

SPRING 2006

Changing

THE WORLD



providing mobility in

LATIN AMERICA



A MESSAGE FROM KEN BEHRING



My last trip to Colombia to distribute wheelchairs was a definite eye opener. I learned a lot from the people we were with, and the trip has caused me to be more grateful for all the blessings in my life. It was an honor and privilege having President Alvaro

Uribe of Colombia and his lovely wife First Lady Lina Moreno participate with us on several of the wheelchair distributions. Having met with top dignitaries and leaders from all around the world, I have learned many things from them. One of the many things I discovered with President Uribe and First Lady Moreno is that they lead by example. I was so impressed with the involvement that they displayed in extending their hands in love to meet and greet all of the wheelchair recipients. They truly love their fellow Colombian countrymen, and it showed on this trip. In thinking more about that trip and my experience two things come to my mind:

1. Landmines
2. Gratitude for freedom and peace in the United States

I recall walking into a large room where I met several hundred young police officers and soldiers between the ages of 18 and 25. They were a very impressive group. It was devastating to see them and think of how their lives have been changed by armed conflicts within Colombia. Both armed conflicts and landmines that have been placed by their fellow countrymen have resulted in the loss of limbs for thousands.

Let your heart help someone in need by making a donation to sponsor a wheelchair for \$75 or a container of wheelchairs for \$21,000. I hope that we can continue to work together to bless the lives of those who suffer from a lack of mobility around the world.

Many thanks for your support,

Kenneth E. Behring
Founder & Chairman of the Board

mission and goals

Our Mission

The Wheelchair Foundation is a nonprofit organization leading an international effort to create awareness of the needs and abilities of people with physical disabilities, to promote the joy of giving, create global friendship, and to deliver a wheelchair to every child, teen and adult in the world who needs one, but cannot afford one. For these people, the Wheelchair Foundation delivers Hope, Mobility and Freedom.

Our Goal

Over the next five years, the Wheelchair Foundation aims to deliver one million wheelchairs to people who cannot afford to buy one, and to further the awareness that a wheelchair is no longer an unaffordable relief option for delivery to developing countries around the world.

Mobility

Since its establishment on June 13, 2000, the Wheelchair Foundation has witnessed tens of thousands of examples of how mobility creates independence and new possibilities for recipients and their families. A mobile child is able to attend school. A mobile adult is able to get a job and provide for their family, or care for the children at home so the spouse can work. An elderly person can rejoin society or family activities after years of staying in a bed. The joy and hope that a simple mobility device can deliver is what gives people a new outlook on life and hope for the future.

Wheelchair Foundation

"Serving the World"



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Contact Us

Wheelchair Foundation (877) 378-3839
 – info@wheelchairfoundation.org
 Wheelchair Foundation Canada (866) 666-2411
 – info-ca@wheelchairfoundation.ca
 Wheelchair Foundation Australia (13) 0076 0581
 – info-au@wheelchairfoundation.org.au
 Wheelchair Foundation UK (44) 1 937 580 725
 – info-uk@wheelchairfoundation.org
 www.wheelchairfoundation.org

Getting Involved...Success Stories



“Ability Through Mobility”- Petaluma, CA

Sid Hendricks of Hendricks Developments, Ray Gallagher of Scott’s Seafood Restaurants, and Lyle Schneider of Schneider Investments, were moved to action by the immediate difference a wheelchair can make in a person’s life and were also impressed by the hard work Ken Behring puts into the Foundation. They decided to host “Ability Through Mobility”, a country hoedown, at the Hendricks’ Rockin’ H Ranch in Petaluma, CA. The event turned out to be the most successful event the Wheelchair Foundation has ever had. Over \$500,000 was raised. With the hosts paying all of the expenses, this will allow over 7,000 wheelchairs to be delivered to people in need around the world.



Visible Changes - Houston, TX

from a letter received from John and Maryanne McCormack, founders of Visible Changes

My wife and I were very moved by a video concerning your foundation and shared it with our staff of 900 at our quarterly meeting. We own a chain of hair salons in Texas that has been in business for 28 years employing teenagers to mature adults who come from all over the country and every corner of the world. Upon watching this video, the staff immediately chose to do a fundraiser to provide your foundation with a container of wheelchairs, and we were pleased to match their contribution. They put together a “Visible Changes” cookbook by gathering recipes from our staff members and had it published. They then sold the cookbooks in the salon, to family, friends and clients. It was truly a labor of love and all the proceeds were for the Wheelchair Foundation. I am so pleased to send this check for \$42,000 from the Visible Changes family to your family. Mr. Behring, thank you for making a difference in our world. May God bless you through your charitable efforts and through bringing the joy of new life to others. You have truly been an inspiration to our company.



Kodak - Rochester, NY

The Wheelchair Foundation is grateful to the hundreds of non-governmental organizations that we have worked with all around the world. They have done a wonderful job in receiving our wheelchairs duty-free, finding worthy wheelchair recipients, distributing the wheelchairs, and taking photos of the recipients with Kodak one-time use cameras. The Foundation would like to thank Kodak for their in-kind contribution of over 2,000 cameras. Because of these reliable and durable cameras that survive international travels to developing countries, the Foundation has thousands of beautiful photos to use in our black presentation folders (see back cover) to send to our donors to thank them for their contributions.



Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo, CA

Wheelchair Foundation Chairman Ken Behring spoke to a group of students at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo in early 2001 and they have been enthusiastic supporters of the Foundation ever since. Four containers have been sent to people in need with the money they raised. In September of 2005, some of them got to go on a distribution to Guatemala and actually see the wheelchairs being delivered. Karen Crabtree, Professor of Marketing, said, “We have raised over \$90,000 and have sent containers of wheelchairs to Peru, Ethiopia, Thailand, and Guatemala. My involvement with the Wheelchair Foundation is a way that I can contribute to the larger community of which we are all a part.”

