



# MONARCH WATCH



*Dedicated to Education, Conservation and Research*

## *Adopt-a-Classroom Annual Report - February 2002*

¡Muchas Gracias, Monarch Watchers!

Thanks to the support of many contributors and the donations from numerous schools, the Monarch Watch crew made another trip (1-15 January) to Mexico on behalf of the Adopt-a-Classroom Program. The goal of this program is to provide resources for the rural schools in the vicinity of the overwintering monarch colonies. Our objective is to facilitate education, particularly in science and math, by providing teachers and schools with appropriate materials. Our hope is that the children, future landholders of the Monarch Reserve, will develop a better understanding of the value of monarchs and will ultimately aid in their conservation. To learn more about this program, see the flyer included with this report or visit our website at

[www.MonarchWatch.org/aac](http://www.MonarchWatch.org/aac)



*A few students at Niños Heroes take a break from their studies and smile for a quick photo.*

### *Travelogue*

After weeks of preparation, we (Jim Lovett, Cathy Walters and Sarah Heimovics) left Lawrence for Texas on the morning of 1 January. We arrived in McAllen, TX on the afternoon of 2

January where we loaded more materials from the storage unit into the 15-passenger van, and prepared all the required paperwork to present to the



*A small sampling of the TONS of books and other materials distributed to the schools.*

Mexican authorities at the border. Later that day we met with O. R. "Chip" Taylor (Director of Monarch Watch), and Janis Lentz a teacher at Weslaco High school who has been instrumental in developing curricular materials and locating sources of books for this program. After shopping for more supplies in McAllen on the morning of the 3rd, we headed for the border and managed to clear customs by 3pm. The roads were good and the traffic was light enabling us to reach a motel in Matehuela just after 9pm. By leaving early the following day, and skipping lunch, we reached our final destination at the house of Señora Colin around 4pm. This house is in the ejido (community) of El Paso, near Ocampo, in the Mexican State of Michoacán. Our arrival was a day early and the house was not ready, which lead us to an overnight stay at the Monarch Inn in nearby Zitacuaro.

After shopping for food on Saturday

morning we headed for our temporary home and headquarters for the distribution of the material in El Paso. José Luis Alvarez of the Michoacán Reforestation Fund agreed to help by transporting the textbooks, which were donated to us by several schools in Southern Texas. Shortly after dark the truck with the books arrived. The mass of books in the truck weighed an astounding four and a half tons! This was more than we had envisioned - we had never seen all the books together in one place. It took an hour to unload the books and most of the next morn-

At the end of each school year, states discontinue the use of some school textbooks. These out-of-adoption textbooks are then returned to the publisher or the state textbook depository where they are either recycled or destroyed! Many of these books have never even been used and those in Spanish are of particular value to our program.

Thanks to the assistance of school districts in south Texas, we obtained four and a half tons of Spanish edition textbooks in 2001 for the schools in Mexico. The school districts of Donna, Hidalgo, La Villa, McAllen, and Weslaco donated hundreds of new math texts and workbooks for grades K-2 as well as reading, science and health textbooks for grades 1-6. During our visits to schools in Texas we met with several textbook coordinators to learn about the textbook adoption process. Everyone was eager to help the students in Mexico and all agreed that it is better to put these materials to good use rather than to recycle them!



Three students at Lazaro Cardenas laugh as they look at photos of themselves and their classmates that were taken last year.

ing to sort them by subject and grade level. The sheer volume and quality of the materials acquired in Texas were exciting but also overwhelming since it seemed impossible to deliver all these materials to schools in only one week. On Sunday afternoon, we took a break and headed for El Rosario where Chip and Janis bought tags and the rest of the crew headed up the mountain to see the monarch colony.

### *Visits to the Schools*

Delivering textbooks and supplies to twenty-seven rural schools in five days is not an easy task. Many of the schools are on narrow dirt roads in the mountains making travel slow. The schools we support are near or within the Monarch Reserve area. Though we do distribute supplies to some schools in more populated areas of Ocampo and Angangeo, our focus is primarily on smaller, rural schools because these schools encounter greater difficulty in acquiring the necessary classroom supplies and textbooks.

