

Aqua Clara International

Water programs that empower communities. Effective. Simple. Local. Sustainable.

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue No 4 Summer/Fall 2009

Tackling Arsenic

Aqua Clara has taken on the challenge of providing an effective, inexpensive solution to arsenic contaminated water in Nicaragua.

Page 2

Affiliated Growth

AC's US training sessions have continued to send 'affiliate' programs into the field.

Page 2



H₂Ope in Mexico

AC continues its work in Mexico, and a continued partnership with Hope College is expanding our presence in Oaxaca.

Page 2

East African Growth



AC reaches out and improves its operations in Kenya - and soon, Uganda.

Page 3-4

Funding Opportunities

AC's work is always done in partnership with those who support and fund our efforts.

Read more here.

Page 7-8

Double Dollars

Friends of Aqua Clara have stepped forward to offer a 1-1 match of your donation, doubling your donation's impact!

Page 8



Some thoughts on ACI's Guiding Vision

A note from AC Founder and President, Bob McDonald.



Glenn Bruggers, early member of the AC family

From the beginnings of Aqua Clara Glenn Bruggers was both our friend and counsel. With his knowledge of how the world worked in many countries Glenn brought to us wisdom, a marvelous Christian perspective and his capacity to care for individuals and for mankind...and that with an intensity and love.

We shared with Glenn our plans, actions, failures...especially in the early stages of our African program. In turn, he added pragmatics, perspective and prayers into our work. Importantly, he also added the sense of grit needed to overcome the obstacles that go with bringing new things to the world. He spoke knowingly about not giving up when the odds speak to the contrary. Life had taught Glenn that lesson. Thus, being firmly rooted in his on-going relationship with God, Glenn helped transfer and embed that intense combination of faith and tenacity into the Aqua Clara program.

Thus, we prayerfully give thanks & remember our friend Glenn Bruggers.

We're hosting a reception with Peter Gleick

On October 6, Aqua Clara is proud to host a short reception with Dr. Peter H. Gleick of the Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment, and Security (www.pacinst.org). Dr. Gleick is an internationally recognized water expert, and is co-founder and president of the Pacific Institute. Peter will be in Holland offering the keynote address at Hope College's Critical Issues Symposium (www.hope.edu/cis/), and we're happy he's agreed to share some of his valuable time sharing food, drink and a few words with the wider AC family. **For more information** contact Marcia Buck at (616) 396-8511 or mbuck@aquaclara.org.

Josephina - Stubborn Hope!

AC's operations in Mexico continue to expand, based largely on several partners who are working effectively in their communities of focus. One of these partners is Dr. Robin Klay (Economics, Hope College), whose drive and mission regularly takes her to Oaxaca. The following article is written by Dr. Klay.

"Where in the world is Josefina???" This is a common question around the home and community of Josefina Cardenas Sanchez, a forty-something wife and mother of two sons, living on the outskirts of Puerto Angel, Oaxaca. This is a small beach town and fishing village on the southern Pacific coast of Mexico.

Josefina is often away from her home and town bringing the new technology of Aqua Clara filters to small towns nearby. She is welcome and trusted in these communities, because she works as a virtual full-time volunteer with Habitat for Humanity Mexico, training communities over nine-month periods to organize themselves and then start building each other's houses--without any help or funding from outside groups.

A couple of years ago, John Hesselink of Aqua Clara began talks with Habitat for Humanity leaders in the area about the idea of training people in their groups who could then start small businesses building filters for households in their communities. They were enthusiastic, because people who build their own homes through Habitat are precisely the kinds of people who look for ways to provide safe and healthy environments for their families--despite their poverty.

For a variety of reasons, it has not been easy to get a filter program started in this area. One is that a local Habitat volunteer leader feared that water bottling companies might resent the "competition" from Aqua Clara filter businesses and accuse them before the local authorities. When Josefina, who lives in another community, heard this, she told me, "Let them accuse us. We (poor people) have a right to clean water. Nobody can stop us. Besides, we already have the owner of a local bottling company helping out our Puerto Angel Habitat group, because he realizes that we are improving our lives and

those of other families in our community." I was breathless, but not surprised, because this is Josefina.

Since that conversation, Josefina has moved heaven and earth to present workshops to people in nearby villages. Despite interruptions from illnesses in her family, tropical rains that wipe out roads, and more things than most of us could imagine facing, Josefina does the work. Her severely handicapped mother and her father, uncles, and neighbors in a rural area near Puerto Angel, now have clean water to drink.