GET INVOLVED AND TELL US ABOUT IT!

ABOVE ARE JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED WITH THE WHEELCHAIR FOUNDATION. WE WOULD LOVE TO HELP YOU GET INVOLVED WITH THE FOUNDATION. WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR SUCCESS STORIES OF RAISING FUNDS TO SEND WHEELCHAIRS AROUND THE WORLD. WAYS TO GET INVOLVED INCLUDE HOSTING AN EVENT, MAKING AN IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION, INCLUDING THE FOUNDATION IN YOUR WILL, DONATING STOCK, AND MANY MORE. PLEASE CONTACT MATT MONTAGUE, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS, AT (925) 791-2316 OR MMONTAGUE@WHEELCHAIRFOUNDATION.ORG TO LEARN MORE AND TO SHARE WITH US YOUR SUCCESS STORIES OF GETTING INVOLVED, AND YOU COULD BE FEATURED IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER!

a trip to Ecuador

By Jenni Gragg



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JENNI AND STEVE GRAGG WITH EVA BROOK, REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS LATIN AMERICA, MAKING A HOME VISIT TO PERSONALLY CHANGE THE LIFE OF HUGO SALVADOR VARGAS WITH A GIFT OF A WHEELCHAIR >>> A WHEELCHAIR RECIPIENT IS HAPPY NOW THAT HE HAS HIS BRAND NEW WHEELCHAIR >>> EXCITED TO GO TO SCHOOL >>> STEVE GRAGG GIVES THE GIFT OF MOBILITY AND A GIFT OF FRIENDSHIP

About 18 months ago my husband, Steve, while waiting in a doctor's office, came across an article about the Wheelchair Foundation and Ken Behring. Having been in the home oxygen business for over 20 years, he knew of the challenges sick and handicapped people have leaving their homes and living lives of quality. Steve has dedicated his business life to helping people overcome these difficulties. After reading the article and doing some research about the Wheelchair Foundation, he called to find out more about how we could make a difference for people who are in need of wheelchairs. He was impressed by the huge need throughout the world. It was at that point that he talked to me about donating to the Wheelchair Foundation. He told me that our contribution would be combined with other funds, and that if we sponsored a container of wheelchairs we could choose where the wheelchairs would be distributed. I said, "Let's go for it."

Shortly after, we were contacted by the Foundation to find out if we had a preference where to distribute the wheelchairs, and I said without hesitation that I hoped to distribute them in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

My love for Guayaquil and its people was born when I first visited in 1968 as a student. I was warmly welcomed into the Guzman family, a loving family not unlike my own, with six children and lots of activity. One of the most striking impressions I had as a middle class teen from the United States was the poverty that I saw in

Ecuador. Over the next 30 years I returned several times with Steve and our children for a visit or to attend the weddings of my Ecuadorian sisters. We were always received with warmth and hospitality.

When God gave us the opportunity to give back blessings to these wonderful people, we did so joyfully. The Wheelchair Foundation chose a wonderful charitable organization, Junta de Beneficencia de Guayaquil, to take care of the details of the distribution. Together with Eva Brook of the Wheelchair Foundation, we were able to tour the institutions that received some of the 280 wheelchairs and see the real needs that they had. Our visits to some of the individual recipients' homes were so very special because we were able to talk to them and find out just how much a wheelchair would improve their lives. We had the opportunity to meet about 70 individual recipients of all ages, and from every one of them we received gratitude and blessings. What an awesome experience - to be able to impact someone's life in a concrete way.

Looking back on the whole experience it is so clear to us that God had a hand in it. He gave Steve the heart for disabled people and He put in my heart the poor and needy people of Guayaquil. He blessed us with the resources to give and He gave Ken Behring the gifts which he used to start the Wheelchair Foundation. Steve and I would like to say thank you to Mr. Behring for following his heart and giving us the opportunity to make a difference.

