

Mr. Robert Wren
President
Space Center Rotary

March 1, 1986

In re: Community Service
El Salvadorians

In early September 1985, President Bob Wren, SCR, called a meeting of about twenty SCR members at the Nassau Bay Baptise Church to examine a situation brought to his attention by Webster City Officials and SCR member Carlos Villagomez.

Situation

There are about four hundred (400) El Salvadorians residing in the Webster/Clear Lake City area. Most of these people do not speak, read or write English. They lack the basic knowledge on-

- local laws and legal assistance
- health, litter and sanitation codes
- utility rights
- medical aid and assistance
- employment rights and possibilities'
- education and recreation
- civil rights and regulations

President Bob Wren appointed a committee to study the above problem and to explore methods by which SCR can be of service to our community. Vic Maria was appointed as ad hoc committee chairman.

The committee decided to concentrate on the apartment complexes in Webster. Carlos Villagomez and Vic Maria spoke to several El Salvadorians in an effort to determine how receptive they would be to working with SCR in trying to solve some of their problems. They appeared very receptive and identified their most immediate needs as language training, legal and medical assistance and employment.

The committee met with and received the offer of support from:

Mayor Dennis Waggertt, Webster
Chief Reyes Sonora, Webster PD
Nassau Bay Baptise Church
United Fund
A Uniting Church
Interfaith Caring Ministries
Clear Lake Presbyterian Church
Central American Refugee Committee
St. John Hospital
Local Apartment Managers

Carlos Villagomez recruited an El Salvadorian named Hector, who is well known in the El Salvadorian community, to assist us.

It was agreed that we should try to contact and organize the El Salvadorians in each apartment complex separately starting with the Colonial Gardens Apartment Community on Nasa Raod One. We made visits to this complex and discussed our proposed project with El Salvadorian tenents. Hector learned the following:

- many of the children do not attend school
- many of the children do not speak English
- many of the children have not been vaccinated or inoculated nor do they have any idea on how to do so.

A flier was drafted - to be written in Spanish by Hector - and copied and distributed to the El Salvadorians by Carlos and Hector announcing a meeting at the Colonial recreation room at 7:00PM on September 23, 1985 to address the subject of language training, job possibilities and legal and medical assistance.

On September 23, 1985 at about 7PM, Hector, Carlos and Vic met with about fourteen (14) El Salvadorians* and explained our plans to help them to solve some of their most immediate problems. We told them to spread the word to others in the complex so that we may have a good turn out for our next meeting on September 30, 1985 at 7PM.

On the above date only one couple showed up. We waited until 8PM. We made several efforts during the month of November to establish contact with a group of El Salvadorians at the Colonial Apartments and at the Webster Villa Apartments. Carlos met and had conversations with El Salvadorians at the Ice House but all to no avail. No activity was taken during the month of December and early January 1986.

Recent contacts indicate that the El Salvadorians do not want to meet in groups. It is safe to assume that they need and want help but that they are fearful of the Immigration Authorities.

We no longer intend to pursue this matter actively. We will maintain liaison with Police Chief Sonora in order to monitor the situatiin. Carlos will maintain contact with the El Salvadorians at the Ice House. We will remain ready to assist them whenever they are ready to work with us.


Victor G. Maria

* 5 were children