cannot afford to eat. Meat is too expensive and the basic grain price goes up every day. It is already hard to survive in Honduras, with lack of work and everything being so expensive. Thanks to God and to you all for taking pity on the poor people"

15 year old Gabriel attends Vicente College and lives in the poor district of La Pena por Bajo on the outskirts of the capital city. He has written to be considered for sponsorship in 2010

"We are 7 people in my house, my mum, my dad, my grandma and 4 children. All my family are poor and we do not have the money to be able to live comfortably. My mum and my dad are the only ones working and they struggle to earn enough to buy food and the basics, like drinking water and light. My mum works hard cleaning houses, washing and ironing clothes for those who will give her work. Her wages are not much but with this she can buy something for us to eat at least once a day.

I have 3 siblings. We all study although we have had great difficulty in completing the course because we do not have a reliable source of income. I study at Vicente Caceres Institute. It is a good college, which includes many children from poor homes in the outskirts of the city like mine. I am currently in 9th grade. It has been difficult to get this far, not because I do not want to but because I cannot afford the books, uniform, shoes and rucksack. When I can, I go to my lessons. I do not live near school and have to take the bus, which is an extra expense. I cannot walk, as it is too far away. We cannot eat anything at break time, when we go to school, because there isn't enough money for transport and food"

Gabriel now has a sponsor for 2010

FEED-BACK FROM HONDURAS

These are some of the 'thank you' letters we have received from various individuals that have benefited from our help.

From Ercilia Chirinos, Supervisor of the student dining room (at Vicente College).

It is a pleasure to greet you and to wish you success in your demanding work. I am the supervisor of the student dining room and I am writing to you in the name of all the students to thank you for the food which you supply to us at Vicente College. It is a great help to us in providing for the pupils who are in extreme poverty. I see their need for myself every day and feel very grateful to CH Trust. I especially pray that God may bless you and keep it in your heart to help Vicente College.

From Zulema Carcamo, Tegucigalpa.

I thank you for the contribution I received from you. It was so useful to our household, as the food was delivered to my kitchen in a moment of great need. Thank you also for clothing for my seventeen year old daughter Cynthia, who is studying.

From Jennifer Meza

My name is Jennifer Meza. I live with both my parents and my two brothers. We rent a one room place to live in. In my family, it is only my father who works, as a security guard. My mum is a housewife. My two brothers are studying in school and I am at college. Thank you to those who help so many people, girls and boys at school, like me, who have very little money. I am a student at Vicente College, Comayaguela, Tegucigalpa.

Modesta, Guanacaste

I am very grateful because I was given a mattress and bedding for our one bed, which we would never be able to buy, not even one of poor quality. We also received clothing and rice. We are very happy because we do not feel cold as we used to. You have helped us so much. Everything here is very expensive and sometimes we cannot afford to eat, as this is a village where there is almost no work. With the rice you have given, we have several days food. Otherwise we only have tortilla (flour pancake) with salt. With your help, we can eat well. Thank you for helping people in need like us as we are really poor. Although we want to buy, we have no money because we cannot find work. May God bless you and keep you.

A COMMENT FROM VERONICA__

It is truly wonderful to see what a difference CH Trust has and continues to make to the lives of the people here in Honduras. To the children direct and also the provision of things such as school roofs, the generator, the tables, chairs, food, medicines and so very much more. If only I could be here for another three months!

I'd like to say, as one of CH Trust's supporters, a big thank you for everything you do and continue to do. It is NOT in vain. Whilst you may be unable to see directly what you have achieved, trust me, it is wonderful.

CH Trust is a very large family of supporters. We could not achieve without things to send, money to send it and the prayerful support of so many. Thank you for making this possible. Jenn

THE ISSUE OF FOOD INSECURITY__

Access to food is a major issue for the people of Honduras. There are many that only eat one meal each day due to lack of money. The comment below was taken from an article by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations:

"The diet of most families consists of five products: coffee, sugar, corn, rice and beans. Vegetables and meat are not part of their diet as they are too expensive. What adds to the precariousness of hundreds of Hondurans is the lack of agricultural technology and micro-irrigation. Water access is very dependent on a good rainy season."

POWDERED MILK__

I honestly do not know what to write about the price of the dried full cream buttermilk. Last year the price went down when we expected it to increase by a large percentage. What I do know is that we are trying to send extra milk out again this year. We have been collecting recyclable clothes, shoes, bedding, etc. that are unsuitable or do not have sufficient wear to send to Honduras. Local people and churches have worked hard at this project. The result of their efforts, accumulated from January this year, has raised a massive £1651.60. This will go a long way to purchasing an extra ton of milk.

Milk is liked and wanted by everyone that we send to, because it is easy to mix and give as a drink or can be mixed with the oats, rice or pasta to make a meal. The children really love the rich, creamy taste and it provides a valuable source

of protein and calories which most of the children desperately need. The small amount of milk that the government distributes is only skimmed milk, rather grey in colour and lacks the rich taste. It also gives babies a lot of wind. To reduce this undesirable characteristic, when opportunity presents, they dilute it with the milk we send.

We extend a big thank you to those who help us to purchase milk each year. It still ranks as one of the most important foods that we send.