The burden of health care for these people is typically very high. Children are especially vulnerable to water born diseases. With clean water to drink, they will now spend more days in school. Their parents will be able to pay for them to continue school beyond the sixth grade, because they will have spent less on clinic fees and medicines, and have much less lost income due to caring for sick family members. With this small change, a water filter, and with encouragement from their families, these kids--some of whose parents are illiterate--will have the possibility of continuing through university and returning to contribute as doctors, engineers, scientists, teachers, and business owners.

Aqua Clara believes in relationships. Numbers of filters built are only one measure of our "success," because the investments that we make in persons, like Josefina, require what one Mexican poet calls, "stubborn hope." The people we work with have a passion for helping others. They have a persistent hope for the future that drives them to work hard and avoid getting distracted by reversals, jealousy, communication problems, and more. We believe in them, knowing that they, not Aqua Clara per se, will change lives one household and one community at a time. They will not be stopped. We are privileged to play a part and witness outcomes unimagined.



Other AC Updates from around the world...

AC affiliate program continues to expand

AC continues to offer training sessions in Holland (and, occasionally, elsewhere). We train church, mission, nonprofit and business groups, enabling them to take the AC program to their communities of service.

For example, Cornerstone Church was trained this spring, and in June and July, a team from Cornerstone launched a successful AC water program on Mfangano Island, in the middle of Lake Victoria!



AC continues towards a solution for arsenic contaminated waters

In Nicaragua, AC staff and partners uncovered several locations struggling with drinking water heavily contaminated with arsenic from local mining activities. The AC family has gone to work (supported by ERM) to find a simple, effective and affordable solution; initial field implementation is expected before the end of the year.





Update on AC in East Africa

If you want to walk fast, walk alone; if you want to walk far, walk with others.
 — African Proverb

This May and June, Scott and Claire travelled to Kenya. During their time there, over 500 individuals were trained at 11 separate training sessions. They represented nearly 60 different communities. Nearly 150 purifiers were constructed.

Aqua Clara staff are busily overseeing the expansion of AC water programs in our four 'core' countries - Nicaragua, Mexico, Kenya and Uganda. AC recently sent Scott and Claire to Kenya.

May and June Transfer Trip

During each trip, time is balanced between networking activities which allow us to more effectively manage and expand our program, training activities which expand the number of communities with 'water teams' trained in the manufacture, installation, promotion and

maintenance of AC Water Purifiers, and revisiting which allows us to check manufacturing and installation techniques for quality control while also helping to promote their program.

During this last trip, we travelled to various parts of Kenya, training new groups and overseeing existing programs. We trained in locations from Machakos to Busia, from Embu to the shores of Lake Victoria. We travelled 1,000s of kilometers and brought the AC program to many communities.



The last AC trip to Kenya saw 508 individuals trained at 11 training sessions in locations from Machakos to Embu to Kisii. Work has continued since these training sessions and the sites will be revisited this fall.

Networking

Along with conducting training sessions, we continue to work at expanding our network in Kenya. That is, we're continuing to contact, and be put in contact with, other individuals, organizations and businesses who are also trying to serve

Continued from page 3

communities in need. One example is a link with a Kenyan business owned by an active Rotarian. Mr. K.P. Doshi of Doshi Group of Companies has been active in other community development projects, and has ordered his business (with branches in cities across East Africa) to cooperate with us, heavily discounting the tools and materials we use to construct our purifiers. This contact has thus helped us keep our costs down, allowing us to reach more communities with fewer resources.

Additionally, we're linking our programs with a variety of other charities who are working in rural communities with training-based programming. For example, our work with Africa Development Initiatives continues, as their focus on training community groups in simple, effective high-yield small plot gardening techniques meshes very well with our own programs.

Indigenizing

We're continuing our process of indigenization - looking for more and more ways to make our program increasingly local-driven. We're training community water teams, and have begun working with event organizers as local circuit riders, who work to oversee several programs in their areas of responsibility. Working further on this will allow us to more efficiently, effectively, and sustainably offer both oversight and training in the future.

Upcoming travel

Our next trip to Kenya is planned for October 5 through November 6. During this upcoming trip, we will focus primarily on revisiting many of the sites launched with our past trip to ensuring proper construction techniques and run water tests, but equally as important to encourage continued work and to help promote and publicize their endeavor within their communities. Additionally, we will look to solidify our local (indigenized) oversight and communications.

