

Dear Friends,

6/5/2004

It has been some time since my last update so I thought it was time to bring you up to speed. As some of you may know, I visited the Philippines about 2 weeks ago, to check on the status of things and to ensure that progress was being made. The elections, both national and local, were held on May 10 and I am most delighted to report that Arlene Zambo was reelected as Mayor of Toledo City. This was very important for our project because as you may recall, it was Arlene who asked me to undertake the project in the first place. This was really good news.

You may also recall the "election ban" that was put into effect both before and after the election. This will be lifted on June 30. This means that we will be able to issue contracts beginning on July 1.

With regard to the status of the land acquisition, it was narrowed down to 2 different sites. We have agreed to the second site, nearer the school. It will also take less site preparation. The city is in the process now of purchasing the land and it should all be completed by June 30. All of the responses to the RFP's (request for proposals) are in and a meeting will be held any day now with the City Engineers Office, the World Vision Architect/Engineer and the DSWD. They will determine the winning bids and award them on or about July 1. Then, construction will be underway!!!! The engineers are estimating between 6 - 8 months for the construction - then the children will have a new home at long last. World Vision has hired an engineer to be on site during all phases of the construction to provide me with updated information or what ever else we might need and also to ensure that it is being built to their standards. This is a very good addition.

With regard to the children, well, they are wonderful. They have been attending 2 hours of catechism everyday and they love it. They were very excited to see me and they all sat around me when I was there listening intently to anything I had to say to them. They are about the best behaved, well mannered and wonderful group of children I have ever encountered. Since my visit, Gina and Tita (social workers at the DSWD) have set up an account at the internet cafe and the children have been sending me messages. For example, I am very proud to say that Aileen placed first in the church "draw and tell" competition and Margie place 3rd in the singing competition. I will be posting some of their letters on our web site in the very near future - so you might want to check them out. They are very moving.

With regard to fund raising, my friend Sandy Miller sponsored a very successful benefit event at her house in the Chicago area just before I left on the trip. I am very happy to report that we are now at exactly 78.9% of our goal!!!! The "Cheesecake Lady," Arta Chiparo has agreed to continue the cheesecake sale for as long as is necessary. I will tell you that I have personally eaten 6 of them

so far and they are truly wonderful. If interested, please call Kim Kluft at 313-407-8550. Also coming soon will be the sale of personalized children's story books and personalized children's CD's. Both will be featured at the July 11 event that I will describe next. Call Kim at the number listed above if you are interested in a sneak preview or if you have a gift need prior to July 11.

On July 11, we have a French Country Brunch planned at Meckley's Flavor Fruit Farm 1/2 mile north of U.S. 12 in Somerset Center, on South Jackson Rd. This event will last from 10:00 until 1:00 and will include a silent art auction. Tickets will be available soon, but please mark this on your calendar.

Then of course, in February, we will have another Valentine's Dinner Dance. More information will be available on this later.

I am also very excited to announce that the Detroit Free Press is going to run a major feature article on the children and the project in early July. I do not know the date yet, but when I find out, I will send out an announcement so you can watch for it. This should really help us!

While all of these fund raisers are certainly getting us to our goal, the last 20% or so, plus future year operating expenses will be the hardest. Consequently, if you know of anyone who might be interested in a good cause, that is tax deductible, please tell them about us. Please direct them to our web site at www.lingapcenter.org. My son Jeff has done an outstanding job with the web site.

In summary, we are making tremendous progress. Things are moving right along but we have a long way to go. Thanks so much for your continued support and encouragement!!

John Drake