

Dear Friends,

On December 6th Santa Claus came early this year but not in his usual sleigh with reindeer. This time he had a huge Galaxy C-5 aircraft which landed in the military air base in Guatemala City full of donations for Casa Guatemala. There waiting were 50 of us who had the pleasure to receive it.



The plane arrived loaded with 21 giant pallets of goods. It had been carefully packed so that we were able to offload some of the pallets with the forklift but the majority contained important building materials that were swiftly unloaded by our staff and volunteers by hand. This mission made us feel like we were the main stars in a movie since we had to get everything accomplished in only 4 hours 15 minutes!



We all worked very hard and were grateful to have the help of some of the soldiers from the base and the support from USAID, the US Embassy and Galaxy Crew. Here are some of

the comments from USAID Official Margaret Penedo:

"The mission was a huge success. Casa Guatemala had more than 40 volunteers helping to unload, plus the people from Transportes Medina, who provided (donated) land transportation on 4 trailers. The 21 pallets were unloaded, unpacked, reloaded in the trailers and off the airport ramp by 4pm on Saturday. Major Curtis Schmucker from US MilGroup and Enrique Olivet from our Executive Office were present as well, in addition to myself, as this very large shipment had caused us concern when information about its bulk was made known to us."

Major Curtis L. Schmucker, Air Force Section Chief/Training Manager USMILGP Guatemala had the same sentiments and said "Thanks to Casa Guatemala, Transportes Medina, the AMC manager, and the USAID reps for pulling this off in excellent fashion".

The idea behind sharing these details with you is to show our gratitude for all the efforts of Kathy and her team at Mission of Love did on their end. Mission of Love as well as the Denton Program and the American Embassy in Guatemala were afraid that if we were not able to meet the time requirements that at the last moment the plane would have to take off back to Charleston with the unloaded cargo still on board. Luckily we were able to successfully complete the transfer and the plane was able to leave empty on schedule.





We thank all those who helped acquire all of the donations that have arrived. The lumber,

roofing laminates, kitchen equipment and supplies, school and medical supplies, wheel chairs, dentistry equipment, the anesthesia machine, the scanner, the beautiful shoes, all the very nice clothing, and all the mattresses, The 10 wonderful tables with the attached seats were such a hit that as soon as the children saw them, they got the broken old tables out from the dining area; went through all the boxes until they found the boxes with the colored seats and by themselves, put them together so that same day they could have dinner at their new tables! You could see how happy and proud they were to have brand new tables! And of course, there were all of the beautiful toys that will surprise and delight the children, bringing smiles to their faces come Christmas when they unwrap their presents.

And that wasn't all! There are so many more wonderful gifts to describe. We are grateful for the material to repair the organic green house and cannot forget about all of the supplies we got for the baby's house we have in the city. There are so many supplies that we still have



not gotten into all of the boxes! So please accept my apologies if some of the supplies sent are not in the description above. We are so grateful for this amazing gift and we thank you all very much.

These 33 tons of supplies are a Godsend. Getting such an amount of very useful supplies in the middle of the international financial crisis is something very special for which we feel incredibly privileged.



Our heartfelt thanks go out to every one of you: the donors; the staff and crew from the Denton Program; Margaret Penedo from USAID; the staff of the American Embassy in Guatemala; and Mr. Alfredo Molina who so kindly gave us so much support with 4 forklifts and three big trucks to transport all this cargo across the country 275 km from Guatemala to Rio Dulce. And of course, to my dearest friend Kathy Price, who only God knows how, was able to put all these wonderful contributions together, get the Galaxy C-5 and arrange to have it sent to us here in Guatemala. Her efforts have been and continue to be such a gift to us and the work that we do at Casa Guatemala. Kathy, we love you very much and are so grateful for your support.

Sincerely,

*Angie Galdámez
Executive Director,*