Uganda on the Horizon

With our recent grant from British Airways (see page 8), we'll also be traveling into Uganda this coming November. We will work primarily in and around Mityana, and will be partnering with the Mityana Diocese of the Anglican Church in Uganda. We think this program holds great promise, and look forward to reporting on it in our next newsletter.

- Scott Rumpsa

Opportunity & Growth:

An increased focus on women as entrepreneurs

Since joining the Aqua Clara team as a volunteer in late 2009, I have been working on 3 main areas: planning the AC women's empowerment program; organizing US based training sessions; and beginning to research the work of Aqua Clara in the field.

My first transfer trip as part of the AC team was in May/June to Kenya. As each local community representative invited participants to our training sessions, we asked that at least 1 or 2 out of every



'water team' of 3 be a woman. This was the first part of our outreach to women... and it was a success. It was immediately obvious that the women understood the need for clean water and more importantly understood the daily challenges of getting clean water for their families. (In many places firewood is scarce so boiling water is difficult.) It was a joy to see how women listened and responded to the AC training. Water is overwhelmingly seen as 'women's work' in Kenya so it is vital that we reach them in the most relevant and appropriate way possible.



In the future, Aqua Clara Kenya hopes to partner with women's savings and self help groups in order to train and empower women through the AC program.

While in Kenya I also had the opportunity to begin some research for AC. I collected some baseline data about the participants at our training sessions including water source info; education level; poverty level etc. This will help us understand why some sites are more successful and also ensure that we have good feedback about how we can continue to improve and expand the AC program. We will also be able to better track the progress of the groups that are trained, so watch this space for updates!



It was a privilege to work alongside those who we trained in Kenya. Listening to people's stories and seeing the pride in their faces as they built their own purifiers confirm the importance and value of the AC program.

Check out page 6 to see how you can be more involved!

-Claire Rumpsa



A few photos...

We've been active over the last several months. Here are a few snapshots of our work over May and June in Kenya.



Stay up to date with AC's Growth!

Follow our activities by registering for e-updates at www.aquaclara.org. Help spread the word by forwarding our updates to your friends, family and colleagues.

Connect with us! Connect us with others who may be interested!

- Connect with us on social media sites Facebook and Twitter. Spread the word among your friends.
- Prefer to receive hard copies of our newsletter and other updates? Contact us and let us know.
- Share the work with others - share materials, present yourself, or put others in touch with us!



Many Passions & a Shared Mission - Get Involved!

Recently, Bob McDonald (AC President) was having lunch in Holland at Via Maria explaining to guests what Aqua Clara was all about and the work that Aqua Clara is doing. Chase Henriksen was our waiter that day. He caught some of the conversation and toward the end of lunch, he said, "Could I ask what you are talking about?" After the explanation, Chase said, "I want to be a part of this. Can you use me?"

Yes, we can! Chase, a Science student at Grand Valley, soon attended an AC training session, and then began volunteering his time on various AC projects. Currently, Chase is using his Spanish to translate our construction manual. The mission of Aqua Clara is compelling. **Volunteers like this are making a difference.** Thank you, Chase!

Do you too want to **get involved**? AC can use a variety of skills and passions. Simply contact us (details at right) and find a way to blend your passions and skills into the AC mission.

The AC Board

Bob McDonald — President
Mike Turco — Secretary
Bill Pierce — Treasurer
Chuck Fowler — Board Member
Ernest Blatchley III — Board Member
Marcia Buck — Board Member
William O. Jones — Board Member

The AC Team

AC's team is made up of a variety of individuals, working full and part time, paid (few) and volunteer (many). We are committed to our cause and are working diligently to expand our impact. Our individual contact details can be found on our website.

Public Relations

Marcia Buck at (616) 396-8511 or email mbuck@aquaclara.org.

Aqua Clara International
88 Sun Ridge
Holland, MI 49424

What your donation means...

Thanks to all AC's donors who make our work possible! Not a donor yet? Get involved in supporting AC programs - your efforts can make them happen. Spread the word and pool donations from your office, church, class, etc. Select from a few funding options below or contact AC for more options and additional information (see page 8).

Field Training Sessions



Aqua Clara sends staff to its four core countries of focus (Kenya, Uganda, Nicaragua and Mexico) to oversee current operations and expansion. A key part of any staff trip is conducting training sessions that train new 'community water teams', thereby empowering these teams to meet their own communities' needs for safe water.

