

**To Fellow Loveland Rotarians who are interested in Mexico projects:  
Your help is needed to fund micro-credit entrepreneurship projects.**

Most of you are aware of our club project in Colonia San Martin Zapotitlan (14.8 miles Southwest of Tehuacan on highway 125 – the old very winding road to Oaxaca).



The human habitation in the area goes back to biblical times and the present city dates back to the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. The church built about 1,556 is still standing and in use! I have pasted general internet information about the community here.



## **Facts about Colonia San Martín**

### **Location of Colonia San Martín**

**Colonia San Martín** is located in the municipality of Zapotitlán in the Mexican state of Puebla with the GPS coordinates:

Longitude (dec): *-97.544722*

Latitude (dec): *18.280278*

### **Height over sea level of Colonia San Martín**

The locations medium height over sea level is 1640 meters.

### **Population in Colonia San Martín**

The overall population of Colonia San Martín is 267 persons, 133 of them are male and 134 of them are female.

### **Age distribution**

The population of this place consists of 135 minors and 132 adults, with 19 of them being 60 years and older.

### **Indigenous population of Colonia San Martín**

10 inhabitants of the location Colonia San Martín in Mexico live in indigenous households. 5 of the citizens 5 years and older, speak an indigenous language. The count of people who only speak an indigenous language without having knowledge of the Spanish language is 0 people, while 5 as well speak Spanish.

### **Social structure**

A legal claim on health care and social insurance benefits have 16 citizens of Colonia San Martín.

### **Economic situation**

In Colonia San Martín exist about 57 households. Of these households 57 are common houses or apartments, 27 are without floor and about 6 consist of one room only.

49 of the normal households have sanitary installations, 57 are connected to the public water supply, 55 have access to electricity.

The economic situation allows 4 households to own a computer, 15 own a washing machine and 37 households are equipped with one or more televisions.

### **School and education in Colonia San Martín**

Besides the 18 analphabets (illiterates) aged 15 or older, about 3 minors between 6 and 14 are not visiting a school.

16 inhabitants of the population of 15 years and older did not visit a school and 104 persons did not finish the school. 24 visited only the 6 years lasting primary school, 16 visited and finished the college or similar scholar institutions.

A total of 22 aged 15 to 24 years visited a school, the medium time school is visited through the whole population is 6 years.

You will probably remember seeing the Salinas salt evaporation ponds shown below along the side of the highway: The natural springs flow natural salt water into the ponds and the water evaporates leaving the salt to be gathered and sold. The table salt you find in Tehuacan likely came from the Zapotitlan Salinas ponds. The rock formations the springs flow over are jewelry grade ONYX and local artisans have fashioned items from the ONYX for centuries.



The San Martin community is located a few more miles down the road from the salt ponds. You may recall that not far away is the area of giant dinosaur tracks in

an ancient stream bed. The whole area in the hills above San Martin is covered with the gigantic elephant's foot cactus trees that grow for over a thousand years with the base trunk becoming 6 feet or more in diameter! We were told that a 2 foot diameter tree might be more than 100 years old!



Ownership of land in Mexico and most of the Spanish heritage world is through the ejido process. You don't actually have title to the land but you enjoy a type of semi-official land grant, originally from the Spanish crown but later in Mexico through permissions from a Notario (Notary Public) who is a licensed attorney with a special additional land judge title (Some call him a LAND GOD) who has dictator like abilities pertaining to the land. The local story, true or not, is that 30 or so years ago the ownership (or tenancy) for the valuable ONYX deposits in the area were taken away from the old responsible Salinas pond operators and given to corrupt groups who paid government bribes and then mined much of the high grade ONYX and sold it for counter tops, building materials, etc. The excess irresponsible mining was said to virtually destroy the ONXY artisan industry of the area. Most of the working male population, not having any work has long since left the area to work in the larger cities and many have also immigrated to the USA. The population that remains works hard to raise crops of maize and beans on small terraced fields. Our Rotary projects are intended to assist the population in creating and maintaining sustainable agriculture in their arid environment. We are also providing micro credit assistance for helping groups to create and manufacture desirable goods to be marketed to others in nearby cities as well as other countries. In other words **HELPING THEM LEARN TO FISH INSTEAD OF GIVING THEM FISH!**



They also have a few cattle but most livestock is goats which can graze on the vegetation of the very arid area. The area receives almost the same amount of rainfall as Loveland does but the rainy season is 3 to 5 months later than Loveland. The soil is gypsum and limestone and most of the water coming from sparse springs has high mineral content making it unsuitable for drinking but sometimes good for certain types of plants. John Turnage, Gary Camp, Michael Robeson and Ron Hogan visited San Martin in January, 2014 and viewed work in progress on development of sustainable agriculture utilizing hydroponic techniques developed in Israel through the OISCA international sustainable agriculture group. We viewed the very impressive modified drip irrigation hydroponics growing vegetables and fruit trees in a small wind screened shade enclosure in soil media buckets. Here you see John Turnage looking at a young Avocado Tree with large ripe fruit.