WHEELCHAIRS COMMITTED OR DELIVERED SINCE 2000

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------|---------------------|--------|
| Afghanistan | 5,800 | Liberia | 780 |
| Albania | 550 | Lithuania | 1,090 |
| Algeria | 640 | Macedonia | 480 |
| Angola | 3,784 | Madagascar | 1,030 |
| Antigua and Barbuda | 280 | Malawi | 1,920 |
| Argentina | 6,531 | Malaysia | 2,260 |
| Armenia | 2,404 | Mali | 240 |
| Australia | 292 | Malta | 240 |
| Bahamas | 920 | Marshall Islands | 140 |
| Bangladesh | 240 | Mexico | 50,229 |
| Barbados | 280 | Micronesia | 1,390 |
| Belarus | 990 | Moldova | 1,720 |
| Belgium | 280 | Monaco | 560 |
| Belize | 1,860 | Mongolia | 1,040 |
| Bolivia | 3,524 | Montenegro | 120 |
| Bosnia-Herzegovina | 1,480 | Morocco | 2,030 |
| Botswana | 1,128 | Mozambique | 1,380 |
| Brazil | 2,305 | Myanmar (Burma) | 500 |
| Bulgaria | 250 | Namibia | 466 |
| Burundi | 240 | Nepal | 2,265 |
| Cambodia | 2,270 | Nicaragua | 4,445 |
| Canada | 280 | Niger | 240 |
| Cape Verde | 780 | Nigeria | 1,310 |
| Central African Rep. | 240 | N. Mariana Islands | 410 |
| Chile | 6,668 | Oman | 280 |
| China | 111,065 | Pakistan | 2,895 |
| Colombia | 5,500 | Palestinians/Israel | 1,906 |
| Costa Rica | 5,095 | Panama | 4,740 |
| Croatia | 1,300 | Papua New Guinea | 1,240 |
| Cuba | 1,240 | Paraguay | 1,544 |
| Cyprus | 280 | Peru | 5,360 |
| Czech Republic | 597 | Philippines | 4,220 |
| Dominican Republic | 8,178 | Poland | 1,600 |
| Ecuador | 3,933 | Portugal | 530 |
| Egypt | 1,058 | Puerto Rico | 490 |
| El Salvador | 4,305 | Romania | 2,692 |
| Eritrea | 250 | Russia | 2,110 |
| Estonia | 500 | Rwanda | 800 |
| Ethiopia | 2,928 | Saint Lucia (UK) | 560 |
| Fiji | 1,060 | Samoa | 1,080 |
| French Polynesia | 280 | Senegal | 240 |
| Georgia | 1,030 | Serbia | 1,250 |
| Ghana | 1,960 | Sierra Leone | 1,840 |
| Greece | 240 | Somalia | 88 |
| Grenada | 280 | South Africa | 10,240 |
| Guam | 250 | Spain | 500 |
| Guatemala | 6,503 | Sri Lanka | 2,330 |
| Guyana | 250 | Suriname | 240 |
| Haiti | 1,820 | Swaziland | 1,580 |
| Honduras | 4,904 | Syria | 641 |
| Hong Kong | 970 | Taiwan | 756 |
| Hungary | 120 | Tajikistan | 240 |
| India | 2,716 | Tanzania | 2,468 |
| Indonesia | 2,260 | Thailand | 4,700 |
| Iran | 3,880 | Tibet | 331 |
| Iraq | 2,620 | Tonga | 500 |
| Israel | 4,650 | Trinidad & Tobago | 1,604 |
| Italy | 560 | Turkey | 4,320 |
| Jamaica | 2,160 | Turkmenistan | 240 |
| Japan | 1,750 | Uganda | 2,904 |
| Jordan | 4,742 | Ukraine | 3,620 |
| Kazakhstan | 1,510 | United States | 26,000 |
| Kenya | 2,260 | Uruguay | 1,632 |
| Kiribati | 250 | Uzbekistan | 1,240 |
| Korea, North | 552 | Vanuatu | 250 |
| Korea, South | 5,020 | Venezuela | 1,040 |
| Kosovo | 1,300 | Vietnam | 9,296 |
| Kyrgyzstan | 1,240 | Virgin Islands (UK) | 284 |
| Laos | 780 | Virgin Islands (US) | 280 |
| Latvia | 740 | Western Sahara | 153 |
| Lebanon | 2,150 | Zambia | 960 |
| Lesotho | 500 | Zimbabwe | 2,050 |

TOTAL COUNTRIES 145

TOTAL WHEELCHAIRS 443,841

For current totals visit wheelchairfoundation.org.

Wheelchair Foundation Australia

Sharon and Vince Mamone, directors of the Wheelchair Foundation Victoria Branch, have just completed a successful wheelchair delivery to Fiji. Rotary Clubs in the Melbourne area came together in a fundraising effort to sponsor their first 280-wheelchair container to Fiji.

Rotary Club members and students accompanied Sharon, Vince and their family to experience the working relationship with Fiji Rotarians to bring mobility into the lives of residents who are immobile and unable to afford a basic mobility wheelchair.



Wheelchair Foundation Canada

Rotarians from the Semiahmoo, B.C. club traveled recently to Tijuana and Rosarito, Mexico to experience the hands on delivery of life changing mobility. Lives from the very young to the very old were changed by the delivery of wheelchairs.



We welcome Craig Lenz, Rotary Club of Regina Eastview, Regina, Saskatchewan, to our team of Rotary Volunteers in Central Canada. Craig heard about us through the Hour of Power television program and decided to become a Rotarian when he saw the great work clubs are doing worldwide.

Current projects include several containers of wheelchairs to Mexico, another to Sri Lanka (in cooperation with the city and local schools of Port Moody), Zambia, Chile, and the Philippines.

Wheelchair Foundation China

With about 1/5 of the world's population in China alone, the need for wheelchairs is obvious. The continued growth and expansion taking place in the business sector in China has caused many corporations and individuals to seek productive ways to get involved in the communities of this country. Many of these corporations and individuals have turned to the Wheelchair Foundation as an effective way to give back to the cities where they are doing work. Wal-Mart China recently distributed 400 wheelchairs at the opening of one of its new stores in Changsha, Hunan Province. CH2M Hill sent several hundred wheelchairs to Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. First Data Western Union has a wheelchair distribution planned in Shanghai for March 2006 and the Morehead, Kentucky Sister Cities community has a distribution planned in Yangshuo also in March. Other donors that have made significant contributions include Walter's Family, Andrew Hosea, Rotary Clubs, Kingston Technology, AstraZeneca, Aosaikang Pharmaceutical and Manulife Insurance in Shanghai.

Wheelchair Foundation Florida

The Florida Chapter continues its efforts in raising funds to send wheelchairs throughout the world. The state is richly saturated with various ethnic groups, particularly from the Caribbean and South America, that want to help their countries any way they can. We're grateful that so many have chosen to support the Wheelchair Foundation to help their countries. They recently sent containers to Costa Rica, Guatemala, Peru, Portugal, and Colombia, to name a few. The office was also called on recently to rush hundreds of wheelchairs to help the survivors of Katrina. In the next few months containers will be delivered to the Bahamas and Jamaica.

