

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: HRO FOUNDER CONTINUES LIFE'S WORK OF HELPING NEEDY

Karen Hinson Daily Press

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Olga Crupper is the founder of the Human Relief Organization, which is dedicated to the relief of suffering among the underprivileged people of the world. According to the group's Web site, www.humanrelief.net, HRO's core values are "that the needs of humanity are best served by supporting conditions and activates that integrate service to body, mind, and spirit."

Through HRO programs, beneficiaries are brought from a state of helpless dependence to one of personal and community independence and empowerment. HRO serves as a link to bring together individuals, corporations, institutions and other entities that have essential resources and good will to provide relief and empowerment to those who lack the fundamental necessities of life."

Q: Why did you get involved in the work you do?

A: I have been motivated to help the needy all my life, and in 1993 I became involved with Kings Daughter Ministry on a relief mission to Guatemala with

Virginia Biggins of the Daily Press. We delivered aid including clothes, medicine and medical assistance with the help of Dr. Sachs from Physicians for Peace to women and men in four different prisons. This mission was with Pat Robertson's group and camera crew called Operation Blessing with Dr. Piper. Video of this mission, "Beginning of HRO," can be viewed on the Web site, www.humanrelief.net.

Q: How many hours do you work/volunteer in an average week?

A: 60

Q: How has this service challenged you?

A: Helping poor and sick people locally and globally has been a tremendously challenging and rewarding experience for 15 years.

Q: Why do you continue to volunteer?

A: Because I love it.

Q: What is your most memorable experience in the position?

A: In the beginning, before HRO was officially founded, I went on the 1993 prison relief mission. I saw barefoot and naked and sick men in prison, and women with their infant children behind bars. The children in prison with their mothers were separated from their mothers and released onto the streets at the age of 7.

Q: Is there a person - either someone you know or someone famous - who inspired you to be involved in volunteer work?

A: My father, Efraim Castillo, who was minister of economy and land reform for the Indians of Guatemala from 1952-1956.

Q: If you had an unlimited budget available to you, what would you spend the money on to help your work reach more people?

A: Medicine, education and programs for orphan children, programs HRO already has that we would expand greatly. HRO has operating programs, schools and medical clinics in Pakistan, India, Kyrgyzstan and Central America. Locally, HRO has a food distribution program for more than 900 families on the Peninsula.

Any additional comments: HRO was selected the Catherina Gayle Outreach Program for 2005 and the Against All Odds Award by the governor of Michigan for achieving excellence in technology and humanitarian work, awarded on Sept. 22, 2007. We encourage all interested people and those who volunteer and make contributions to humanitarian programs to visit the HRO Web site at www.humanrelief.net.

OLGA CRUPPER

Age: 60

Family members: Bryan Landrum, husband; Mario Comparini, son

Hometown: Born in Guatemala City, Guatemala; currently lives in Hampton

Occupation: Executive director of Human Relief Organization; vice president of iENERGY Inc.

Education: PhD. in child psychology

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