Below is lettuce growing in a traditional all wet hydroponic process. This process has the entire root structure growing a liquid only (non soil media).



There is very limited water available for substantial crops and the Tehuacan club asked for our Loveland club participation in an activity to develop additional water from existing known springs. Detailed analysis of the water coming from various springs has been made and some springs waters are suitable for drinking and some only for plant irrigation. We also noted that even in Tehuacan most of the water for drinking comes from large purchased bottles of water and not from the piped in city water. Every home has a tank on the roof or a submerged cistern to furnish water on the days that the city has no water supply available!

Returning from Tehuacan we exchanged many emails discussing effective ways that we might offer help to the San Martin area. Local engineers and geologists made studies and recommended that the existing springs be thoroughly cleaned of anything that might obstruct the flows. It was evident that all the local animals drink freely from the springs and it was recommended that the spring sources receive protective enclosure structures to protect the springs from animal contamination. Some springs had been in use before but several were no longer used because the feeder pipes from the springs had been damaged or otherwise no longer operable. One of the main springs was located more than 2 miles distant over very rough terrain and Manolo Herrero volunteered to have his surveyors and engineers perform a detailed topographic survey of the line in order to determine the needed repairs and to also make improvements in the grade slopes of the line so that proper pressure relief valves and air vacuum relief valves could be properly placed. The Tehuacan club and their Rotary District

agreed to pay for extensive work to rework the well source and build adequate protection from animal contamination and to first prove the feasibility of increasing the flow from the spring before the line rehabilitation was started.

Our Loveland club made application for a \$4,000 district grant (matched with \$4,000 from our club) for a total of \$8,000 to be used to rehabilitate the existing delivery system from the CONEJOS well that is located more than two miles away at a much higher elevation than San Martin. Our \$8,000 fund is still holding in the bank until the flow increase is verified. There has been a significant measured increase in flow however the rainy season has not occurred yet so we are still waiting to see the results before spending our Grant funds. I noted before that surprisingly the annual rainfall in San Martin is almost exactly the same as Loveland (400mm) but the rainy season at San Martin is 2 to 3 months later than Loveland so we are still waiting for adequate measurement results. The topographic survey and plans for the line rehabilitation have been completed by the local engineers and we have copies in hand for review and comments.

You will see from the photos evidence of great progress in the Rotary sponsored Rotary Community Corps activities inspiring the community to help themselves. The focus of all of our activities is to **TEACH TO THEM TO FISH INSTEAD OF GIVING THEM FISH** and this past week Loveland club president Julie, John Turnage and I received the following press release:

From: Elissa Tivona, Vice President  
United Nations Association, Northern Colorado Chapter  
Contact: etivona@harmonydesigngroup.com  
970-223-8944

#### **PRESS RELEASE:**

#### **Loveland Rotary Chosen for Coveted UNA International Humanitarian Award**

*Fort Collins, Colorado – May 6, 2015*

After a month-long review of candidates for the United Nations Association NoCO's International Humanitarian Award, the Outreach Committee nominated the Loveland Rotary Club for health and dental services to rural villages in and around Tehuacán, Mexico.

On May 6th, the UNA NoCO Board unanimously approved the nomination.

Loveland Rotary's project started as a gift of medical equipment to the Tehuacán municipal hospital, Mexico, accompanied by visits by professional members to instruct and assist. The donation evolved into water, agricultural, hearing aid and dental programs. The dental program has placed twelve portable dental clinics in the area staffed by Mexican intern dentists doing their year of national service, aided intermittently by visiting Loveland Rotarian dentists. See website [www.smileswithoutborders.com](http://www.smileswithoutborders.com)

According to Loveland Rotary members, Ron Hogan and Rev. Rev. John Turnage, the goal of Rotary's work is "TO EMPOWER RECIPIENTS SO THAT THEY CAN ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY TO SUSTAIN THAT WORK." The program in Mexico that inspired Rotary's nomination for the International Humanitarian Award provides a useful model for achieving this goal.

