

PLENTY BULLETIN

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FALL AND WINTER 2015

Nepal Earthquake



Halchok villagers clearing rubble that will be used again in the rebuilding. (photo by Manika Rai)

On Saturday April 25, just before noon a massive (7.8) earthquake rocked Nepal. A major aftershock struck on May 12. More than 9,000 people were killed. Plenty is helping to channel recovery funds being raised by the friends of two villages that were completely destroyed, Chupar and Halchok.

See *Nepal*, p. 4

Karen's Soy Nutrition Project



Kids of families living around the Guatemala City dump getting soymilk and enriched cookies.

(photo by Tomoko Clarenbould)

See *KSNP*, p. 3

Plenty International is a nongovernmental relief and development organization. Donations to **Plenty** are tax-deductible.

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Plenty Belize



Graduates pose displaying their diplomas.

(photo by Anita Whipple)

On October 17th, 48 representatives of community-based organizations, women's groups, and youth and farmers groups celebrated their graduation from a comprehensive training program in conflict management, customer service, record keeping, and management skills. Plenty Belize staff organized the classes and participated as trainers. Offering the program outside of Belize's larger urban areas made it accessible for rural people to attend.

See *Plenty Belize*, p. 2

Pine Ridge Gardens



With the generous support of the Philip R. Jonsson and Wellmark Foundations Plenty was able to purchase vegetable seed and plants, a rototiller, more hand tools and build thirty new raised beds for the Pine Ridge Gardens project this year. Members of the Little Finger family are planting a raised bed in the above photo by Robert Reifel.

See *Pine Ridge*, p. 2



Plenty Belize, cont. from p. 1



Mark Miller checks on batteries for the 3 kw solar system Plenty Belize installed at the Santa Teresa village health clinic.

In October five of us from Plenty paid a visit to Plenty Belize, (our Board Chair, Lisa Wartinger, Board member Mary Hamilton, Plenty Executive Director, Peter Schweitzer, Office Manager, Anita Whipple and Plenty volunteer and Nurse Practitioner, Darlene Marks and longtime volunteer, Rick Katzenberg). We attended their annual board meeting. Mark Miller, Executive Director of Plenty Belize took us around to visit a number of the schools they have been working with. We went to the Mayan village of Santa Teresa where they have installed a solar system for the health clinic and will soon be helping with the install of a village-wide solar system in partnership with the Global Environmental Facility in Belize and Barefoot College in India.

A new Plenty Belize project, just under way, sponsored by the Belize Ministry of Health, will install 25 small solar systems at sixteen elementary schools and nine village health clinics.

Not unlike most societies around the world, Belize is dealing with a certain amount of youth violence and bullying. As part of a strategy to mitigate the violence Plenty is partnering with UNICEF and Punta Gorda Town, where Plenty Belize has its office, on a project to facilitate and promote soccer at town schools. The sporting goods chain, Sports Authority, donated 50 new soccer balls.



(photo by Anita Whipple)

Peter Schweitzer, Darlene Marks, Mark Miller and Punta Gorda Mayor Fern Gutierrez, after a meeting on the soccer project.

Pine Ridge, cont. from p. 1



A Lakota veteran looks over plants for the new garden at the homeless veterans shelter on the Reservation.

(photo by Robert Reifel)

This year, new gardens were set up at an Elders Care center and a homeless veterans shelter on Pine Ridge Reservation. Needless to say, these were welcomed with open arms. One of the vets said to Plenty Director , Robert Reifel, "Thank you for coming and doing this. Hardly anyone comes to see us."

Books To Kids



Since Jim Selin started doing Books To Kids in and around New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, 186,000 quality children's books have been given out. Here Jim is seen with some of the kids of the Biloxi-Chitimacha tribal families who live on Isle de Jean Charles, an island that is gradually dissolving into the Gulf. (photo by Elaine Langley)

Kids To The Country

by Peter Kindfield, PhD, KTC Counselor and Curriculum Coordinator

Kids To The Country has been very successful as a transformative experience for at-risk inner-city children. Our goal has been to open the minds of such children to the possibility of a future very different from their present, by providing them with the experience of being surrounded by nature and caring individuals dedicated to taking care of their needs. Over the years we have seen frightened and insecure six-year olds blossom into confident and empowered preadolescents.

The KTC Counselor Training Program is the most successful model of instruction I have ever participated in. Young people between the ages of 12 and 21 master critical leadership skills. The counselors are encouraged to develop their unique strengths and face their challenges at each step along the way and to work together as a team. As they progress the counselors develop a taste of how it feels to be of service and they seem to get hooked on the feeling. We see a transformation in these young people, who had not previously thought about it, seeing that they can make a real difference in the lives of the kids who participate in the program.



Kids and counselors at the swimming hole.
(photo by Anita Whipple)



KTC counselor, Ethan Lee, leads a first time rider.

