



Faces of Hope Faces of Hope

Fall 2023



People making a difference on Hopeful Ways Projects.

"We provide medical & humanitarian services and educational opportunities to improve the quality of life for the people of Nicaragua. We do this with great love, compassion, and a sincere desire to be of service to those living in impoverished conditions."

Providing Hope. Enriching Lives.

President's Message



As the fall leaves change, we reflect on the last few months which have been very busy for Hopeful Ways. Significant efforts were expended preparing for the upcoming Eye Care Mission Trip to Nicoya, Guanacaste Costa Rica. Our largest brigade ever will enhance the lives of more than 1500 people with free eye care services.

In addition to the Costa Rica, the Nicaragua eye care clinics have continued in Santo Tomas and Juigalpa. People identified with severe cataracts during these clinics continue to received eye surgeries at FONIPRECE / Ojo Sano Eye Clinic through the Hopeful Ways Gift of Sight Program.

A successful fundraising event at Hofbräuhaus Buffalo in July is supporting these mission activities. And the 6th annual "Bicycling for Sight" fundraiser during September added to that total. We also have volunteers working on writing grants and contacting companies for sponsorships through donations of medical supplies.

Growth of the Hopeful Ways eye care mission has been generated by the needs of the poor, which has increased expenses that must be offset with new revenue sources. Please note that Hopeful Ways is an ALL-VOLUNTEER 501(c)3 non-profit organization. That means 100% of your donations go directly to providing services for the needy.

There is certainly no shortage of things to do. Fortunately, Hopeful Ways volunteers are dedicated to the mission goals of improving and restoring eyesight for the less fortunate. More information on Hopeful Ways activities are inside this newsletter.

Always in service,

Jim Carlins, President | 716-909-8942 | jjcarlins@hopefulways.org

"Do something nice and try not to get caught", "Be humble." – Unknown

Eye Care Brigade Prepares for Costa Rica

Hopeful Ways is partnering with the Nicoya Lions Club in Costa Rica to improve eyesight for impoverished people. The rural areas surrounding Nicoya consist mostly of ranching and agricultural communities.



Here is the current situation. Costa Rica has a government run medical system, but without sufficient resources to provide the needed services. In April, the hospital director reported that there were over 3000 people on the waiting list to receive an eye examination. Of course, once a person receives their vision prescription after their long-awaited eye exam, they may not have the resources to purchase eyeglasses. This is where Hopeful Ways can help.

A 27-person eye care medical brigade will arrive in Nicoya on January 27, 2024. During the 1-week eye care clinic, the brigade will deliver free eye exams as well as dispense eyeglasses, sunglasses, safety glasses, and eye health education for 1500+ needy people. People will also be screened for severe cataracts and other potentially abnormalities which may require surgery. These individuals will be referred to the hospital for follow-up treatment.

The end goal is to enhance people's lives by improving their vision, and protecting their eyesight through good eye health practices, like using safety glasses and sunglasses.

Nicoya Supplies Finally Ship

After 7 months of collecting, sorting, cataloguing, packing, loading and hauling supplies, 981 pounds of prescription eyeglasses, readers, sunglasses and equipment have shipped to Nicoya, Costa Rica. Thanks to the many volunteers who spent countless hours on various time-consuming tasks to prepare this shipment. A special thanks to NEXgistics and BTX who teamed up to transport the 2 pallets from Buffalo, NY to the port in Newark, NJ. From there the supplies will travel by ocean transport to Moin, Costa Rica, and overland to Nicoya via San Jose. The supplies are expected to clear Costa Rica Customs and arrive in Nicoya during late November.



Santo Tomas Eye Care Clinic Extends its Reach

During September, the Santo Tomás Lions Club partnered with Hopeful Ways and FONIPRECE Eye Clinic to help the people of Santo Tomás. People also traveled to Santo Tomás from 8 other communities covering a wide geographic area to attend the Eye Care Clinic. These people received free eye exams, and 20 people were identified as being nearly blind with severe cataracts. These people will have their eyesight significantly improved or restored with cataract surgery through the Hopeful Ways “Gift of Sight” program. These services would not be available in this region without the partnership of these 3 nonprofit organizations.



In the words of Santo Tomás Lions Club President Jorman Martinez,

“The Lions continue to be committed to the Visual Health of our community and its surroundings. Thanks to the Lions' management with **Hopeful Ways**, we've managed to get more people the benefit of specialist consultations and exams completely **FREE**. In this day, not only local patients were attended to, we received patients from Boaco, Juigalpa, Acoyapa, Villa Sandino, Muhan, El Coral, Rama and New Guinea. **Because where there is a need, there is a Lion.**”

Indeed, the **Lionism** philosophy also exists in the **Hopeful Ways** and **FONIPRECE** organizations with Lions members holding leadership positions of each organization.

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Our Values

Humility

Outreach

Passion

Enthusiasm

“Gift of Sight” Program Restores Eyesight

The Hopeful Ways “Gift of Sight” Program continues to enhance the lives of needy Nicaraguans and their families by improving and restoring eyesight for people with FREE eye surgeries.

Recently 20 people from the towns of Santo Tomas and Juigalpa were transported by their respective Lions Clubs to FONIPRECE / Ojo Sano Eye Clinic in Managua to receive free cataract surgery. These people were nearly blind with severe cataracts. That is, they each had 20/400 or worse vision in both eyes.

Cataract surgery is inaccessible for most people in Nicaragua. Severe cataracts are the leading cause of preventable blindness in developing countries. To receive sight restoring cataract surgery through the Hopeful Ways “Gift of Sight” program is a life changing experience that greatly enhances their lives. One older patient exclaimed “Now I will finally see my grandchild’s face clearly for the first time”. Other people are happy that they can now return to being breadwinners to support their family, instead of a burden to them. It is not uncommon to see tears of joy the next morning after surgery when the bandage is removed from the patient’s eye.



Bicycling for Sight Supports Eye Surgeries

The 6th annual “Bicycling for Sight” Fundraiser was successfully completed by Jim Carlins and Loretta Carlins. The 2-day event traversed the *Erie Canal Trailway roundtrip from Amherst, through Pendleton and Lockport, and onward to Medina. The event raised money to support cataract surgeries to restore eyesight for impoverished people and significantly improve their quality of life.*





Many thanks to Hopeful Ways' Partners and Sponsors for their continued cooperation and support. The success of our mission is a credit to their commitment and generosity.

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