Wheelchair Foundation Great Britain & Ireland

Since the establishment of Wheelchair Foundation Great Britain & Ireland, containers of wheelchairs have been sponsored to South Africa, Lesotho, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey.

Peter L. Offer, President of Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland 2006/2007 recaps recent experiences. "Janis and I wanted to witness the need for wheelchairs, so we visited Romania, Lesotho and South Africa. In these countries we attended presentations of wheelchairs, sponsored by Interact and Rotary Clubs in Great Britain and Ireland, to hundreds of people of all ages and all walks of life. Nothing could have prepared us for the experience, and the stories of need, survival and newfound happiness were endless."



ROTARIANS IN SOUTH AMERICA

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: THE PLEASANTON CALIFORNIA ROTARY CLUB'S WHEELCHAIR COMMITTEE, HEADED BY BOB ATHENOUR, HAS CHOSEN A "GRASS ROOTS" APPROACH TO FUNDRAISING THAT REACHES OUT TO A WIDE VARIETY OF PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY. >>> ROTARIANS FROM MASSACHU-

SETTS TRAVELLED TO LIMA, PERU >>> RECIPIENTS IN ANDAHUAYLAS, PERU >>> ROTARIANS FROM ROTARY CLUB OF PLEASANTON CALIFORNIA NORTH IN CHILE



Rotary Club of Pleasanton California North - Chile

Pleasanton North Rotary Club's involvement began with a one-wheelchair project where we were made aware of a young man in our community who wished to be mainstreamed with his age group in school. Through various means the money was raised to purchase a special-purpose wheelchair for his use. Through this process we came to know about the Wheelchair Foundation and the terrific work they are doing around the world.

We have an annual "Black Tie" fundraising event called "Cabaret," which is our main source of funds to underwrite charitable projects. Within that event, we have a special "Fund-A-Need" program that is dedicated to a particular purpose. We have used that platform to raise significant amounts of money - \$52,000 in ten minutes this past year - all of which is directed to the purchase of wheelchairs.

As a result, we have distributed over 1,000 wheelchairs to individuals in Baja California, Tulancingo, Mexico and throughout Chile on two separate occasions. We haven't found another opportunity as a service organization to have a better return on our "investment" or a more personally satisfying impact on a one-on-one basis.



Rotary Club of Pleasanton California - Peru

There were eleven of us in the Peru delegation, and our trip took us from the big city of Lima to the coastal town of Huacho to the community of Andahuaylas, high in the Andes Mountains. Three very distinct, very different areas, but all with a great need for wheelchairs. For some of us this was our fifth distribution, for others the first, but for all it was emotional and tremendously satisfying. And as in other distributions, the people we met were gracious hosts and warmly welcomed us into their communities.

The need for wheelchairs was as diverse as the people themselves. We distributed wheelchairs to young soldiers injured by landmines and to an old woman who was carried in on a blanket by her family members. We gave wheelchairs to two young girls from the same

family, both afflicted at birth with the same debilitating condition, and we gave a wheelchair to a teenage boy suffering from a tumor on his leg.

We are members of the Rotary Club of Pleasanton, California. Our club of about 100 members has been working with the Wheelchair Foundation for the last three years and has delivered nearly 2,000 wheelchairs to Mexico and South America - so far!

Rotary Club of Martha's Vineyard - Peru

Peru was not an unfamiliar destination for the Rotary Club of Martha's Vineyard. This was a continuation of an eight-year relationship with Rotary Club of San Bora, Lima, Peru and the second time working with Wheelchair Foundation.

The first day we distributed 163 wheelchairs at the La Ciudad de Los Niños, Lima, a local orphanage. One of the most moving moments was watching a mother carry her eight year-old daughter to the presentation ceremony and helping place her in a wheelchair for the first time. Knowing this mother would no longer have to physically carry her daughter was overwhelmingly humbling. Another young man exclaimed it was "his birthday!" He went on to explain how he was never able to leave his house to work unless somebody carried him. He would now be able to find gainful employment with his new wheelchair.

Before any of us left Peru we decided we would initiate fundraising for the next container of wheelchairs. Upon our return home, we received the District's support and have started fundraising for the next container. We started a holiday gift giving appeal with the local community, which proved quite successful.

My impression of the Wheelchair Foundation is the caring self-



less good that they are helping others to give to their fellow man. If given the opportunity to speak with Mr. Behring myself, I would thank him for allowing Rotarians to help fulfill our commitment of "Service Above Self."

a true volunteer



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT >>> Jon and Linda Grant changing lives in Africa >>>

Jon Grant along with Ken Behring and Rotarians from Morocco committing over 1,000 wheelchairs for Casablanca >>> Jon with a landmine victim in Colombia

BOTTOM OF PAGE >>> Jon unloading wheelchairs in Vietnam

Merriam Webster's Dictionary defines "volunteer" as "a person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to undertake a service."

You look that word up in the Wheelchair Foundation dictionary and you'll see a person's name: Rotarian Dr. Jon Grant. He'll be the first to tell you, "I'm a Rotarian first and always will be." Celebrating his 30th year as a Rotarian this year, Jon recalls his first Rotary meeting in Foster City, California in 1976. "There were about 25 of us there, and we were dividing out the responsibilities. I was appointed to be the Foundation Chairman. I learned early on in Rotary that if you raise your hand too many times, and you do a good job, they give you more to do." Apparently, Dr. Grant continued raising his hand at various Rotary meetings. Since then, he has served in many different positions in Rotary including Regional Rotary Foundation Coordinator for the Western U.S. and Rotary District Governor of District 5150, to name a few.

