

MONARCH WATCH

DEDICATED TO EDUCATION, CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH ADOPT-A-CLASSROOM ANNUAL REPORT - FEBRUARY 2001

Monarch Watchers made it happen once again. Thanks to the support of many contributors and the donations from numerous schools, the Monarch Watch crew made another trip (2-16 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



Cathy (buried under boxes) and Dana sort through school supplies in El Paso. Photo by Jim Lovett 1-7-01.

It takes several months to prepare for this trip. We assemble Math & Science Kits, obtain donations from participants, design and print posters, and sort and repackage donated supplies. This year, in response to requests from teachers and principals we spoke with last year, we acquired five posters

illustrating human anatomy. A number of U.S. schools donated year-end school supplies while others purchased new supplies with money



Two students at Miguel Hidalgo (Los Remedios) pose for the camera. Photo by Jim Lovett 1-10-01.

obtained through fund-raising efforts. Your contributions enabled us to purchase materials for the Math & Science Kits to accompany the Spanish language curriculum prepared by Janis Lentz, a teacher from C. C. Mason Elementary School (Cedar Park, TX). Thanks to Jim Lee, Manager of the Texas State Textbook Depository, and Janis Lentz, we were able to obtain over 2000 Spanish science and math textbooks (weighing more than 4000 lbs and valued at over \$80,00) for distribution to the schools this year.

On 2 January the Monarch Watch staff (Jim Lovett, Dana Wilfong, and Cathy Walters) loaded the supplies and materials into a van (rented from the University of Kansas) and drove to McAllen, TX. The textbooks had already been sent to Michoacán by truck. In McAllen, the staff met with Janis Lentz, O. R. "Chip" Taylor (Director of Monarch Watch), and Wayne Wehling (USDA). Wayne graciously transported some of our materials in his rented vehicle. After a two-

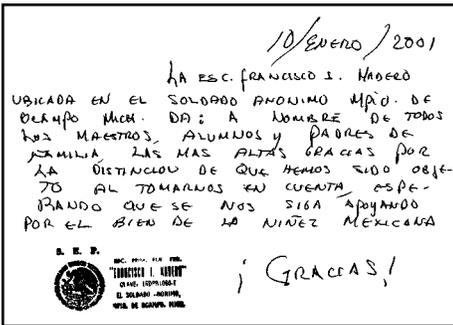
day drive into Mexico, we arrived at "the pink house" in El Paso, a small community near Ocampo and Angangueo. The use of the house during our stay in Mexico was provided to us at no cost by José Luis Alvarez and the Michoacán Reforestation Fund. Thanks to José Luis and to Karen Schaeffer more than ninety boxes of books were at the house when we arrived on Saturday evening.

Much of Sunday was spent organizing the materials and over the following five days we distributed materials to twenty-nine schools (two of which received two sets of materials for the separate morning and afternoon sessions).

Last year we distributed materials to eighteen schools. Twelve new schools were added to the list this year thanks to the help of José Luis Alvarez and Señora Domatilla Miranda Colin, an elementary school principal, who mapped out the school locations for us. Eugenio Salazar Sanchez (a school principal) and Alejandro Pulido Pedraza (director of the school district in Ocampo) accompanied us to many of the schools and introduced us to the principals and teachers. José Luis and



Melchor Ocampo, a small school nestled in the mountains. Photo by Jim Lovett 1-10-01.



Translation of the letter (above) written by Juan Mendoza Díaz, principal of Francisco I. Madero School near Ocampo: "Francisco I. Madero School located in El Soldado Anónimo, Municipio de Ocampo, Michoacán in the name of all the teachers, students, and parents, gives you the highest thanks for the distinction of being selected as the object of your consideration, hoping that you continue aiding us for the benefit of the children of Mexico. Thank you!"

Sra. Colin assisted greatly by taking supplies to two schools that we could not reach.

The school system in Mexico presents a stark contrast to that in the United States. Many schools are nestled in the mountains on dirt roads that are nearly impassable. The classrooms have



The outdoor classroom at Lázaro Cárdenas. Photo by Chip Taylor 1-11-01.

poor lighting and are unheated. Teaching aids and supplies are often lacking or in short supply. Some schools have one session each day, with students attending classes most of the day. However, many schools have both morning and afternoon sessions with separate principals, teachers and students. Students in these schools are in class for only four to five hours each day. Many of the children near the Reserve sell postcards and trinkets to tourists, which means that on Fridays, when tourist traffic is high, they miss school because they have to work.

Teacher training is also different from that in the United States. The qualifications for rural teachers are minimal and only an elementary education is

required to teach in these schools. In larger schools, most of the teachers have four to five years of training and a few of the teachers have Master's degrees. Some of the teachers travel two to three hours each day due to the remote locations of the rural schools. Despite the challenges facing these teachers, many are devoted to their students and their profession.