"Currently, these clinics serve in a public school attending children for a year and then move on to a new one. That work has become quite self-sustaining. To-date, nine thousand children have received dental healthcare," notes Turnage.

With the clinic program firmly established, Loveland Rotary has turned the main thrust of its humanitarian work to the establishment of a water system via wells, ditches, crop terraces and dams to provide water for domestic and agricultural use. These projects are funded through a matching grant system involving both Loveland and Rotary International and input from grant recipients.

As with the dental project, Loveland Rotary professionals provide professional assistance on occasion. However, Julie Johnson Haffner, President of Loveland Rotary stresses that all of the funds provided, the professional help given, the visits made have no other goal than to empower, to create a locally sustainable program.

UNA NoCO's Vice President and Outreach chair, Elissa Tivona points out that the IHA Award was established six years ago to recognize Northern Colorado initiatives that support the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For example, Article 25 of the declaration specifies that, "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care."

Tivona says, "The work of Loveland Rotarians animates these ideas, moves them from theory to practice. We hope this UNA honor will lend support for their future humanitarian efforts like the water system project."

Loveland Rotary joins the ranks of previous IHA winners, who have demonstrated an outstanding track record of service to global citizens:

- 2009 Inaugural recipient, Maury Albertson, Peace Corps Pioneer
- 2010 Binh Rybacki, founder and director of Children of Peace International
  - 2011 Shared award winners for work in Africa: the Dille/Dunbar Fund and the Murulle Foundation
- 2012 Norm Illsley, Lifetime Award for Humanitarian Service



- 2013 Kari Grady Grossman, founder and principal of Sustainable Schools International

In lieu of the IHA award in 2014, the Outreach Committee hosted the joint UNA/CSU Conference on the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals in concert with UNA chapters across the country. However this year UNA resumes the tradition of the IHA celebration.

Celebration of the IHA winner and a program featuring a presentation of their outstanding humanitarian service work will be held Sunday, September 13, from 3:00 to 5:00 at the Fort Collins Harmony Library.

The public is welcome.

**Additional Contacts include:**

Richard Rush  
2651 North County Road 29  
Loveland, Colorado 80538  
E-mail: [crush@frii.com](mailto:crush@frii.com)  
Phone (970) 667-5077

**It is indeed a pleasant surprise for our Loveland Rotary club to be chosen for this United Nations Association International Humanitarian Award!**

In preparation for a possible larger Global Grant project at San Martin our combined team of Loveland and Tehuacan Rotarians followed through on creating a **Rotary Community Corps** organization at San Martin (see [rotary.org/RCC](http://rotary.org/RCC) for full descriptive details of the how and why for an RCC). You will see in the photos the enthusiastic response from the San Martin community members. A team of 5 families joined together to finance and build the 1000 square meter shade facility and plant the hydroponic fed Pitaya Dragon Fruit crop. The Pitaya is native to the arid regions of Mexico but has not been exploited in Mexico. Other areas of the world that have grown the Dragon Fruit have experienced very profitable results. Internet search on Amazon shows the Dragon fruit at about \$10 each. A group of 22 women have formed an association and are also weaving baskets, purses and hats and are successfully marketing them in numerous places. Another group of 3 families joined together to create a composting company. They purchased a nine horsepower picadora mulcher to grind up corn stalks, grass and other plant

products to produce cattle and goat feed and composted fertilizer. Together they had \$900 but were short about \$150 and the Tehuacan club suggested that Loveland Rotary might help and they appealed to me for help. Gary Camp and I had visited San Martin, met the people and witnessed the dedication and determination of the residents. We discussed the situation of immediate need and agreed we would personally contribute help and would also ask other interested Rotarians to help fund a micro credit group at San Martin. We knew that other small groups would need help and we saw this is as a perfect opportunity to join with the Tehuacan club to institute a micro credit element into the San Martin community. Because of the existing but unfinished District Rotary Grant it would not be possible for Rotary to respond immediately. We also noted that donations made directly to a foreign entity are not eligible as a tax deductible donation and I had a visit with Moe Heth about the possibility of receiving donations for the San Martin Micro Credit project through our 501-C-3 Sonrisas Sin Fronteras Foundation so contributors could receive USA tax exempt contribution credits and he said yes and immediately made a personal substantial contribution. I phoned Arturo Neira, president of the Tehuacan club and he agreed that it was a great plan. I immediately sent the following letter on the next page to the Claudia Nicolas, president of our sister dental foundation in Mexico.

Claudia immediately responded that in order to move promptly, she would personally fund the \$2,000 to start the San Martin Micro Credit organization and I could pay her back in July!

