



May 2010

Dear Friends,

It is a very busy time at the Lingap Center and the kids continue to do very well. This has all been made possible with the support of many people such as you.

The school year in the Philippines runs from June through March. As a result, the kids are currently on their summer break. We have a number of activities lined up for them, including a day at the beach and a two-day vacation Bible school. They are also busy working on an "Entrepreneurial Challenge" and have divided into teams, such as cake making; ragging; candle making; and specialty meats, etc. to teach them livelihood projects that will benefit them in the future. This is the second year that they have done this and they absolutely love it!

Our tutors are working with them throughout the summer break to help give them a head start on the coming school year, when all of the elementary kids will be attending the new private St. Bernard's School. They really do now have hope for a brighter future. During the next school year, 10 of them will be attending college. Just think of it. Only a few short years ago, these kids had no chance whatsoever. Now, they are on their way to college - some on scholarships. What an amazing transformation this has been!

Last fall, we developed a HUGE garden. The kids divided themselves into teams and are competing with each other to grow the most vegetables and flowers. We invited a representative from the City Agriculture Department in to teach them gardening skills, such as the science of composting and what sort of things they should plant. We are now providing much of our own food and any that is left is being sold on consignment at the City Market.

We also are trying to reduce our city water consumption and thereby reduce our operating expenses. We installed a cistern system to catch and reuse rainwater and we also installed a new deep-well. This water, while not potable, will be used to water the garden during the hot, dry summer months.

Our Street Children's Education program continues to thrive. What started in August of 2008 with five or six kids in the park now



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averages over 80 kids of all ages five days a week in two locations. Our street educator, Janice, teaches them reading, basic arithmetic and hygiene. We also provide them with a full lunch, which is generally their only meal of the day. During the summer, our college students are acting as "teachers' aides" and truly love working with the street kids. It reminds them of where they were not too long ago and they recognize and appreciate the opportunities they are being given. We have successfully brought several of the street children into the Lingap Center and they are now attending school.

The Third Saturday Outreach program continues to be a miracle in my mind. You will recall that this is a Children's Mass for all of the impoverished children in the area, followed by a soup kitchen. In January, we had over 1,200 children in attendance! There were tall ones, short ones, kids with disabilities and kids carrying kids. It was incredible - and we fed them all!! This program must be experienced to believe it since words are not sufficient to describe it.

Not all of the news is good. We did have a couple of seriously broken arms. As commonplace as this might sound, without the support of the Lingap Center and people like you, they would not have been able to receive the treatment that they got and might have lost their arms - or worse! Instead, both boys are now doing just fine.

Thank you all so much. Your support is really making a very significant difference. When counting the Lingap residents; the Street Children's Education Program; the Third Saturday Outreach; the Lingap-developed (Rotary-funded) community library and our other programs, what began as an effort to save 26 children in need has expanded to touch the lives of literally thousands. It is an incredible miracle that I am so proud to be a part of. Thank you all for joining me in changing all of these young lives for the better.

We are a 501(c)(3) organization and, therefore, all donations are fully tax deductible. Since the Board of Directors and I pay all administrative fees, 100% of all donations go directly to the benefit of the children. If you haven't already, I hope you will join us. You may even consider a **"Place at the Table"** sponsorship? Details can be found on our website at <http://lingapcenter.org>, or you may contact me for information at 517-529-9702.

When thinking of these children in need and those still living in the deplorable conditions of crushing poverty, I am reminded of the following photo and quote:

Sincerely,



John Drake