In 1984 Dr. Grant got his first taste of international service work in a developing country when he was asked by the Rotary Foundation to put service above self and spend six weeks in the Philippines working as a dentist at a Vietnamese Refugee Camp. A practicing dentist with a full staff and functioning dentist's office in Foster City, he put everything on hold to serve those in dire need at the refugee camp. Dr. Grant said, "From that experience my eyes were opened to the difference Rotary Foundation can make in the world. Whether it's sponsoring scholars or doing a group study exchange, I learned that by utilizing the grants and programs of the Rotary Foundation one person really can make a difference. It was an experience that changed and blessed my life forever."

Dr. Grant was forced to retire and sell his dental practice in 1989 because of a tragic accident that took his right index finger. In 1994, while serving as Rotary District Governor, he was introduced to his future wife Linda by a mutual friend. They were married six years later on Christmas Day in Las Vegas, and have since lost themselves in service.

While serving on Rotary's "Jobs for Disabled" Task Force, Dr.

Grant worked under Frank Devlyn, who was then Rotary International President. President Devlyn had just accepted an invitation from Ken Behring to serve on the International Board of Advisors of the Wheelchair Foundation. Grant explained, "It was President Devlyn that brought the Wheelchair Foundation and Rotary together. He is an amazing man, and his enthusiasm and bright personality helped expose Rotarians to the Wheelchair Foundation."

With Dr. Grant living an hour from the Wheelchair Foundation headquarters, he proposed to President Devlyn that he serve as the liaison between Rotary and Wheelchair Foundation. After a lunch meeting with Ken Behring and Wheelchair Foundation staff, Dr. Grant was sold on the mission of the Foundation and wanted to get involved.

Five years later and looking back, you could definitely say the Grants have been involved with the Foundation. Jon and Linda work together out of their home and are responsible for collecting and combining the Rotary funds that come in, which has totalled enough money to sponsor over 120,000 wheelchairs in more than 100 countries. They accept donations from Rotarians, maintain a database of over 7,000 names, keep detailed records and files of all Rotarians that have been involved with the Wheelchair Foundation, write Rotary Foundation grants, and respond to Rotarians' e-mails from all around the world, encouraging them to travel and participate in the wheelchair distributions.

The Wheelchair Foundation is thankful and grateful to both Jon and Linda Grant for all the time, energy, and effort they continue to give in order to provide hope, mobility, and freedom to those in desperate need around the world.



season highlights



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: >>> James Robertson makes a new friend in Tijuana, Mexico >>> A young man and his friends help unload wheelchairs in Sierra Leone >>> A grandmother with her granddaughter in the hills of the Andes Mountains in Peru





CLOCKWISE, FROM RIGHT: >>> Eighty-three year-old recipient with friends and family in Mongolia >>> Even the wheelchair boxes are put to use in Guatemala >>> Cal Poly students do the hokey-pokey with children in Guatemala >>> Rotarian Beth Barlow shares in the joy of providing mobility >>> Swift Charities blessing lives in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico >>> Recipient Adela with President Barry Middler and President-Elect Linda Whitehead of Rotary Club of Semiahmoo (White Rock), Canada >>> Knights of Columbus are improving thousands of lives with the gift of mobility >>> Prince Albert visiting with each of the wheelchair recipients in Monaco >>> Pat Behring has a friend in Colombia





Colombia South America

IN NEED OF A DIGNIFIED LIFE - "LA VIDA DIGNA" SAYS THE FIRST LADY OF COLOMBIA, LINA MORENO DE URIBE

THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: PRESIDENT ALVARO URIBE OF COLOMBIA VISITING WITH WHEELCHAIR RECIPIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES (PHOTO COURTESY OF *EL COLOMBIANO* NEWSPAPER) >>> COLOMBIAN SOLDIER THAT SUFFERED FROM A LANDMINE HAS GOOD REASON TO SMILE >>> HUNDREDS OF LIVES INSTANTLY CHANGED AT A DISTRIBUTION FOR THE COLOMBIAN ARMY (PHOTO COURTESY OF *EL TIEMPO* NEWSPAPER)

By Eva Brook

Colombia is a country known in the United States mostly for its 40-year-old conflict between the government and anti-government insurgent groups and illegal paramilitary groups - both heavily funded by the drug trade, which escalated during the 1990s. However, during the last four years, under the Presidency of Alvaro Uribe, Colombia has seen decreased violence and several thousand paramilitary members have demobilized in an ongoing peace process.

During our first visit to Bogota, Colombia in June 2004 to distribute several hundred wheelchairs, Joel Hodge and I were astonished to find a beautiful and charming Bogota, red-roofed houses, lots of green space - in short, a city with a European flair that made it easy to walk around. Although we noticed more soldiers, especially around the historical center of the city, we felt comfortable strolling and listening to the happy sounds of cumbia and salsa that Colombia is well-known for, tasting flavorful Juan Valdez Colombian coffee, and sampling the most luscious exotic fruits sold throughout the streets. Even more impressive, as our wheelchair operations are concerned, was the efficiency of our various partner organizations. One of the containers was gener-

ously donated by Jeff Behring's Wine for Wheels at the request of a former Colombia Defense Minister, who asked in most convincing ways to help the many injured soldiers. Tejido Humano, a Colombian non-profit with its mission focused on helping those injured by the war, took responsibility for distributing the wheelchairs. It hurt our hearts to see so many young soldiers with missing limbs and a difficult future ahead in a country that has such amazing potential and a beautiful people, despite being held back by decades of conflict. We also had the pleasure to have the First Lady of Colombia Lina Moreno de Uribe attend our ceremonies, and we were taken by her genuine way of being, and her passion to help those in need without interest in publicity.





