



March 26, 2008

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe that in less than two years the Lingap Center has been transformed from a pig slaughterhouse housing 26 children into one of the finest childcare facilities in all of the Philippines. We now have 97 happy, healthy, smiling children living in a clean, safe and loving environment. Thank you for your heartfelt support as together we continue to make our dreams a reality for this group of wonderful children.

The academic year for the Lingap school children ended the last week of March. Thanks to the added support of two tutors, the children's academic performance continued to improve and one ward, Marjie, will graduate from high school this year. She has applied for a scholarship from the city and plans to major in Hotel and Restaurant Management, as we anticipate that she will be accepted into college this fall. We also had an extraordinary achievement by one of our kids that I would like to share with you.

Fourth-grader John Ryan entered a competition that tested students' science knowledge. The questions went far beyond his grade level, but he prepared by studying upper level textbooks which were borrowed for him. Not only did John Ryan win his school's contest, but he also won at the city and district levels. At the regional competition, he endured a grueling six-hour exam. His test results earned him a second place finish, just one step away from being eligible for the national competition. I felt a lot like a proud parent. I hope you do too.

This past school year, we had 11 children enrolled at the private West Bay Learning Center. When school resumes in June, John Ryan will become our 12th student enrolled there. Other recent educational highlights for our Lingap kids as well as the community include:

- A scholarship has been offered by Hillsdale College in Michigan for Lingap students who can qualify for admission.
- A scholarship has been offered by Negros Navigation in the Philippines for a Lingap student to study marine engineering. The scholarship also guarantees a job after the recipient successfully graduates from college.
- Approval of our application for a Rotary International Matching Grant for a new community library that will serve the Lingap Center and 2,500 area children
- More than 2,250 books donated for the new community library by the Makati City Rotary Club in Manila.
- During the school year, you will recall that we hired two tutors. I am delighted to report that the children's grades all improved over each of the previous marking periods – some were significant increases!

I am now working to find donors for up to 40 computers for the schools in the Lingap Center area. This underscores my belief that children in schools today need to be computer literate to have the best chance for success when they enter college, a trade school or the working world.

<http://www.lingapcenter.org>
A 501 (c)(3) Organization

The Third Saturday Outreach program, implemented by the Lingap Center staff continues to feed the souls and bodies of hungry children in the community. A priest conducts a community children's mass followed by a soup kitchen for needy children in the area. The number of children attending has grown from 130 at the inaugural event in November to more than 500 in March. We are blessed by community members who provide food and serve as volunteers.

Other exciting developments that have unfolded since my last newsletter:

- We received our license as a Residential Child Care Facility and Certificate of Registration from the Department of Social Welfare and Development.
- A representative of the Peace Corps has contacted me with an interest in partnering with the Lingap Center.

While we can feel good about these accomplishments, I continually worry about our ability to meet our annual operating costs. For this reason, our financial focus continues to be on our goal of building a \$1 million endowment to sustain operations indefinitely. We recently paid to install a water tower to resolve severe water shortage problems. We also paid to have the kitchen counters lowered to make it easier for the children to help with kitchen chores. These were expenses we hadn't anticipated, but that were needed.

This year, we will need to replace the aging vehicle used by the Lingap Center to transport the children. Frequent mechanical problems have made the vehicle unreliable and nearly impossible to maintain, but it's the children's safety that I worry about most.

There are many ways you can help. Please visit our web site, www.lingapcenter.org, and click on "You Can Help." On behalf of myself, our directors and especially the Lingap children, thank you for all that you have done and for your continued support. None of this would have been possible without you.

I will again leave you with a favorite quote:

"I will not leave you orphans. I will come back to you!" (John 14:18)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Drake', with a stylized, cursive script.

John Drake