



Semillero Mi Ángel Guardián

October, 2009

Subject: Update and Request for Donations

Dear friends of *Semillero Mi Ángel Guardián*,

(Deborah Nicklaus) This summer while volunteering at the *Semillero Mi Ángel Guardián*, a children's after school program in Santa Ana, Guatemala, I was asked by one of the children, "Do you have a light in your house to see at night?" Another one asked, "Have you eaten today?" Fortunately, in our lives, food and electricity are both things we take for granted. It is not so for the Guatemalan children who benefit from the *Semillero Mi Ángel Guardián* after school program provided by Marta and the other volunteers. Many will not have had anything to eat on any given day. Most do not have electricity in their homes.

The Economist (September, 2009) recently reported that chronic malnutrition in Guatemalan children ranges from 50-80% and is one of six worst countries in the world. Chronic malnutrition stunts growth and development, and affects children's ability to learn. In a country where many people earn only a dollar or two a day during a good year, the economic crisis has hit hard.

While we can't single handedly fix the economic or malnutrition crisis, we can do our small part to improve the lives of 30 kids and their community by supporting *Semillero Mi Ángel Guardián*. As you may know, this after school program is run by volunteers and depends almost exclusively on the benevolence of international donors. The program provides an educational center for children who are from families in extreme need. Most kids come from households led by a single working mother, who would otherwise need to leave her children unattended after school, and without support and resources for homework and learning. The *Semillero* provides them with:

- help with homework and difficult subjects;
- a resource center with supplies and reference books to complete homework assignments;
- lessons in practical activities such as gardening, cooking and basic hygiene.

When there is a little extra money, vitamins, juice, milk or healthy snacks are purchased for the children.

To continue and expand the educational efforts, we ask you to consider a donation. Those who have volunteered in Guatemala know a little goes a long way. For example:

- \$5 buys a pound of mushroom seeds which are grown to sell in the farmers' market, creating a source of income;
- \$10 buys 2 chickens to lay eggs providing nutrition for the children;
- \$15 buys needed medicines for common health issues such as anemia, scabies, bronchitis;
- \$25 buys 2-3 books for the "library";
- \$35 provides pure water for a month;
- \$60 provides a small lunch or afterschool healthy snacks for a week.

Update

Thanks to your donations of time and money, the *Semillero* recently passed its four-year anniversary. It is with deep gratitude that we thank you for your efforts that, along with the work of the children and Guatemalan volunteers, created a safe, clean education center out of what was in 2005 a garbage-filled lot.

Through your efforts the *Semillero* has progressed

from this....



2005 (photos John Moore)



to this....



2009 (photos Deborah Nicklaus)



Self-Sustainable -- Goal for the Future

The *Semillero* has undertaken several projects to generate self-sustaining funding. Moneys from these projects are used to provide educational supplies/projects, much-needed vitamins, healthy after school snacks and reinvested into additional self-sustaining projects. For example ...

- Crafts are made and sold to volunteers;
- Tilapia fish, rabbits and poultry are raised to sell in the market;



- Mushrooms are now grown and are sold in the market.



Through your continued support 2009 – 2010

The economy has hit Guatemala perhaps even harder than the country where you reside.

Please consider donating to this special program, or even having a fund raising effort to raise money for the kids of *Semillero Mi Ángel Guardián*.



Ideally, we'd like to raise the money to

- Continue the education support for the 25-35 children
- Provide clean water to drink
- Increase the number of Spanish reading and reference books in the small “library”
- Provide a daily snack for 25-35 children
- Provide needed medicine for common medical issues such as anemia, scabies, bronchitis, etc.
- Enable self-sustaining agricultural projects to include growing mushrooms, tilapia fish, rabbits and chickens.

How can you help?


We'd like to add your photos and/or stories about your volunteer experience or why you donate your time at *Semillero* to the Web site (<http://www.semilleromiangelguardian.org>).

Please send your photos/stories to Simone, this year's gracious volunteer Web mistress: info@semilleromiangelguardian.org.



There are now several easy ways to donate

To learn more, visit http://www.semilleromiangelguardian.org/how_to_help.html.

NEW! Electronic payments (PayPal, Visa, MasterCard) are now accepted from the  link on the *Semillero* Web site. Those in the US are eligible for a **tax-exempt donation** (501-3C filed) through direct support by the US-based Milagro Foundation.

Or, if you prefer to send a check, please send to:

Milagro Foundation
1570 S. Quebec Way #59
Denver, CO 80231 USA
Memo note: Semillero Guardian Angel

Other methods of payment are listed on the Web site.

As always, 100 PERCENT of your donations go directly to support the kids.

<http://www.semilleromiangelguardian.org>

Did you know?

- “According to Unicef almost half of Guatemala’s children are chronically malnourished—the sixth-worst performance in the world. In parts of rural Guatemala, where the population is overwhelmingly of Mayan descent, the incidence of child malnutrition reaches 80%.” (Economist 9/09)
- Nearly 60% of Guatemalans live in poverty (defined as a household income less than \$2 per day), and many (22%) live in ‘extreme poverty’ (i.e. earn less than \$1 / day). This figure increases to 88% of the indigenous rural population.
- Less than 50% of Guatemalans have access to potable water.
- Education in Guatemala is the lowest in Central America. In general, public schools, where they exist, are 4 hours per day, with 50-80 children per classroom). School is not mandatory. After 6th grade, options for school are slim. Access to books is limited.
- Guatemala is one of 2 countries in Central/South America that has such a large disparity between the rich and the poor. They are two of four countries in the world with such a large gap between the rich and the poor.

For more information about the program, please contact:

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Semillero Mi Ángel Guardián thanks you for your support!

<http://www.semilleromiangelguardian.org>