

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

Los Manguitos, Ecuador gets a new well.

The First Annual International Health Committee (IHC) Silent Auction, promoted in the Winter 2001 WSPHA newsletter was held at the Annual Education Conference (AEC) of the WSEHA in the spring of 2001, and was a great success. The goal of the auction was to raise money to support a public health project in a developing country or impoverished area and to raise awareness of international health needs. Many people provided wonderful donations to the Silent Auction and dozens won bids or had fun trying. The items definitely had an international flavor but several local Washington items were enjoyed as well.

A total of \$2663 was raised to help the villagers of Los Manguitos, Ecuador repair the well they depend on for clean drinking water. El Nino floods had destroyed the well earlier in the year. It was located next to the bank of the river, but the floods eroded several meters of bank away, exposing the concrete rings of the well casing. The casing collapsed in the unexpectedly heavy floodwaters. The drinking water system had just been completed when the floods came. The villagers had previously collected water from holes dug in the ground near the riverbed. The funds from the IHC Silent Auction were used through Public Health International in Ecuador to repair the well and to complete the water system. As a result, over 700 villagers have a safe, chlorinated supply of water to drink.

Frank Meriweather and Tanya Mohammadi, two of the IHC members, went to Los Manguitos in November 2001 to take a look at the new well, document the water system repairs and visit the villagers. They had a great trip and visit and shared a very interesting slide show about the work at the December 2001 IHC meeting.







Pictures of villagers excavating the well, installing the surface casing, purging the well, and installing piping for pumping water.