

Local firefighters make a difference in Guatemala

Posted on April 21, 2011 on Sub Times

By Vicky Tetzlaff

Tacoma, Washington – Firefighters from local fire departments of West Pierce and Central Pierce Fire and Rescue, as well as other Western Washington fire departments, recently travelled to Guatemala for 10 days to train the Bomberos Voluntarios of Guatemala.

The team instructed courses in First Aid and CPR protocols, airway management, and child birth emergencies. The courses were held at the Guatemala City International Airport, Monterrico (on the Pacific Coast) and Retalhuleu. Courses were also taught in the remote areas of Santiago and San Juan La Laguna on Lake Atitlan. The project trip also included helping with construction on a new medical clinic and rebuilding a much needed water ambulance boat dock that had been damaged in a recent storm.

Since 1996, the B.R.A.V.E. Foundation has organized dozens of volunteer training teams to Guatemala which have significantly increased the ability of the bomberos to provide pre-hospital emergency medical care to the sick and injured in Guatemala. The Foundation assisted with the establishment of an Emergency Medical Technician Program throughout the country which is teaching the bomberos medical skills required to reduce pain and suffering.

The B.R.A.V.E. Foundation is currently organizing a road trip of 2 medic units surplussed from local fire departments which will leave later this week from Puyallup, Washington. Driven by volunteer drivers, they will travel more than 4000 miles through the U.S., Mexico, and in to Guatemala. Each vehicle will be loaded with thousands of dollars in donated medical supplies and equipment.

About the B.R.A.V.E. Foundation

MISSION: “B.R.A.V.E. Foundation, improving fire and life saving services in developing countries.” The B.R.A.V.E. Foundation is a 100% volunteer driven Washington based non-profit organization seeking to improve the efforts of firefighters and medical personnel in developing countries to become self-sufficient by providing access to progressive training programs, efficient facilities, and functional equipment.