The principals and teachers were very receptive to the donations of educational materials and one principal's reaction was particularly touching. It was raining when we pulled up to Francisco I. Madero School near Ocampo. We unloaded the school supplies and explained the purpose of our visit in the office of the principal, Juan Mendoza Díaz. He thanked us profusely and with tears in his eyes, he wrote us a letter which we wanted to share with you (SEE LETTER THIS PAGE).

Of the twelve new schools we visited, Lázaro Cárdenas, a school in its first year, was the most difficult to get to but also the most memorable. As we approached the school, the children were crowded around two young male teachers. We were greeted by the usual groups of curious students and as we entered the classroom we found this to be the school in the most need of supplies. There was one small enclosed building that was poorly lit and crowded with students. Seventy-eight students attend this small school. Another classroom building was open to the air (SEE PHOTO AT LEFT) and in one corner there were remnants of a small fire, apparently built to keep out the chill. Despite all outwardly appearances and the lack of supplies, there were great things happening inside the classroom. We could see that the teachers had a great relationship with their



Dana (l) and Cathy (r) with their new-found friend Ruby at Emiliano Zapata. Photo by Jim Lovett 1-9-01.

students.

A favorite at this, and many other schools, was the gift of slide sets of artwork and slide viewers. To demonstrate the materials, Janis pulled out a slide of the Great Pyramids and placed it in a slide viewer. When we left thirty minutes later the children were still passing around the slide of the Pyramids and explaining to each other what the picture depicted (PHOTO BELOW).



Students at Lázaro Cárdenas show each other how to use the slide viewers. Photo by Dana Wilfong 1-11-01.

The students at all of the schools were wonderful. They often rushed up to the van eager to help, holding out their hands waiting for books and materials to take back to their classrooms. A tiny little girl named Ruby greeted us at the school named after the famous revolutionary, Emiliano Zapata. She waited patiently for supplies to carry into the school. Her quiet demeanor was endearing and she latched onto Cathy as if she were her long lost sister, holding her hand and asking questions in a quiet voice (SEE PHOTO THIS PAGE). We all had opportunities to practice our Spanish with the school children. They were eager to ask about our technical equipment, namely the digital camera and tiny GPS unit (used to mark the school locations). Showing students their pictures on the digital camera brought smiles and laughter. Our presence at the schools seemed to be a reason for awkward smiles and curious but cautious stares from the younger children. Walking into a classroom sometimes started a cascade of giggles and the sight of our outstretched hands in greeting caused some of the students to wiggle away and slump down into (and often under) their desks. The students added value to this whole trip and reminded us all why we were there.



Janis Lentz shows off the human health and anatomy posters to students at Lazaro Cardenas.

Photo by Dana Wilfong 1-11-01.

We were touched by the hospitality we encountered on our trip. We were given a place to stay, offered guidance to the schools, given food by a local grocer, invited to have a cafecito in a teacher's home with her family, shown a collection of artifacts collected by school children, and generally welcomed everywhere we went.

We have two goals for the future of Adopt-a-Classroom. First, this spring we plan to obtain several tons of Spanish textbooks designed to promote reading skills from the Texas State Textbook Depository. The second is a conditional goal. We are trying to obtain a letter from the Governor of Michoacán which will enable us to ship donated equipment such as used computers and overhead projectors into Mexico. At present, duties are so high we are restricted to donations of basic supplies, materials and textbooks. If we receive this letter, we will use the website and Season Summary to solicit donations of used computers and other equipment for delivery to the schools next year.



Alejandro Pulido Pedraza, Eugenio Salazar Sanchez, Juan Mendoza Díaz, Chip Taylor, Dana Wilfong, Janis Lentz and Cathy Walters at Francisco I. Madero (near Ocampo).

Photo by Jim Lovett 1-10-01.

The teachers in Mexico were very pleased with the supplies we brought them and asked for more of the same for next year. The textbooks were a big hit and we hope to expand the school libraries with more donations next January. Below is a list of the schools that received supplies thanks to your support for Adopt-a-Classroom.

Schools that received supplies:

18 de Marzo
20 de Noviembre
Alvaro Obregón
Amado Nervo (AM & PM)
Benito Juárez (Las Jaras)
Benito Juárez (Ocampo)
Cerro Prieto
Educación y Patria
Emiliano Zapata



A student at Miguel Hidalgo (Los Remedios) helps carry books into his school.

Photo by Jim Lovett 1-10-01.

