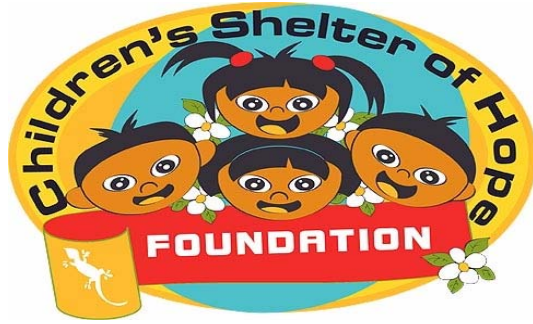


Board Members

President -Chris Amo
V.P. -Jim Boland
Sect'y-Treas- Amy Welch
Anne-Marie Haynes
Maria Soledad Martinez

Foundation Address

505 N Tomahawk Is
Portland, OR 97217
USA
503-285-4007



Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation



www.childrens-shelter-of-hope-foundation.org

A USA registered 501(c)(3) tax deductible foundation
office@childrens-shelter-of-hope-foundation.org

Volume 2, Issue 3 October 2005

Dear Friends of the Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation,

With this newsletter we would like to introduce you to Pasitos de Luz, a wonderful center for children in Puerto Vallarta with various disabilities such as Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Muscular Dystrophy, consequences of Meningitis and Microcephaly. Our Board is pleased to announce we that have begun supporting this important organization along with the Refugio Infantil Santa Esperanza.

Pasitos de Luz (Points of Light)

Jim Boland - Foundation Vice-President

It is hugely rewarding to know that Pasitos de Luz joins the Refugio as a focus of the Foundation's concern and support. For three years I have watched this amazing place accomplish miracles in the lives of these very special children, their parents and families. Most of you are not familiar with this marvelous daycare facility in the Pitillal area of Vallarta, so let me take you on a quick tour.

I want you to picture a space more or less the area of a small one bedroom home—more like an efficiency apartment, really. In the entryway off of a busy street, there are maybe 10 to 15 children, ages 5 to 15, with varying types and severity of disability—some can walk, some cannot. Two or three children are blind, a couple of the children have Cerebral Palsy or Down Syndrome. This is the area where the less severely affected hang out. The space has no windows and is not much bigger than an oversized bathroom.



The main room is where the most severely affected children spend the day. Against the back wall there may be 6 to 8 little souls, tied into chairs or cribs because they cannot support themselves. Some can't even raise their heads.

Along the other wall, the children who need and can tolerate specialized treatment, are strapped into devices to help them stand upright, stretch muscles, correct deformed limbs, or to allow them movement without falling. Many have arm-splints to keep them from scratching themselves if they spasm or convulse.

Just off of this room there is a small kitchen. This is where the day's food is prepared for upwards of 60 children, staff and volunteers. Near the kitchen, there is a therapy room, about 6 by 6 feet,

where loving touch works to give muscles more mobility and relieve the pain and cramps of their conditions. With two therapists and so many children, each child is lucky to get two 20-minute sessions per week.

Wandering about the center, one particularly touching little fellow catches your attention. Carlos (not his real name) is deaf and blind, but quite normal in every other way. This beautiful little boy walks about, feeling his way with one hand and carrying an inflated balloon in his other hand. The balloon is his bridge to the vibrations



that are his only connection to world around him. More about Carlito later.

Continued on page 2

Meet Some of the Children

José Angel (Pollito)

I am Pollito. I have skin ulcers. My parents and my brothers work so no one can take me to therapy. For the past three years, I have had many ulcers in my feet and on my bottom. But now they are better and healthy.

I like it very much when Yolanda picks me up from home and takes me to therapy and then takes me home in the afternoon. Please help to sustain our project!



Eva

I am Eva and I am a “child of glass” with broken bone syndrome. In three years I have had 24 leg fractures—I am very active and want to play with the other children. Each time I start to run I break my legs. I have a papa who works in the United States. My mother and I are very poor. I need braces to get around but the doctor says that first I need an operation.

I am excited to think that maybe I will get a motorized wheelchair to help me move around the house and help me go for walks. I like to sing and hope to reunite with my papa because we sing many songs together. Helping PDL helps our dreams come true.

We cannot help everyone, but everyone can help someone.

Anonymous

Pasitos de Luz

Continued from page 1

Are you getting a feel for Pasitos? Until the expansion is finished, there is very limited space. The expansion will give them about 50% more room and Pasitos is delighted. They will then have an actual classroom for those children who are physically disabled but mentally capable. Other additions include a second bathroom (the whole operation depended on one toilet), as well as a hugely needed second therapy area.

Let me share a couple of experiences. On one visit, I saw a new little guy, sitting under the sink like a trapped little puppy. Yolanda told me that he had spent his seven years under the family table. Unable to walk, and from a very poor family, they had no idea what else could be done for their palsied child.

Weeks passed before my next visit, and as I walked in, I saw the same little fellow, shakily walking towards one of the therapists. The look of amazement and joy on his face will stay with me forever!

The second experience I want to share took place away from Pasitos. I was heading to the airport and hailed a cab. The driver was a warm and personable guy so we were quickly chatting about this and that. As I always do, I asked if he had any children. "Si señor, un niño quien es la luz de mi vida!" (*Yes, a boy who is the light of my life*).