Funding allows AC Staff to travel in order to train, launch and oversee new AC 'water teams' (local AC Franchises), which will be capable of continuing the promotion, manufacture, installation and maintenance of AC Water Purifiers after our trainers leave. Our goal is to hand-off life-saving knowledge so that community leaders can be empowered to answer one of the most pressing needs in their own location - how to provide affordable clean water.

\$2,500 allows AC to travel, train, launch and continue oversight and support over a network of up to 10 newly trained water teams.

Affiliate Growth and Support



Ongoing AC expenses are met by a variety of individuals, groups, foundations and businesses that contribute in a regular and sustained way. This enables AC to meet its operational expenses while being able to plan from a regular baseline of funding. Become one of our core funding partners by committing to a regular donation of any amount (annually, quarterly, monthly, etc.). Your regular commitment will enable all the work AC does.

A key component of our work is the training and support of affiliate programs. We conduct training sessions in the U.S. where interested people and organizations (churches, missionaries, other charities and businessmen and women) are trained in our program. These groups then travel to communities in need where they have pre-existing trust relationships, and bring the Aqua Clara program as another service.

Supporting these programs has expanded AC's reach into 14+ additional countries.

Choose your level of regular support.

Subsidized Programs



Kenya: We will work with a local AC Franchise (purifier manufacturing/ installation business) and a *rural hospital* to place subsidized units in the homes of many *very low income* households. These households are asked to pay a portion of the cost, and the rest of the full market price of a purifier is then covered by an outside funder (you!) so that water purifiers can be placed in locations where they are needed most. **\$1,000 can place 50 subsidized purifiers in Kenya.**

Nicaragua: Like the program detailed above, AC is working to place subsidized units in the homes of many *very low income* households. These households pay a portion of the cost as well as to contribute their own labor in the preparation of filler material, and the rest of the full market price of a purifier is then covered by an outside funder (you!) so that water purifiers can be placed in locations where they are needed most. Many purifier sales are being negotiated on a village-wide basis with the *cooperation of local officials*. **\$750 can place 50 subsidized purifiers in Nicaragua.**

British Airways Recognizes Aqua Clara's Growth Potential

AC receives award from British Airways

This September, it was just announced that B.A. has selected Aqua Clara to be a recipient in its *The Face of Opportunity* grant award program.

This award will provide Aqua Clara with two round trip tickets to Uganda as well as invites to London networking events.

This will not only help further publicize Aqua Clara's program, but will enable us to launch our program in Uganda yet this year (flights departing Nov. 17).

AC Donors - Making H₂Ope Happen

AC's work is made possible by a wide ranging network of businesses and individuals who commit their resources to furthering the AC Mission. Thank you to all who make this important work possible. *If you'd like to contribute today, cut and return the form below, donate online at www.aquaclara.org or contact Marcia Buck at (616) 396-8511 or mbuck@aquaclara.org.*

Double your donation challenge! *You have a special opportunity to DOUBLE your donation! We all know how easy it is to see our money disappear, but rarely do we have a chance to see our money double.*

THIS IS THE TIME!

A very special friend of Aqua Clara will double the donations that we receive before the end of this year! That means, for example, that your \$500 donation will grow to \$1,000! In this time of global economic challenges, Aqua Clara too is being careful with every donation to make sure that it is used as effectively as possible. That is why we are excited to have this wonderful opportunity to maximize your donation through this challenge. With an austere budget, the Aqua Clara staff is stretching present funding so we can meet our program commitments. Every donation – no matter how large or small – will help us to achieve this challenge and fulfill our program commitments. Thank you for your consideration of this Double Challenge and for your continuing prayer support! You are making a difference.



Aqua Clara International

Donation Card

- My company will match my gift.
- I want to help spread the word about Aqua Clara.
- Please call me regarding this donation.
- Please use my donation where it is needed most.
- I want to target my donation to a specific region.
- I want to target my donation to a specific AC program.

Your donation will enable Aqua Clara to provide cheap, clean water in areas of extreme need. Aqua Clara is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Please mail check with this card to:

Aqua Clara International
88 Sun Ridge
Holland, MI 49424

Please make check payable to:

Aqua Clara International



Name: _____	Amount: \$ _____
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If you prefer to pay by credit card: Please go to www.aquaclara.org, click on the donate button, and make a donation by the card of your choice.

Notes and additional information: