



Nicoya Eye Care Mission Trip

Project Update - April 2024

Planning for the **January 27, 2024 Hopeful Ways Eye Care Mission to Nicoya, Guanacaste, Costa Rica** is progressing well.

During April 17 - 26, 2023, Jim and Loretta Carlins traveled to Nicoya, Guanacaste, Costa Rica to prepare for the mission with the Nicoya Lions Club.

The primary goals included:

1. Develop a working relationship with the Nicoya Lions Club as the mission host and as a partner.
2. Agree upon roles and responsibilities for each organization
3. Assess potential locations and select the clinic site
4. Assess hotels and select a hotel for the mission team
5. Find suitable restaurants for mission team meals
6. Develop a relationship with the local hospital and medical professionals
7. Determine documentation requirements for USA medical professional requirements to work in Costa Rica
8. Determine Customs documentation requirements to:
 - a. Ship mission supplies from USA to Costa Rica in advance of the mission
 - b. Bring mission supplies into Costa Rica from USA with the mission team
 - c. Transport Hopeful Ways medical instruments and supplies into Costa Rica from Nicaragua in advance of the mission

Summary

The Hopeful Ways team and the proposed mission project was received with enthusiasm by both the Nicoya Lions Club and the Nicoya Hospital doctors and administrators.

This helped to make the trip a huge success. Items 1 - 6 are complete and were achieved much quicker than expected thanks to the Nicoya Lions preliminary work prior to our arrival and their tremendous assistance during the visit.

Plans are in place to complete items 7 - 8 thanks to the hospital staff engaging in the project. The mission plan is on schedule and progressing well.

Trip Highlights

1. Nicoya Lions Club was fully engaged in the project, even before the arrival of Hopeful Ways and is enthusiastically supporting the mission.



Meeting with Nicoya Lions Leadership



Nicoya Lions Club Meeting



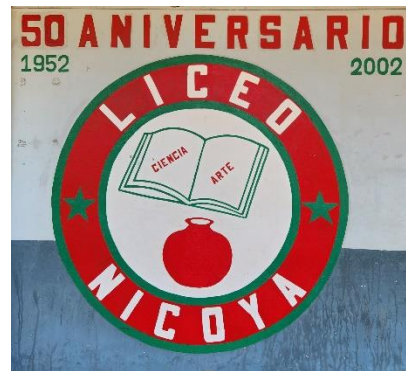
Social Gathering after Nicoya Lions Club Meeting

2. A preliminary list of Roles and Responsibilities for each organization was discussed and agreed upon with no open issues. A final document will be drafted and approved in the coming months.

3. Liceo De Nicoya, a local public high school, has been chosen as the Eye Care Clinic site. The Gymnasium will be the primary location and consists of a large main room with a stage area that can be divided for separate examination areas for optometry use. There are also 2 small auxiliary rooms and bathrooms in the gymnasium building. Bleachers along the side of the gymnasium can be used for the patients waiting at the various stations. Nearby classrooms are available for breaks and lunches, and there is a tree-shaded area outside for the patients waiting. The site can be easily secured physically to protect the mission equipment and supplies.

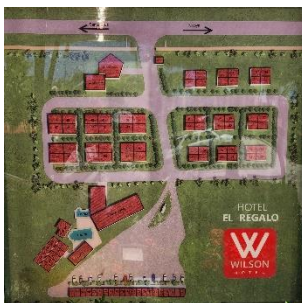


Clinic Site Entrance at Liceo School



Liceo Public High School Logo

4. The Wilson Hotel El Regalo has been chosen for the mission team accommodations and is a short drive to the clinic site. The rooms are clean, comfortable, air-conditioned, have hot water showers, include breakfast and are reasonably priced. There are 91 rooms in single story buildings on spacious well-kept grounds. The hotel also has 2 pools, a restaurant and laundry services.



*Wilson Hotel El Regalo
Property Layout*



*Hotel El Regalo
Typical Hotel Room*



Hotel El Regalo Pool Area

5. Three (3) restaurants are walkable from the hotel rooms. One restaurant is on the hotel property and 2 others are across the street. Each serves a different cuisine which will provide variety.

Hotel El Regalo Restaurant



6. The hospital staff expressed enthusiasm for the mission and are actively engaging to assist in the mission preparations. Costa Rica has a good social health care system, but lacks resources. The hospital has a 3,000 patient waiting list for people needing eye exams. The Hopeful Ways Mission can significantly reduce the size of this list. In addition, the hospital doctors have requested that Hopeful Ways consider performing eye surgeries at the hospital. The Hopeful Ways ophthalmologist will discuss this possibility with the hospital ophthalmologist.



Meeting with Hospital Doctors and Administrators

7. The hospital staff has taken ownership of items 7 and 8 above. They will be contacting the Health Ministry to determine documentation requirements for Hopeful Ways' medical personnel. They will also be requesting the assistance from the Health Ministry to secure authorization for Hopeful Ways' equipment transported from the USA and Nicaragua to easily clear Costa Rica Customs.

Note

As with all Hopeful Ways projects, travel expenses for this logistics planning trip were paid by the volunteers and not funded using donations to Hopeful Ways. All donations received by Hopeful Ways are directed towards services for the needy, except for minor administrative costs and mandatory taxes and fees to comply with government regulations.