During one of his trips to Washington D.C., Ken Behring met the former Colombian Ambassador to the U.S. Luis Alberto Moreno, who is currently leading the Inter-American Development Bank, and his esteemed wife Gabriela Febres-Cordero. From there, a partnership was formed with a goal to continue supporting Colombia, given the tremendous need and horrendous impact of landmines.

Colombia is the country most affected by landmines in the Western hemisphere, and ranks among the three countries in the world with the highest number of landmine deaths and injuries, after Afghanistan and Cambodia. Landmines are the major cause of death and injury of Colombian soldiers, which comes as no surprise since narco-terrorists have planted over 120,000 landmines in Colombia. As of March 2005, the government military landmine arsenal had been totally destroyed.

Through her energetic and relentless efforts, Gabriela Febres-Cordero raised tens of thousands of dollars from Colombian banks and other sources to be combined with funds from Wheelchair Foundation Florida, Rotary Clubs, and Wheelchair Foundation to send 1,120 wheelchairs to Medellin and Bogota. Gabriela is the founder of a non-profit organization called United for Colombia, whose aim is to engage the Colombian community worldwide to support their home country. On August 17, 2005, Mr. Ken Behring and his wife Patricia, David Behring (President of the Wheelchair Foundation), Dr. Jon Grant (Wheelchair Foundation Rotary

Volunteer) and his wife Linda, Mark Leeka (Rotary Club of Los Angeles No. 5) and his wife Pearl, Diego Velasquez (Rotary Club of Conejo Valley) his wife Anna and nine-year-old daughter Catherine, and David Robinson (Rotary Club of Culver City) arrived in Medellin to meet with Luis Alberto Moreno and Gabriela Febres-Cordero. We were also very pleased that Jeanne Farmer, Programs Principal Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, participated in our wheelchair distributions in Medellin and Bogota.

On August 18th, 2005, we were joined by the President of Colombia, Alvaro Uribe, the First Lady, Lina Moreno de Uribe, and the Mayor of Medellin, Sergio Fajardo, in giving away wheelchairs that put smiles on faces and hope in the hearts of so many deserving people. Children, soldiers, policemen, and an elderly couple who could each boast nearly a hundred years, smiled when Ken Behring shook their hands and happily chatted with them. One most eloquent five-year-old boy named Hugo could not have been more excited when he sat in his new wheelchair and started to roll around. His two wishes came true: he beamed when he received his red wheelchair, the color he had imagined, and he dreamed of meeting the President of Colombia whose name he had told us without hesitation. It filled our hearts with utmost joy when President Alvaro Uribe walked through his row and miraculously stopped to say hello to him. You should have seen that smile! *(Article Continues on Page 12)*

**THIS PAGE FROM TOP LEFT
CLOCKWISE: EXCITED FOR HER
NEW WHEELCHAIR AND THE
FREEDOM IT WILL PROVIDE >>>
GABRIELA FEBRES-CORDERO,
FOUNDER OF UNITED FOR
COLOMBIA, WITH KEN BEHRING
GETTING TO KNOW THE WHEEL-
CHAIR RECIPIENTS >>> A
THUMB'S UP FOR HIS NEW
WHEELCHAIR >>>
BANCOLOMBIA HELPS CHANGE
MANY LIVES >>> AN ELDERLY
COUPLE IS UNITED IN RECEIV-
ING THE GIFT OF A WHEEL-
CHAIR**





FROM TOP LEFT DOWN: HUNDREDS OF SOLDIERS' LIVES INSTANTLY CHANGED >>> CHILDREN WILL NOW BE ABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL >>> DIEGO VELASQUEZ, A NATIVE OF MEDELLIN, COLOMBIA, NOW WITH THE ROTARY CLUB OF CONEJO VALLEY, CALIFORNIA DELIVERING WHEELCHAIRS AND STUFFED ANIMALS

The next day, we went on an adventurous excursion, flying in helicopters from one of the military bases to Puerto Nare. Because Puerto Nare is rural, it is not easy to travel there, and as with many such out-of-the-way places, is not well provided for. But First Lady Lina Moreno de Uribe has her heart exactly in those places hardly reached, often forgotten, where the need is high. She insisted on taking us to this small community so we could see and

feel for ourselves why this outreach was so important - our hearts were touched over and over again!

On Saturday, August 20, 2005, we revisited charming Bogota, and gave away hundreds of wheelchairs to soldiers injured in conflict, and many specifically by landmines. They related their stories of patrolling conflict areas many times, avoiding landmines until the day they got hit by one of these hideous devices losing arms, legs and eyes. Despite all of the hardship, they joked with us and smiled, being so grateful for receiving a wheelchair. While it was on one hand heartbreaking to see so many young people with such difficult fates, it was a pleasure to contribute hundreds of wheelchairs that provide mobility and a new perspective.

This project was successful because of the partnership of United for Colombia, Rotarians from the United States and Colombia, and Wheelchair Foundation. Wheelchair Foundation thanks its partner organizations, and their partners in turn, for coming together to help provide mobility and hope in Colombia. The need is high, and Colombia's government, non-profit and service organizations are excellent partners in the wheelchair project, and hope that we can all work together in the future. A special thank you also goes to Jon Grant, Wheelchair Foundation Rotary Volunteer, for successfully submitting a Rotary International Matching Grant for 1,400 wheelchairs to Colombia which is overseen by Udo Rungeler of the Rotary Club of Bogota, Laureles, Colombia, and will be distributed by various government and non-profit entities with the help of Rotarians later this year.