Each evening, we loaded the van with supplies for the five to six schools we planned on visiting the following day. Because most of the schools are only open until 2pm, the amount of time we spent at each school had to be kept relatively short. Once we arrived at a school, we met with the teachers or the director to explain that the materials are donations from schools and individuals in the United States. Enthusiastic students crowded around the van to receive supplies and books

to take into their school. Students were often competitive and would make it a contest to see who could carry more supplies. This year the most popular item we delivered turned out to be beautifully illustrated storybooks for grades 3-5. At several schools students voluntarily picked up these books and read aloud to others and in a few cases we sat down with the students to read along with them. At each school we presented a laminated poster with color pictures taken at the school the previous year. These pictures always attracted a crowd as well as many excited comments and giggles as students recognized themselves or their friends in the pictures. We hope to do the same next year with some of the many photos we took on this trip.

One of the delights of this trip was meeting Dave Kust and his family in Angangueo. Dave is on sabbatical from Breck school in Minneapolis, MN



Dave Kust helps deliver supplies for Guadalupe Victoria to a nearby family who offered to keep them until school was in session the following week.

and he chose to spend much of his leave studying monarchs and assisting the Journey North program [www.learner.org/jnorth](http://www.learner.org/jnorth) with their symbolic butterfly migration in the area schools. Dave was of great assistance to us, and he helped deliver materials to a number of schools. Dave is also helping us by buying tags at the overwintering sites.

Our trip was too short to learn as much as we would like to about the schools, communities, and people in this area. However, we have noticed a number of improvements in the communities over the years. Last year we gave a ride to a teacher who talked about her facilitation of satellite communications with secondary schools. This year we visited two secondary schools with operational satellite links. While visiting Lazaro Cardenas, we spotted a large satellite receiver outside a small wooden structure that turned out to be a temporary secondary school with two classes. In one of the classrooms the students were watching "Geography Lesson #49," an impressive video on South America. We were amazed and encouraged. This was a very rural school and yet it was "connected" with the students receiving high-quality instruction in many subject areas that were different from the training and expertise of their teachers. Evidently, Mexico is striving to connect all secondary schools in the country via satellite to a video curriculum provided in Mexico City. Many of the secondary schools are close to primary schools and as the standard of living increases in Mexico, it should be possible to connect primary schools to satellite instruction as well.

### *Our Last Night*

On Friday, after completing our trips to the schools, we were invited to dinner at the home of Señora Colin. She is the director of one of the schools, Emiliano Zapata, and the owner of the house in which we stayed. We also arranged to meet with Jordi Honey-Roses of the World Wildlife Fund Mexico (WWF-MX) and Brian Mann of National Public Radio late in the day and they were able to join us at Señora Colin's house for dinner. Chip had a brief opportunity to interact with both Jordi and Brian and to be interviewed by Brian who is doing a story on the WWF-MX program (funded in part by the Packard Foundation) to assist the ejidos. The dinner was excellent and a lively discussion ensued about the WWF-MX project to compensate the members of the ejidos for not cutting down the trees. At the end of the



*Janis Lentz reading aloud from one of the storybooks as students gather around to listen and read along with her.*

evening one of the guests, a former President of the municipality of Ocampo, presented each of the Monarch Watch crew with a certificate of appreciation for the gifts of the books and supplies on behalf of the community and the schools. This appreciation extends to all of you who made this effort possible through your donations and shipments of supplies to Monarch Watch.

### ***What's next for Adopt-a-Classroom?***

With your help Adopt-a-Classroom will continue. We have established connections to obtain donations of large volumes of Spanish language textbooks and with the school supplies provided by many of you, we will have enough materials to deliver to the schools next year. In fact, we may be able to acquire more books than we can deliver. If this should happen, we will seek partners to help us distribute the books to additional schools in Mexico. Our focus has been on primary schools; however, secondary schools, even though they are connect-



*Students at Lazaro Cardenas examining the materials that we brought their school.*

ed via satellite links, have relatively few books and supplementary materials. We are interested in helping these schools as well.