PARTY TIME!

This year children from the villages of Guanacaste, Sabaneta , Chiqetepe and Marco are having Christmas parties at their respective schools. These have been financed again from England. The parties will take place on the 10th December.

As before, these parties are as much about a nutritious meal as they are a social occasion. They will be eating chicken (a great luxury), potatoes, vegetables, fruit, fresco and cake. I remember being told about a party where they only had one cake. It was sliced so thinly that some only got a little icing or a little bit of sponge. However, everyone was happy and no one grumbled. We can learn a lot from these children, as they are always happy and very grateful for what they have. There are no complaints about what they have not received. In deed, they are a joy to help.

WHERE DID THE MONEY GO?

Major costs for the year:

- Shipping and transport in England £13,700
- Import and transport in Honduras £2,000
- 3 tons of milk £4,575
- 4 tons of oats£1,379
- 4 tons of rice £1,700
- 4 tons of flour £1,500 approx
- Medicals £4,739
- Printing of newsletter and postage approx £1,150
- Education and science supplies £685

Other money was spent on tinned food, school shoes and items bought on offer.

The medical bill remains high. We purchase antibiotics, creams, multivitamin tablets, worming tablets, pain killers, etc. All these items are bought at fantastically

low prices compared with the shops but the quantity we need, as every child needs vitamins and worming tablets, results in a very large bill.

ON-LINE FUND RAISER

For those of you who “surf the net”, another source of income for CH Trust comes from the “Everyclick” search engine. Every time YOU use it, it earns US a donation. At the time of going to press we have received £144.45 and currently have 33 supporters. To participate you need to register your e-mail address with the site and make CH Trust your favourite charity. No personal details are given to third parties and they do not bombard you with unsolicited mail.

The details can be found at: <http://www.everyclick.com>

Please note that there have been changes to the Everyclick website. If you have not already done so, this means that previously registered supporters will have login in to the site, using their password, to re-choose CH Trust as the charity you wish to support. Otherwise your anticipated donation to CH Trust will be lost to the general fund.



- PASTA FROM THE CONTAINERS -

WISH LIST

FOOD

All food is very expensive In Honduras compared to England. It is even more expensive for the very poor as they can only buy in very small quantities, which puts the price up. For example in the village of Guanacaste there is only one tiny shop. This is smaller than our food kiosks at the park. So there is no shopping around for offers.

One current price example is oil. A one gallon bottle of oil costs £10.80. It can be bought here in England for about £4. We can buy flour in a 3lb bag for 45p. They pay £1.48 for a bag half that weight.

For the children's school party meals they have bought tinned sweet corn. A tall tin cost 98p. The jar of mayonnaise cost £2.80. You can realise why these are special party foods. The staples are rice and red kidney or pinta beans. They like the beans as, once they are soaked and cooked, they will keep up to five days with just a reheat. Rice is not so stable and has to be cooked every other day. The cooking is done on wood fires using what they collect locally. The schools and feeding centres particularly like pasta, as it is so easy to cook and partnered with about any other food such as tinned tomatoes, meat balls in sauce, beans, tuna, spaghetti, cereal, etc. When making purchases, we would prefer that you buy two tins of a cheaper product than one tin of a branded product.

Tinned Beans and Spaghetti

We have found that the children like our tins of spaghetti, beans and meatballs (stores own is good). They mix well with the pasta that the children like to eat. The sauce is the real bonus. They also like the tinned or bottled sausages, as these can be sliced up and added to the pasta. They like sweet corn to mix with the rice.

Sugar

The families use a lot of sugar in their coffee, which is the main drink apart from water. They get their calories from the sugar as we did 50 years ago. Do you remember when the sugar bowl was the size of a mixing bowl? We will send out any sugar we are given. It is also used in the feeding programmes.

Plain flour, oats, cheapest rice and pasta shapes are items we send each year.

Cereals

Cereals are liked but we only send them as emergency supplies to the schools, for the occasions when no cook is available. You get through a lot of packets of cereal when 400 children sit down for lunch!

Large saucepans, jam pans or pressure cooker bases. These are needed for cooking lunch in the schools.

Towels and bedding including blankets knitted or ordinary are needed in the high mountain areas.

SCHOOLS

There is so little in their classrooms that it is difficult to know where to start with a wish list. Obviously they need basic items, sugar paper, marker pens, white board pens, blackboards, white boards, white board pens, chalk, paper, exercise books or reporters pads (the cheapest). They also need equipment for the more specialised lessons.

- **Paper** is very expensive so reporter's pads or exercise books are a great help to families. They also need individual glue sticks or containers of glue.
- For science, test tubes, beakers, magnets, prisms, lenses, laboratory weighing machines for chemicals, microscopes, prepared microscope slides, basic electronics material, etc.
- The schools also like our **wall charts and posters**. Sometimes you can find them in Spanish in some of the shops. If they are in English they cover the writing over with Spanish. They also like pictures of animals and plants that they can display or cut up. Old calendars are good for this.
- Craft resources such as artist paint brushes, embroidery silks, large hole needles and other sewing needs, etc.
- **Football**s make for great playtimes great gifts for the boys as well as the old favourite, marbles
- Skipping ropes are popular with the girls. Also dolls, baby or Barbie are greatly loved by the girls.