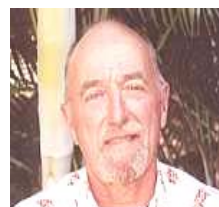
The cabbie shared that the boy was disabled and I asked if he knew about Pasitos. When I inquired, his head jerked in my direction, eyes wide and startled for a second, before tears

began to flow down his cheeks as he gasped, "*They are my angels! They saved my life!*"

He told me the story of, yes, little Carlos, born premature, physically perfect except he could neither hear nor see. His young overwhelmed wife, fled and he was a single dad with a child that needed constant care. He, like all the other families, can only earn a living if there is someone or someplace where their special children can be cared for. So he drops Carlos at Pasitos, drives cab all day, then picks him up and cares for him until the next morning.

It's another aspect of this marvelous place—the incredibly dedicated and loving parents you often encounter.

In the next newsletter we'll explore the day-to-day operations of PDL and the impact it has on the 60 families who use their services.



Jim

Mission Statement

At no charge to families, Pasitos de Luz is committed to support children with severe disabilities. Pasitos provides these children with a caring and loving environment, along with treatment for individual rehabilitation, nutritional meals, physical stimulation and therapy.

Also provided are regular evaluations from medical specialists, including occupational and speech therapists; as well as providing free orthopedic equipment.

In addition, PDL provides moral and emotional support to the families of these children and maintains a high standard of hygiene in an environment where each child can be healthy and happy.

Your donations are very important in making all of this happen!



Building Addition

Pasitos de Luz (PDL) is in need to construct additional space at the entrance to the building. Of the 67 children enrolled full- or part-time, there are a number of children who if given appropriate therapy would be better able to take care of their basic needs—such as feeding and toileting themselves. This and the education of the children are reasons to support PDL and its need for more space.

The PDL children do not attend school due to their physical and/or mental disability. Therefore they not only suffer alienation from their peers but begin to doubt their own capabilities and focus on their weaknesses rather than their strengths.

Current Needs

by Sarah Elengorn

What PDL wishes to offer in its two additional rooms is a whole new perspective on life for these children. They will then have the right to attend a “school” where they can fulfill their potential for the first time. The project focuses on their *abilities* and allows the children to express themselves and their creativity through the use of specialised educational material, games, and arts and crafts.

For some students, the essential elements of the program will be to learn mathematics and to learn to read, comprehend and write basic Spanish. For others, the goals will be smaller, but just as important—working on speech and aural development and making individual advances with the help of trained staff. The moral and emotional impact will be huge for these children who, through no fault of their own, have been deprived of an education.

Staff Salaries

PDL relies on a small dedicated team of volunteer coordinators and paid staff, including four aides, a cook, a housekeeper, and two physical therapists. However, in order to maintain a high level of care for the children, they need to employ four additional aides.

The aides provide many hours of tiring physical and mentally draining work. These women and men protect the general health of the children by changing diapers, cleaning and feeding children up to 3 meals a day.

PDL also requires trained professionals and experienced individuals to form a medical team which includes physical therapists, a speech therapist, and two special education teachers.

None of these specialized staff comes free and PDL, just like any other institution providing a valuable community service, needs to recruit more staff to assist as the numbers of children grows.

Children's Shelter of Hope
Foundation



505 N. Tomahawk Is. Dr.
Portland, Oregon 97217
503 285 4007
503 283 1074 fax
amywelchpdx@hotmail.com



Yolanda's Vision

Yolanda Sanchez Santiago, founder and director of Pasitos de Luz, was the third of twelve children who grew up in poverty in a loving and caring family. Her view of life was shaped at an early age when one of her sisters, Astrid Elizabeth, became extremely ill and eventually died from a very rare dermatological condition called Penfigo Vulgar. Yolanda credits this sister with helping her to "see the light" on many important beliefs which help her to relentlessly carry out her work at Pasitos de Luz today.

In Yolanda's own words:

"I have learned that when you are standing strong, you can do something for the others.

I believe that we should make the most of the short time that we spend here on this earth, as everything that we buy or own is only ours temporarily.

I have now learned that in the face of adversity we should never give up, never allow our self to be swept away in the suffering, and never ask for it to be over.

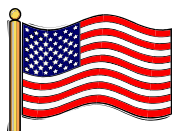
When, in a family such as mine, the odds appear to be stacked against you; there should always be a 'light' somewhere along the way which can help to guide you and lighten the load."

Pasitos de Luz is a story born from love ... in order to love.

YOUR SUPPORT

Pasitos de Luz has immediate needs to:

- ◆ Pay monthly expenses for staff salaries for 4 aides, a housekeeper, a cook, and 2 physical therapists.
- ◆ Finish work on the new therapy and education area with adjoining bathroom.



If you wish to claim a charitable contribution for USA tax purposes, make your check payable to:

Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation
505 N. Tomahawk Is. Dr.
Portland, Oregon 97217
USA

Questions? Call or email Amy Welch
amywelchpdx@hotmail.com
503 285 4007



If you wish to contribute to Pasitos de Luz, **DO NOT MAIL DONATIONS**, but visit Pasitos at:

Pasitos de Luz www.pasitosdeluz.org
Exiquio Corona
545 Col. Bobadilla
Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco
Mexico, CP 48295

Questions? Email Jim Boland
jimboland@aol.com
322 222 2866 (in Puerto Vallarta)