We are always seeking ways to maximize our impact, but our effectiveness is largely driven by the donations since we don't have the resources to buy materials for the schools. This year we were pleased to receive and deliver over 400 Spanish language math workbooks to the 30 kindergardens in the municipality of Ocampo. These schools have over 300 students but no textbooks with which to introduce students to numbers, counting, colors, letters and words. It was rewarding to see how well these materials were received by the teachers. We will be looking for similar resources in the future.

### ***Schools That Received Supplies***

- Benito Juárez
- Educación y Patria
- Francisco I Madero
- Jóse Palomares Quiróz
- Miguel Hidalgo
- Escuela Secundaria Tecnica
- Gregorio Torres Quintero (Kinder.)
- Juaquín Fernández de Lizardi (Kinder.)
- Rendención del Campesino (AM & PM)
- San Cristobal Secundaria
- Benito Juárez
- 18 de Marzo
- 20 de Noviembre
- El Soldado (Kinder.)
- Francisco I. Madero
- Gregorio Torres Quintero
- Laguna Verde
- Miguel Hidalgo
- Adolfo Lopez Mateos
- Amado Nervo
- Ignacio López Rayón
- Jóse María Morelos
- Lázaro Cárdenas
- Guadalupe Victoria
- Lázaro Cárdenas
- Niños Héroes San Luis

Dave Kust will deliver supplies to three schools (Melchor Ocampo, Vicente Guerrero, and Emiliano Zapata) which were closed the day we attempted to deliver supplies.

### ***What You Can Do To Help***

#### **Buy a Butterfly Garden Kit!**

Monarch Watch is currently taking orders for Butterfly Garden Kits (\$25). They are available now for spring planting and make great gifts. By purchasing the garden kit not only will you be doing something to help monarchs and other butterflies in the United States, but you will also be assisting the schools within the Monarch Reserve in Mexico. A portion of the proceeds from each sale directly supports the efforts of the Adopt-a-Classroom program.

These kits consist of 25 seed packets (about 100 seeds each) of annuals and perennials which are known butterfly nectar plants and/or host plants for butterfly larvae. A booklet which describes how to plant and care for each species is also included. Please visit our website for further details.

#### **Donate to Adopt-a-Classroom!**

There are many ways you can get your school or organization involved in this worthwhile project. We hope you can find a way to incorporate the Adopt-a-Classroom effort into your school activities. A contribution form and contact information are included for your convenience.

#### **Donate School Supplies!**

At the end of every school year there are perfectly good school supplies that end up in the trash. Why not collect the used (but not used up\*) school supplies that your class has at the end of the year and send them to Monarch Watch (our address is on the order form). The children in the schools in Mexico are without basic supplies and this is a terrific, low-cost way of donating to a worthy cause. Items the children need include: markers and crayons, pens and pencils, pencil sharpeners, erasers, scissors, glue, protractors, metric rulers, calculators, compasses, unused construction paper, and unused paper. Please do not send used spiral notebooks.

\*Please make sure you are sending supplies that are still useful. It takes us a lot of time to select out items that should have been thrown away.

# We Couldn't Do It Without You...

We wish to thank:

**Janis Lentz** for her help in locating textbooks and supplies, and assisting with the delivery of the materials;

**Leah Slaven** for providing us access to her "Buddy Passes" which we used to fly to Texas to collect the donated textbooks;

**Ruben Garza** of Daniel B. Hastings Inc. Custom Brokers for donating his time and advice;

**Dave and Kay Kust** for dinner and for their help in delivering supplies to some of the schools;

**Karen Schaeffer** and **José Luis Alvarez** for transporting textbooks from Texas to Mexico;

**José Luis Alvarez, Ed Rashin,** and **Bob Small** of The La Cruz Habitat Protection Project and the Michoacán Reforestation Fund, as well as **Sra. Domatila Miranda Colin** for the use of

the house in El Paso;

**Sra. Domatila Miranda Colin** for providing an opportunity for us to meet and discuss with other teachers from the area over a wonderful dinner; and