Please visit our website

WWW.WHEELCHAIRFOUNDATION.ORG for:

- Donation and Matching Gift Program
- Planned Giving
- International Board of Advisors
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Upcoming Events
- Our Annual Report
- Travel to Wheelchair Distributions
- Team Contact Information
- Videos

Or call us toll-free (877) 378-3839



in honor of Mary Beth

preserving a memory



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: MARY BETH ENJOYING LIFE >>> THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA >>> ANDREW ALONG WITH HIS FATHER AND BEST FRIEND NOAH VISIT WITH A WHEELCHAIR RECIPIENT >>> MANY LIVES WILL BE BLESSED BY THE WHEELCHAIR

Standing at the Great Wall of China in the freezing cold may or may not sound like your idea of fun. For Andrew Hosea it is part of a dream come true. “Never be afraid to follow your dreams,” Hosea says. This spirit of adventure and willingness to pursue a dream, a trait that is very strong in Andrew, is part of an effort he put in motion over a year ago to pay tribute to his younger sister, Mary Beth, who passed away in October 2003 at the age of 33 after a 17 year battle with a brain tumor.

China is a long way from the dentist office where Andrew just happened to pick up a copy of AARP Magazine and read an article about Kenneth E. Behring and the Wheelchair Foundation. Moved by what he had read, he jotted down the web address for the foundation and made his first \$75 donation. Andrew admits that when he received his first presentation folder with a picture of the recipient of a wheelchair in it, he was hooked. He now has numerous reminders of the individuals he has helped receive wheelchairs scattered around his house.

Andrew’s little sister, Mary Beth, spent the last ten years of her life in a wheelchair as she dealt with her tumor. Witnessing what she went through first hand and how important her wheelchair was to her daily existence, he easily understood how difficult life could be for someone who needed a wheelchair but did not own one. Andrew describes his sister as “strong” and “determined” and “always wanting to share a little bit of life, love, and light with others” and she did so through her paintings and artwork. She liked to surprise friends with gifts just to see them smile. Andrew likens this to what

he read in the article about Ken Behring, “only wanting a smile in return for the gift of a wheelchair.”

And thus his journey to honor his little sister's legacy began. With the help of his family, friends, co-workers, and complete and total strangers, Andrew began collecting \$21,000 to sponsor a container of wheelchairs to people in need. He set up an account to collect donations, and began raising funds. Andrew and his best friend Noah held the First Annual “Right for Mobility” Bowl-A-Thon. Andrew spoke at churches and youth groups about his sister Mary Beth and his effort to send a container of wheelchairs to others in need. Andrew and his Mom also sold prints of Mary Beth’s paintings with all proceeds from the sales going toward the container of wheelchairs.

“I had a thermometer chart on the wall at my office, and every time we'd get more money we'd fill in a little more ‘red space’ to track our progress.” And then one day, the thermometer topped out and the process to send wheelchairs to China was set in motion. Andrew was put in contact with Katherine Yan at Wheelchair Foundation China. Together they planned a distribution ceremony in the city of Harbin for January 7th, 2006 and Andrew, his father, and Noah made arrangements to attend.

Standing in the cold at the Great Wall of China was exciting, but not as exciting (or cold) as arriving in Harbin in the center of Manchuria. Andrew and his entourage were greeted by officials from the Harbin Municipal Government and Heilongjiang Charity Federation, who work closely with Wheelchair Foundation China

THE OVERWHELMING NEED FOR WHEELCHAIRS

- >> People require the use of a wheelchair for many reasons: accidents, birth defects, war injuries, debilitating diseases and advanced age.
- >> One of the most horrific causes of disability worldwide can be attributed to landmines or unexploded ordinance (UXO). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), every year, more than 29,000 people are injured by landmines or UXO around the world. This number does not include unreported cases, or those that are killed by the explosions.
- >> An estimated 100-150 million people with physical disabilities worldwide need wheelchairs, though less than 1 percent own or have access to one. The number of physically disabled is likely underestimated, due to the difficulty in accounting for "forgotten" citizens who spend their lives hidden from sight.
- >> It is estimated that the number of people who need wheelchairs will increase by 22 percent over the next 10 years, with the greatest need existing in developing countries.
- >> In developing countries, only a small percentage of those who need wheelchairs have them, forcing dependence upon family and friends to get around. For others, the only way to get around is to crawl, or lie in a bed or corner of a room for years at a time.

The wheelchairs provided by the Wheelchair Foundation are purchased in bulk, and designed to be the best possible solution in developing countries. They cost on average \$150 each, delivered by a 280-wheelchair shipping container, and are offered free of charge to those most in need. Each donation of \$75 will be combined by the Wheelchair Foundation, with funds provided specifically for that purpose, to deliver a wheelchair, until these combinable funds have been exhausted. \$21,000 will deliver an entire 280-wheelchair container to a developing country.

to distribute wheelchairs to individuals in need. Andrew, his father and Noah were immediately taken out into the cold to see the Harbin Ice Festival, which is truly one of the most spectacular exhibits of ice carving in the world. The Harbin Ice Festival draws visitors from all reaches of the globe and features life sized ice replicas of the Arc de Triomphe, Great Wall of China, Pyramids of Egypt, the Matterhorn and Lhasa Buddhist Monastery, to name a few.



TAKING IN THE CHINESE CULTURE

The following Day Andrew, his father, and Noah were greeted by Katherine Yan who had traveled from Shanghai on behalf of Wheelchair Foundation China. Katherine, who is a veteran of numerous distributions, finally met the gentleman she had been corresponding with via e-mail on the other side of the globe.

The distribution of wheelchairs was held at the Harbin Number 1 Senior People's Welfare House. Mary Beth would have been so proud of Andrew



ENJOYING THE HARBIN ICE FESTIVAL

that day. He addressed the crowd of assembled dignitaries, wheelchair recipients and their families and told them all about Mary Beth and his desire to make this donation in her honor. Each wheelchair was embroidered with three Chinese characters "Hope," "Love," and "Friendship" which Andrew explained to the crowd was a sentiment that embodied the spirit of his sister's life. Then he and the others made their way

into the crowd and shook the hands of each wheelchair recipient. "It was really neat for us because we felt like we were really meeting a need for these people," said Hosea.

