

Poor Pueblo Recovers From Quakes

by Bob Lothian

El Rodeo, Mexico — For the impoverished Indian pueblo of El Rodeo, located about 80 miles south of Guadalajara, Mexico's devastating Sept. 19th and 20th earthquakes made an already desperate situation worse.

El Rodeo has no pure drinking water, no water or sewer system, there is no doctor for the village of 2,000, no park, no school bus, and only one bus each week to the nearest town, 12 miles away. Village residents often walk to town, which takes two hours over a dusty, log truck-choked mountain road.

The average income for El Rodeo residents from woodcutting, the main source of work, is about \$225/year. Alcoholism, unemployment and illiteracy plague the village.

According to Father Jesus Bernardino Reyes, secretary of the El Rodeo reconstruction committee, the quakes destroyed 10 adobe mud brick houses

and seriously damaged 94 others, making them uninhabitable. Many of the 500 quake victims in the village were taken in by family and friends, he said, but some continue to live in plastic shelters even though nighttime temperatures dip below freezing.

Luckily, no one was killed or seriously injured in El Rodeo, but coping with the quake damage is just one more hardship for people who live on the edge of survival.

Village residents are optimistic, however. Their reconstruction committee has come up with a three-stage plan that not only addresses the problem of rebuilding the 104 houses, but outlines later improvements — extending water pipes to each house, building a children's park, purchasing a school bus and starting a sewing co-op — that could help transform the town.

Bernardino, son of a poor woodcut-

ter who grew up in El Rodeo, said little government aid has trickled down to the normally neglected small pueblos like El Rodeo, of which there are thousands in Mexico. What aid is available can only be obtained from a government bureaucracy requiring documents often unavailable to Indians, according to Bernardino.

The reconstruction committee has turned to outside help. So far the pueblo has received \$22,000 Canadian dollars from Quebec, Canada, and another \$2,000 from the Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement, Bernardino said.

The aid money furnished the down payment on a truck for hauling building materials, and purchased cement to start work on a water collection system and reservoir. The reservoir will make it easier to mix cement for building new houses, he said.

A team of experts from Guadalajara came up with a figure of \$160,000 needed to construct 104 houses, with an additional \$26,000 needed to complete the water system, Bernardino reported. The aid is trickling in slowly, he said, and by the end of January work on only a few houses had commenced.

In Portland, Jose Angel Gutierrez, executive director of the Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement, said the council plans to send another \$5,000 to El Rodeo soon. The group has opened an El Rodeo relief fund account at the U.S. National Bank of Oregon's Main Office, 321 S.W. 6th Ave., in Portland, he said.

The aid will be greatly appreciated in El Rodeo. Bernardino said he hopes the aid will initiate future warm relations between the small pueblo and Oregon. Enthusiasm gleaned from his eyes as he described plans to transform El Rodeo.

Don't Put Away the Hankies Yet

Winter's on the way out and you thought you were safe from catching another cold. But wait — there's still one more peak period for those cold viruses to attack: the arrival of spring.

Peak periods of cold infections coincide with seasonal changes, peaking in fall and spring. This means that as winter fades in Oregon, at least another 250,000 people will have sniffles, sore throats, stuffy noses, coughs and sneezes during a typical two-week period.

Mother's advice about simple handwashing appears to be the most effective in preventing colds, according to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Cold viruses — of which there are more than 200 — survive for long periods on hands, telephones, doorknobs, clothing, etc. People infect themselves by touching these items and then touching their eyes or nose. Medical experts advise frequent handwashing to break the cycle and keeping hands away from the eyes and nose.

While studies have proved that getting wet feet does not cause colds, getting plenty of rest, eating a well-balanced diet and avoiding stress do help keep immunity levels high and aid in cold prevention.

For those who end up battling colds despite these precautions, health care specialists recommend additional rest, plenty of fluids, good nutrition, appropriate over-the-counter medicine and various "home" remedies to ease the symptoms. A Mt. Sinai Medical Center study found that drinking hot liquids was better than cold liquids in easing nasal congestion. It appears that Mother was right again when advocating hot tea, hot broth and hot lemonade to relieve the cold sufferer.

On the heels of this study, one

American drug company has begun marketing a powdered cold medicine that contains standard anti-cold remedies with lemon flavoring to be mixed with hot water and sipped.

The National Institute notes that antibiotics do not kill viruses and are useless against a common cold. Until further anti-viral research develops a simple cure for the cold, following Mother's counsel on handwashing and drinking hot liquids may still be the best advice.

"Health Matters"

Looks at Elderly

Adults over age 60 are the fastest growing age group in America. Although many people enjoy full, active lives, increasing age often brings a greater chance of illness or injury. One-third of the elderly suffer from a chronic health problem that is a serious concern both to themselves and their families.

This week on "Health Matters" (Sunday, March 9, 8:30 a.m. on KGW Channel 8) you'll learn what the options are when older parents need special care. Is a nursing home the answer? Should they live with relatives? What about retirement centers or apartments?

You'll meet a couple with four elderly parents who need care, and learn about alternatives to nursing homes. Special studio interview guests will include Alton Wiebe, M.D., family practice physician on the Emanuel Hospital and Holladay Park Medical Center medical staffs, and Carolyn Reznikoff, social worker with Portland's Visiting Nurse Association.

"Health Matters" is a health and medical information series presented as a public service by HealthLink.

Jacob Critical of EEOC Action

by John E. Jacob

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has abandoned its policy of using hiring goals and timetables to redress discriminatory practices. This new policy has been implemented without public hearings, without a formal vote of the Commissioners, and without due regard for the purposes for which the EEOC exists.

The National Urban League condemns the EEOC's practice. It is a terrible step backward — a triumph of ideology over decency. It is yet another example of the Administration's high-handed disregard of civil rights enforcement tools proven to be effective.



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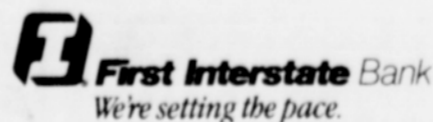
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