Francisco I. Madero (Anganguero)
Francisco I. Madero (Ocampo)
Gregorio Torres Quintero
Guadalupe Victoria (Ocampo)
Ignacio López Rayón
José María Morelos
José Palomares Quiróz
Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi
Lázaro Cárdenas (Anganguero)
Lázaro Cárdenas (Anganguero, new)
Lázaro Cárdenas (El Capulin)
Melchor Ocampo (Ocampo)
Miguel Hidalgo (Ocampo)
Miguel Hidalgo (Los Remedios)
Niños Héroes de San Luis
Pedro Asencio
Presidente Callas
Redención del Campesino (AM & PM)
Vicente Guerrero (Macheros)
Vicente Guerrero (Las Palmas)

Note: Many of the schools are named for famous people or dates in Mexican history. This could be the basis for a lesson in Mexican history in your school.

What You Can Do To Help

Buy a Butterfly Garden Kit!

Monarch Watch is currently taking orders for Millennium 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 the Monarchs and other butterflies in the U. S. but you will also be assisting the schools in the Monarch Reserve in Mexico. Ten dollars of the cost for the kit is a tax-deductible contribution to 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 preparing the Math & Science curriculum, helping to locate textbooks and supplies, getting her students involved, and assisting with the delivery of the Kits;

Jim Lee, Manager of the Texas State Textbook Depository, for donating textbooks;

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

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

José Luis Alvarez, **Ed Rashin**, and **Bob Small** of The La Cruz Habitat Protection Project and the Michoacán

Reforestation Fund, as well as **Sra. Colin** for the use of the house in El Paso; and

Sra. Domatilla Miranda Colin, **Eugenio Salazar Sanchez**, and **Alejandro Pulido Pedraza** for taking the time to help us locate the schools.

¡Muchas Gracias!

Monarch Watch would also like to thank all of you who donated to the Adopt-a-Classroom program in 2000. 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
Sharon Barnett
John Beck, Jr.
Rose Brunner (Arkansas M.S.)
Rebecca Clemens
The Cloud Foundation
Joyce Davis
Ken De Waal Malefyt's 7th Gr.
(Hudsonville Christian School)
Nancy Dott
Joan Folse
Mary Ginley (Center School)
Laurel Godley
Donna Haddon
Jane Hill-Rosato (Knowlton Twp. Elem.)
Sharon Howard (Udall Elem.)
Judith Jackson
Anne Kenney
Charlene Koehl (Knowlton Twp. Elem.)
Jean Ladd (Clinton Young Elem.)
Dona Little
Idell Ludwig (Lyter Elem.)
Fran Ludwig
Teresa Mallon (Midland Park H.S.)

Judy Matthews
Jonne Mc Carron
Laurie Mc Kean
Paul Milner
David Novello
John Obrycki
Gard Otis
Pam Owens & Jan Eversole
Mary Pearson
Barbara Plunkett (Knowlton Twp. Elem.)
Millie Ramsey's K-classes (Porter School)
Karen Rieser (Amberly Elem.)
William Rountree, Jr
St. James Episcopal School
Cyrene Slegona
Robert Small (MRF)
Tom Uecker
Victor Volkman (E. Klopp Library)
Karen Washburn (Sheldon Elem.)
Frances Welden
Adrian Wenner
Cathy Wertz
Shelby Wilber (Butterfly Society of VA)
Jessica Winslow

Individuals and organizations that donated school supplies:

Karen Anderson (Pet Junction)
Chili's Grill & Bar (Lawrence, KS)
Joslyn Cleary's 2nd Gr. (Concord Acad.)
Betty & Brianna Englen
Freestate Brewing Co. (Lawrence, KS)
Miss Ginniff's 1st Gr. (Reynolds Elem.)
Marcia Hawkins (Arrow Springs Elem.)
Shirley Kasper
Morton School
Barbara Petty
Dennis Petty
Robin Roche (Insect Sci. Ed. Outreach)
Elizabeth O. Snyder (Falling Spring Elem.)
Melanie Stancill & Jr. Troop 139
The Summit School
Donna Vaneste
Victor Volkman (E. Klopp Library)
Randy Warner (Frontier Trail JHS)



The students at Ignacio López Rayón treat us to a grand send-off.

¡Adiós Amigos!

Monarch Watch Adopt-a-Classroom Financial Statement

Expenses	
Promotions of Project (brochures, mailings, etc.)	\$1180.00
20 Math & Science Kits (\$120 each)	2400.00
Cost of transporting ~2 tons of books	1075.00
Monthly storage fee (McAllen, TX - 12 months)	506.00
Shipping school supplies to Monarch Watch	20.00
Customs duties & taxes paid at the border	157.70
Travel expenses for trip (hotel, food, and miscellaneous supplies)	1376.72
Transportation for trip (airfare, van rental, gas, insurance and tolls)	2141.09
Salary (three full-time staff for two weeks on the road)	3559.77
Total Expenses	12,416.28
Income	
Donations for Adopt-a-Classroom	7440.50
Millennium Garden Kit Contributions	1780.00
Total Income	9220.50
Summary	
Total Income	9220.50
Total Expenses	12,416.28
Income - Expenses	-3195.78
(This difference was covered by Monarch Watch's operating budget)	