Following the distribution ceremony they went to hand deliver a few wheelchairs to recipients who were homebound and unable to travel. Here Andrew again saw just how precious a wheelchair was to someone in need. "One woman had waited 40 years for her wheelchair, and when she saw the wheelchair she just started bawling!"

"It was a trip of a lifetime, a dream, something that I have wanted to do. That's something that I'm proud of, that's something that I'm glad that I took the opportunity to do to honor my sister. I'd encourage other people who have dreams to dream big and then start and take that first step. It takes a bunch of small steps to get a big dream completed, it's not just one big leap."



WE MISS YOU MARY BETH

YOU CAN READ ANDREW'S SPEECH TO THE HARBIN WHEELCHAIR RECIPIENTS, SEE SOME OF MARY BETH'S ARTWORK, AND DONATE TO ANDREW'S NEXT CONTAINER OF WHEELCHAIRS AT:

WWW.WHEELCHAIRFOUNDATION.ORG/HOSEA.

Army NCO spearheads wheelchairs to Iraq

By Paul X. Rutz / American Forces Press Service

CLOCKWISE FROM FAR RIGHT: U.S. AND IRAQI SOLDIERS DISTRIBUTE WHEELCHAIRS >>> LANDMINE VICTIM >>> UNLOADING WHEELCHAIRS FOR A LOCAL HOSPITAL >>> SOLDIERS PUTTING ON ADJUSTABLE FOOTREST



WASHINGTON, Feb. 6, 2006 - For more than a year, Army Sgt. Amy E. Perkins has been working to bring some relief to the people in Tal'Afar, Iraq. This month her hard work has finally paid off.

A rare shipment of 220 wheelchairs for injured Iraqi citizens arrived in the city on February 19, thanks to help from the Wheelchair Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in California. Perkins said she was impressed with the foundation's ability to deliver the wheelchairs so quickly.

"I want to emphasize how little outside help we get here, and how quickly (the) Wheelchair Foundation reacted to our request for assistance," said Perkins, a member of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

Tal Afar, with a population of 250,000, is located 30 miles west of Mosul in northern Iraq. In September, the city suffered heavy fighting between insurgents and American troops, but security has since improved, said Perkins.

Coalition forces have been focusing on humanitarian missions in the area recently, she said, but support from outside the military is still hard to come by.

Perkins said she went through a list of 200 nongovernmental organizations and charities asking for help; several wrote back, saying they already had people in northern Iraq.

"After I mentioned the location, darn near every organization responded by saying that they don't do work in Tal'Afar, only Mosul," she said. "No one will help these people. It is entirely up to (the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) and the United States Army to do anything to improve their standard of living."

Finally, an e-mail exchange with Joel Hodge, program director at the Wheelchair Foundation, led to a plan: The foundation would pack a shipment of wheelchairs and transport it to Kuwait, while Perkins would secure military transport for the two 20-foot containers from Kuwait to Tal Afar.

Perkins said Hodge helped take care of many worries.

"He kept me informed the entire time as to the status of our order, and has often added a note to keep my head up," she said. "His correspondence has helped with more than getting wheelchairs."

Hodge was part of a Wheelchair Foundation team that included Gerry Riley, who managed much of the logistics, and Matt Montague, who secured funding for the shipment. "I have been truly

impressed by their efficiency, their willingness to help, and the speed at which they work," Perkins said.

"I would donate to the Wheelchair Foundation every year for the rest of my life if for no other reason than that they were there for us when no one else was," she said. "Then they made everything so easy!"

Perkins did much more than put in a request, according to Hodge.



Her offer to coordinate the shipment through Iraq was extremely important since that meant the foundation would not have to hire an armed convoy to ensure its protection.

"The option of shipping them in to our military personnel, and then having them handle all that logistics and shipping in from that point was wonderful," Hodge said from his office in Danville, Calif. "It cuts down a lot of costs for us, and streamlines things."

Often the foundation receives donations earmarked for particular countries in need. Meeting those requests is difficult at times, Hodge said, but this time everything came together smoothly, thanks to a donation from the Iraqi-American Association of Illinois, which provided funds for a container of wheelchairs to go to an undetermined place in Iraq.

The shipment of 220 wheelchairs arrived in Kuwait and was handed over to the army in Iraq.

"The Wheelchair Foundation, one of the world's largest consumers of wheelchairs, has delivered more than 400,000 wheelchairs around the globe since its inception in 2000," said Peter Barnes, the foundation's executive director in Washington D.C.

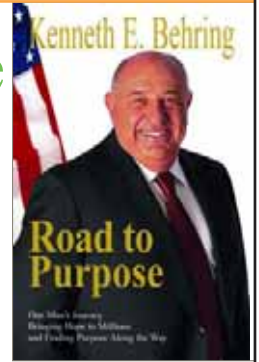
On a daily basis, the foundation oversees the donation of thousands of wheelchairs throughout the world. Still, the group's leadership found it important to tell "how absolutely amazed everybody was that this one sergeant in this one corner of Iraq had made all this happen," Barnes said.

"Not only do the wheelchairs help people who need them, the deliveries also help to show the Muslim world that Americans are charitable and trying to help," Barnes said. "This is the caliber of people that we have in Iraq doing good work."





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 in the name of a loved one
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 book
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an account of his personal journey that
 led to the creation of the Wheelchair Foundation,
 and the stories of
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Sample Presentation Folder

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