**Kaidan, Inc.** (kaidan.com), **VR Toolbox, Inc.** (vrtoolbox.com), and **Minds@Work, LLC.** (mindsatwork.net) for donating equipment to help us share the trip with you - visit [www.monarchwatch.org/aac/2002](http://www.monarchwatch.org/aac/2002)

**Monarch Watch would also like to thank all of you who donated to the Adopt-a-Classroom program in 2001. We apologize if we neglected to acknowledge any donations. Please notify us if we need to update our list.**

## Individuals and Organizations that Donated \$100 or More

Carol Armbrust; Roy Beckemeyer; Velma Begley, South Shore Charter School; Debra Bishop; John Brown; Elizabeth Brown; Donn Byrne; Susan Casker, Connoquenessing Valle Elementary School; Sandy Cavanaugh, Grapevine Garden Club; Gillian Cusack; Sarah Dalton; Ken de Waal Malefyt, Hudsonville Christian School; William Dunk; Alan Fiero, Farnsworth Middle School; Jim & Teresa Gallion; Jacalyn Goetz; Janice Gray, Preston Elementary; Sammy Hensel-Hunter c/o Edith Hunter; Anne Kenney; Heather Long, Eanes Elementary; Fran Ludwig; Jonne Mc Carron; Judy Mc Intyre, Oak Grove Primary; Virginia Millard, Roosevelt School; Paul Milner; The Minneapolis Foundation; Colleen Mitchell;

Monarch Research Associates; Barbara Nelson; Kathleen Nevala, Washburn Elementary; David Novello; Shelia Parker and her Third Grade Class; Quittapahilla Audubon Society; Millie Ramsey, Kindergarten Classes at Porter School; Karen Rieser, Amberly Elementary School; Lynn Rosenblatt; Betty Sanders; Bonnie Smith; Victor Volkman, E. Klopp Library; Karen Washburn, Sheldon Elementary; Frances Welden; Gary Zang.

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## Individuals and Organizations that Donated School Supplies

Burton Elementary; Centennial Elementary; Becky Collins, David Lipscomb Elementary; Kathy Davis, Hillcrest Elementary; Donna ISD; Educational Resources; Hidalgo ISD; Carol James,

Talbot Elementary; Carole Jordan; Bob and Shirley Kasper; Dave Kust, Breck School; Janis Lentz; Anne Macpher, Harvey Green Elementary; Pat Mc Donald; La Villa ISD; Leah Mc Dowell, Haine Elementary; Patty Mc Leod, Bangor Christian School; Bob Melton, Putnam City Schools; Morton School; Moyock Elementary; Pet Junction; Preston Elementary; Randi Reed, Collins Drug; Kaki Robinson; Lyn Silcock, Glenwod High School; Syrene Slegona; Alice Story; Union Public Schools; Tom Vecker; Weslaco ISD; Elaine Winslow.

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This year we received the single largest donation to the program from The Minneapolis Foundation who gave \$1,000.00 to the Adopt-a-Classroom Fund.

*Thank you for your support!*



*A few of our new friends at Francisco I. Madero crowd around the camera for one final photo before we say goodbye. ¡Adiós Amigos!*

### Monarch Watch Adopt-a-Classroom Financial Statement

Expenses	
Promotion of Project (brochures, mailings, etc.)	\$1,826.00
Musical recorders	280.00
Calculators	180.00
Typewriters	60.00
Transportation of ~4.5 tons of books	1,750.00
Monthly storage fee (McAllen, TX - 12 months)	552.00
Customs duties & taxes paid at the border	181.00
Separate trip to TX to collect 4.5 tons of books	715.76
Travel expenses for trip (hotel, food, and miscellaneous supplies)	1,528.05
Transportation for trip (airfare, van rental, gas, insurance and tolls)	1,557.44
Salary (three full-time staff for two weeks on the road)	3,591.94
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>12,222.19</b>
Income	
Donations for Adopt-a-Classroom	\$7,987.75
Millennium Garden Kit Contributions	1,390.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>9,377.75</b>
Summary	
Total Income	\$9,377.75
Total Expenses	12,222.19
Income - Expenses	-2,844.44
(This difference was covered by Monarch Watch's operating budget)	