

JULY 15, 1997

MR. STEVE HARRIS
DISTRICT GOVERNOR
DISTRICT 5890

International

Group Study Exchange

The District GSE Committee has been very busy this year with outgoing and incoming teams to two different countries. The GSE Team from Houston to Czechoslovakia was just chosen last week. The GSE Team from Czechoslovakia was here in October, and will help our Houston team tour their country when they arrive. Our GSE team is scheduled to leave in June for a 5 week tour of Czechoslovakia.

The GSE Team from Houston to Chile was chosen last month. They have been busy learning some of the customs and language. The GSE team from Chile will arrive in April. They will go to our District Conference in Orlando.

International Youth Exchange Committee

Chairman: Marsha Galvan

The International Youth Committee has been extremely busy. After her interview, we have decided to send Kristal Quinn to Australia next school year. Furthermore, we are gearing up for the huge Space Center Weekend where we host 50 exchange students from several districts for three days. We will take them to Galveston, the Space Center, and Armand Bayou between April 2 - 5. The Committee is in the process of finding host families for these students plus the adult chaperones. In conclusion, we have heard from our two exchange students abroad, Sean Riley in Poland and Kellyn Jezierski in Switzerland, who are doing quite well.

World Friendship Committee

Director, Johnny Gibson

We are not involved in any active projects at the current time with this committee. There is an overlap for this committee and the International Youth Committee. The primary function of this committee is to serve as host for visiting dignitaries or Rotarians from other countries. We do not have any visits planned in the near future which would involve an extended stay in our area and require the work of this committee.

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THE YOUNG SYRIAN BOY WE SPOKE TO YOU ABOUT DURING YOUR VISIT TO OUR CLUB ON JULY 7TH IS FAYEZ KATBEH. HIS PHYSICAL CONDITION IS DESCRIBED IN THE ATTACHED MEMO.

WE ARE VERY ANXIOUS TO HELP THIS BOY. WE WOULD LIKE TO FURNISH HIM WITH A NEW COMPLETE COMPUTER AND EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE FOR A CHILD HIS AGE. I HOPE TO FIND ENGLISH - ARABIC - ENGLISH SOFTWARE THAT WILL HELP HIM LEARN AND PREPARE HIM FOR THE FUTURE. WE PRAY THAT SOMEONE IN OUR DISTRICT HAS A CONNECTION WITH A COMPUTER COMPANY THAT MAY DONATE A COMPUTER FOR THIS YOUNG BOY.

WE WELCOME ANY SUGGESTIONS AND/OR RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ANYONE IN THE DISTRICT ON HOW WE CAN HELP FAYEZ AND PREPARE HIM FOR THE FUTURE.

VICTOR G. MARIA
(281) 474-7914

WORLD HEALTH COMMITTEE
CHARLES HARTMAN, CHAIRMAN

HIS FACE IS ALMOST TOTALLY OBLITERATED WITH BURN TISSUE. HIS EARS ARE TATTERED. HE HAS HAD OPERATIONS TO MAKE OPENINGS BETWEEN HIS UPPER AND LOWER EYE LIDS. A LARGE AREA OF THE TOP OF HIS HEAD IS COVERED WITH BURN SCAR TISSUE. HIS EYES HAVE BEEN BURNED AND HE HAS JUST HAD A CORNEAL TRANSPLANT OPERATION ON HIS LEFT EYE SO THAT HE CAN MAKE OUT SHADOWS. WE ARE OPTOMISTIC THAT HIS EYESIGHT WILL IMPROVE.

ON HIS LEFT HAND HE HAS LITTLE NUBS WHERE HE USED TO HAVE FINGERS. HIS RIGHT ARM ENDS IN A STUB JUST BELOW THE ELBOW. DOCTORS HAVE FITTED HIS RIGHT ARM WITH A CLAW PROSTHESIS AND HE IS PRESENTLY GOING THROUGH THERAPY LEARNING TO USE IT.

HIS LEGS HAVE BEEN AMPUTATED AT THE THIGHS. WITHOUT A WHEELCHAIR HE HAS TO BE CARRIED EVERYWHERE HE GOES. DOCTORS ARE PLANNING TO MAKE A TUB WITH WHEELS TO SET HIM INTO SO THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO PUSH HIMSELF AROUND. THE MAIN PURPOSE IS TO STRENGTHEN HIS BACK TO AN UPRIGHT POSITION AND TO STRENGTHEN HIS LEG STUMPS SO THAT HE WILL SOMEDAY BE ABLE TO STAND ON LEG PROSTHESIS. THE LATTER WILL BE CONSIDERED IN A FEW YEARS. HE HAS A LONG, DIFFICULT ROAD HEAD.

WHAT I HAVE DESCRIBED ABOVE IS FAYEZ KATBEH A SIX YEAR OLD SYRIAN BOY (HE WILL BE 7 ON AUGUST 1st). IF YOU CAN BELIEVE IT, FAYEZ HAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SMILE AND GENTLE MANNER. HE OF COURSE SPEAKS ARABIC BUT IS LEARNING WORDS IN ENGLISH, FRENCH AND SPANISH. HE LOVES TO HAVE VISITORS ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO CAN SPEAK SOME ARABIC. HE KNOWS WHAT THE SHRINERS HOSPITAL AND THE SPACE CENTER ROTARY CLUB ARE DOING FOR HIM AND ARE PLANNING TO DO FOR HIM AND HE IS VERY GRATEFUL.

THIS YOUNGSTER WAS BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION BY PLASTIC SURGEON, DOCTOR ABDEL FUSTOK, AN HONORARY MEMBER OF THE SPACE CENTER ROTARY CLUB AND THE CENTRAL FIGURE IN OUR WORLD HEALTH PROGRAM.