KSNP, cont. from p. 1



Bottling soymilk that will be given out to kids living around the Guatemala City dump. (photo by Chuck Haren)

Chuck Haren writes: "The first of October marked 5 years since Plenty, a group of local residents who called themselves Grupo de Soya Santa Maria (GSSM), and the Misioneros de la Caridad initiated twice weekly distributions of fresh, nutrient rich soy foods to undernourished and vulnerable children who live in settlements next to the Guatemala City waste dump. The project continues to provide quality foods each week to more than 325 children as well as help mothers better understand the nutrition needs of their families, and promote safe income earning opportunities for women in the area. Plenty representatives worked on-site with our partners during visits to Guatemala in January and August of this year. We were happy to see that the women who are making and distributing foods to the children are continuing to improve their food processing and quality control skills.

Each month the Misioneros de la Caridad donate about \$400 and Plenty donates \$1,000 to meet costs of supplying foods for the children. Foods are distributed every Wednesday and Saturday, and each child receives an 8 ounce drink of fresh soymilk, and cookies fortified with toasted soy flour. The servings provide children with 11 grams of protein, iron, calcium, B vitamins, calories and other essential nutrients. It costs 43 cents per serving to make and deliver the food to the children, and 7 cents per serving to pay for the program accounting, monitoring and technical assistance costs. Plenty would like to continue this program through 2016."



The banner reads: "From the villagers of Chupar, Nuwakot, Nepal to Plenty International and the caring people of the United States who donated to save our village after all our homes were destroyed by the earthquake of April 25, 2015, we thank each and every one of you from the bottom of our hearts. Namaste."

Chupar village update by John Vavruska:

The monsoon is now over and the people of Chupar are beginning their harvest of millet and rice. The villagers weathered the monsoon in makeshift shelters covered by the tarps purchased with your donations after the earthquake.

The highest priority of the village now is rebuilding the school. A small group from the U.S. will be going to Chupar in January to help. We will also build a small gravity flow water system and a composting latrine for the school. Funds for the water system and latrine will be matched by the non-profit organization Waterlines.

In the longer term, our goal is to cover the cost (approximately \$1,800 per house) of materials including a clean wood-burning cook stove for all 215 households in the village. The school, water system and composting latrine are estimated to cost about \$25,000 in purchased materials. Our project has raised approximately \$72K so far from your generous donations with \$13K spent on food and temporary shelter for the village after the earthquake. We therefore continue to request donations for Chupar so that the children will have a school and someday, everyone will have a home.

Halchok village update by Lois Alsop:

In October we sponsored a clinic for all the people of the village, offering a free check-up by a doctor and his staff. For rebuilding the village homes we're trying out the gabion banding and timber lacing technique with our staff in Nepal who will be able to advise us on this method, which uses local materials, i.e. stone and mud, and adds wire mesh in a way to prevent earthquake damage. All labor will be provided by the villagers themselves. This will be a model for future construction.

Gradually the village is reappearing from the rubble and we are continually inspired by the Nepalis and their ability to adapt under very trying circumstances.

Please visit Plenty International's website and Facebook pages for continuing updates and news about these and all of Plenty's projects.

Guatemala and El Salvador Agriculture Projects By Chuck Haren



Miriam Iquique Coroy (in the center of the group) leads a workshop with women participating in the Essential Seeds and Trees Program.

During each of the past three years the women of Tecnologia para la Salud (TPS) have worked with 100 economically marginalized families, from 5 villages in the Guatemala Department of Chimaltenango, to implement the Essential Seeds and Trees Program (ESTP). TPS is providing farm-site technical support, distributing tools, tree seedlings, education materials, and conducting workshops with families who want to cultivate and use trees and plants to help to control soil erosion, and for organic insect repellent. These same families are working to increase production of traditional beans, corn, amaranth, medicinal herbs and vegetable crops. Some are growing small quantities of non-genetically modified soybeans. With funding provided by the Trull Foundation in 2015, Plenty was able to help our partners at TPS to: 1) establish a de-humidified room for improving storage of native indigenous seeds; 2) increase plantings and use of trees and bushes for erosion and insect control ; 3) distribute agriculture hand tools to help 40 families work their land; and, 4) continue providing workshops and technical support. We also want to thank the Atkinson and International Foundations for their contributions to this program.

In 2015 Plenty continued supporting small farming families in El Salvador, assisting their efforts to improve production and post harvest management and seed storage. Funding was provided by Plenty to help the village of Rancho Grande construct a secure seed storage room, and a building for post harvest processing of vegetables, grains and herbs. Plenty representatives met with farming families to hand out education materials and discuss methods of preparing and using neem seeds and leaves, and other local plants for insect repellent. Plenty is also assisting a team of professors and students at the University of El Salvador who are researching non-genetically modified soybean varieties for their nation's farmers.