I am now asking for your donations to fund the San Martin Micro Credit Group. You can make your check payable to San Martin Credit C/O Smiles Without Borders. I will prepare a certificate of donation to the 501-C-3 Sonrisas Sin Fronteras Foundation that you can use for your income tax filing.

**I look forward to your reply and hopefully a donation check for this opportunity to make it possible for these people to help themselves!**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronnie E. Hogan".

**Ron HoganTo**  
**rhogan2635@gmail.com**



## Sonrisas Sin Fronteras Foundation

501c3 FEIN 26-3092105  
1801 Rolling View Drive  
Loveland, Colorado 80537

May 5, 2015

To: Fundacion Sonrisas Sin Fronteras Mexico

Attention: President Claudia Nicolas,

Dear Ms. Nicolas,

The Rotary Club of Loveland, Colorado presently is working with the Club Rotario Tehuacan Manantiales to improve the domestic water supply and distribution for Colonia San Martin Zapotitlan Salinas under District 5440 grant #1411 and additional Rotary funding is not available until completion of the present grant.

The Manantiales club and the Loveland Club have helped form the San Martin Rotary Community Corps organization to help prepare for a larger Rotary Global Grant in the future. The San Martin community is responding remarkably well by working together in groups in small business ventures. Some of the small business ventures are in need of small loans. There are some members of the Loveland club who wish to make donations to be used to form a micro credit loan organization at San Martin. The Manantiales club will help organize the San Martin Micro Credit Group and will assist in formulating the rules extending the micro credit loans and their subsequent payback features. The board of Sonrisas Sin Fronteras Foundation Colorado will accept donations on behalf of the San Martin Micro Credit Group and will bring the money in cash to Mexico. This method will allow the donations to be credited as qualified 501-C-3 donations. This procedure will also eliminate the international bank transfer costs.

We respectfully request that Fundacion Sonrisas Sin Fronteras Mexico loan Sonrisas Sin Fronteras Foundation Colorado 30,000 Pesos payable to Club Rotario Tehuacan Manantiales for the use of the San Martin Micro Credit Group. The loan will be repaid on the visit from the Loveland group in July, 2015.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronnie E. Hogan".

Ronnie E. Hogan, Treasurer

**Also note that the Tehuacan club is inviting those who wish to come for a Tehuacan visit in July. See the following invitation letter from John Turnage:**

**Tehuacan Facts Sheet**

Dates: July 15 - 21/22, 2015 (The 21 to 22 date will be based on itinerary the Tehuacan club will develop)

Costs: 500 - 700 USD depending on airline and time of purchase

Hospitality: The Tehuacan club will arrange for us to stay in homes  
-Hospitality gifts are usually presented to the family

The Tehuacan club is looking forward to hosting us. To help them, the sooner you let me know you are going, the better and easier it is for them to plan. They need to know how many host families will be needed.

NEED: If you plan on going, I will purchase all tickets.

I need a commitment & funds by June 1, 2015 - I will try and give you an exact price.

I need a copy of your passport face page

Itinerary & Agenda:

- 1) Visit the San Martin community to visit the water project we co-sponsored
- 2) Help initiate the micro-financing program
- 3) Participate in President change program and festivities
- 4) Re-establish friendships
- 5) Pay our respects to Manolo Herrera & wife Christina at La Huerta

John Turnage - (970) 217-3335 or [jbkt@aol.com](mailto:jbkt@aol.com)





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ELEFANTE CACTUS**



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MARCELLA**











**CLOTHES SALE BAZAAR**



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ANIMALS AND WEATHER**



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REPAIRED EXISTING PIPE**



**INSPECTING THE NEW 1000 SQ. METER (10,763 SFT.)  
DRIP IRRIGATED HYDROPONIC SHADE GARDEN**



**THE PLANTS ARE 5 MONTHS OLD  
THEY ARE PITAYA DRAGON FRUIT  
CACTUS THAT IS NATIVE TO THE  
ZAPOTITLAN SANINAS REGION**



**DRIP IRRIGATED HYDROPONIC SHADE GARDEN  
CONCEPT USES MINIMAL AMOUNT OF WATER  
NECESSARY NUTRIENTS ARE ADDED TO THE WATER**



**THE PITAYA DRAGON FRUIT CACTUS IS NATIVE TO ZAPOTITLAN AND HAS BEEN ADAPTED ALL OVER THE WORLD. TYPICAL PRICE FOR FRUIT IS \$10 TO \$40 EACH!**