Modest resources such as these can facilitate exciting lessons for children only used to chalk and talk.

- **Black and white boards** are still being requested by the schools.
- **Recorders** are an item asked for by many schools. They have recorder groups but lack enough recorders for the children. **Guitars** are also needed.

- **Inexpensive digital watches** for the older children.
- **Rucksacks** each child needs a rucksack to carry their books and school supplies. Many children walk for an hour or more each way to school.

Helping children to get to school on time was not something that we had considered. School starts at 7.30am. Some of the children face a 3-hour walk, others four consecutive bus journeys to get to school in the city. For this reason, our distributing agents in Honduras have purchased watches for some of the sponsored children out of their allocated funding. However, I am convinced that simple watches can be purchased more cheaply in England!!

Rubix Cubes - Do you still have one in your cupboard? We thought it might be good to give some to the children in Honduras as a challenge. However, we do need several to make it competitive and fun.

Agricultural Tools - Cesar says some of the people living near to Guanacaste have land but do not know how to cultivate it. He wishes to teach them so that they can better provide for their families. However, they will need tools. A popular tool for gardening is the pickaxe, as the ground is often dry and hard. The other obvious tools are spades, forks, rakes, shovels, trowels and hoes. He has also asked for mattocks (fence-post augers) and scissor type post hole diggers that look like a pair of back to back shovels. I think almost any useful non-electrical gardening tool. However, it seems that they do not have a use for hedge shears.

Dustpans and sweeping brushes.

Plastic bowls, plates and drinking tumblers are still needed. Every child has to have their own at school and many families would really appreciate some.

ITEMS STILL MUCH IN DEMAND

- **Umbrellas** are used against the rain and the strong sunshine enjoyed most days. Each year we send out some umbrellas but many people still do not have one to use in the storm rain that they experience daily during the rainy season.
- **Torches**- The wind-up ones are a great success in Guanacaste and other mountain areas that have no electrical supply and no funding for batteries. I also sent three wind-up lanterns, which they are thrilled with and want to thank us personally for sending them. I think this is another much needed item for years to come. They cost about £10. If you send one to us, please check first that it works. The quality

of these devices varies and needs to be checked before sending to Honduras.

If you would like to provide a wind up lantern for a family but cannot find one, just send £10 to us at CH Trust and we will do a bulk buy. If you want to send a card, letter or photo to the family please include this with your lamp or donation.

- **Children's shoes** are still a priority. Black is needed for school, any colour for ordinary wear, 'wellies' and walking type boots for the hills or working in the fields during the rainy season. Boots and wellingtons can also protect the ankles from snake bites as they work among the crops.

The wellingtons have proved very popular in the mountain areas where they work the land. The constant rain during the rainy season creates deep mud, which has to be negotiated when walking to school and for general living. The mud destroys precious shoes. Can we provide more wellingtons? The small children also like to play in the puddles!

- **Children's clothes** are still a large part of our shipment. You might have thought about all those new pants and socks that we ask for each year. I have now got lots of pictures of children holding up their new underwear! If there is not room in this newsletter for one of these pictures, look on the web site www.chtrust.org.uk where I have posted a new selection of photos.

WE NEED YOUR PRAYERS

PACKING WEEK

There is a lot of pressure on all those who work every day at the unit throughout Packing Week. Often the goods arrive faster than we can process them. Please pray for good health and strength, mentally and physically, for all those helping during this week and the following weeks approaching loading day.

LOADING DAY

Loading day comes at the end of several weeks of very tiring work, both at the unit and behind the scenes. In addition to the packing, there is the organising of the paperwork and dealing with the import and export problems.

Please pray for strength, health and patience for all the team. Organising 150 people is not easy. We also need wisdom and protection for everyone on Loading

Day. Items such as the provision of a forklift driver and truck need extra prayer, as those who helped originally are no longer available. One of the main problems is that the fork lift driver and vehicle has to have its own insurance cover. This is usually available through the company owning the fork lift. Obtaining specific separate independent insurance for the day appears to be difficult and expensive.

As always, we ask you to pray for something appreciated by all, a warm dry day!

APOLOGIES!__

On a personal note, please accept my apologies if you were expecting a thank you letter but have not received it, or have had to wait a long time. I have been struggling all through the year to make time to cope with both the paperwork and the hands on tasks involved with running a growing charity. In default, I greatly appreciate the help of everyone contributing towards the work of the charity in whatever form it takes. Please accept a big thank you.



**- A SPONSORED GIRL KITTED OUT FOR SCHOOL AND
A GIRL RECEIVING A WHEELCHAIR FROM ENGLAND -**

PACKING WEEK

13th-20th February 2010 (excluding Sunday). Please note, any goods brought in after 20th Feb cannot be processed and will be rolled over for the following year.

I would appreciate a phone call to say if you are bring items in this week please.

LOADING DAY

Saturday 20th March 2010

NOTE nothing will be loaded on this day that has not been previously logged into the computer



- DONATIONS FROM THE CONTAINERS -