

Morgan Hill Times

'Three Amigos' Arrange Ambulance Delivery to Mexico

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Morgan Hill - On their trip to Mexico in May, three buddies from Morgan Hill carried with them suitcases full of medical supplies donated from Saint Louise Regional Hospital.

When the travelers - known to their friends back home as "the Three Amigos" - stopped at a Red Cross station in the city of Ameca, not far from Guadalajara, they were greeted joyously by the volunteer staff. The approximate value of the gift: \$10,000.

"When they opened the suitcases, it was almost like Christmas," said Morgan Hill resident Peter Anderson, the chief "Amigo" who organized the peaceful adventure.

Anderson and his companions, Carl Schindler and Bob Brentnall, are members of the Morgan Hill Rotary Club. The 90-person organization is part of a worldwide chain of professional leaders working to address community and international service needs.

When the "Amigos" visited the Red Cross station in Ameca, they were helping to strengthen an international bond between Morgan Hill and the Mexican state of Jalisco that began in 2003 when Morgan Hill forged a sister city relationship with tiny San Martin de Hidalgo.

Now, the acquisition of a \$15,000 used ambulance promises to bring the two cultures even closer together.

The "Amigos" spent three days of their trip finalizing the project with members of Ameca's Rotary Club. The Ameca Rotary has pitched in about \$800 of the total expense, and a partnership between clubs in Morgan Hill, Gilroy, Hollister and San Juan Bautista has raised about \$5,000. Those funds have since been leveraged to receive \$9,000 from the Rotary Foundation, a nonprofit corporation that supports the efforts of members who build goodwill and peace.

The ambulance will augment a small fleet of emergency response vehicles that serves an area of roughly 7,800 square kilometers.

"They've got two ambulances to service about 60,000 people," said Schindler, adding that the trip opened his eyes to the needs of the United States' close neighbor. "They really appreciated all the medical supplies. It's stuff they couldn't afford."

The bridge with Ameca follows Morgan Hill's fostering of a sister city relationship with San Martin de Hidalgo. To expand upon that diplomatic relationship, the Rotary Club of Morgan Hill made ties with the Rotary Club of Ameca, a city roughly the same size of Morgan Hill and as close to San Martin de Hidalgo as Morgan Hill is to Gilroy.



Morgan Hill Rotary Club members Peter Anderson, Bob Brentnall and Carl Schindler gave more than \$10,000 worth of medical supplies donated from Saint Louise Regional Hospital to the Ameca, Mexico Red Cross organization and its workers.

The two clubs soon decided to work on humanitarian aid projects to foster camaraderie and cultural understanding. Last year, that spirit of cooperation led to a donation of \$6,000 worth of school supplies to three primary schools in San Martin de Hidalgo.

"The whole reason Rotary works so well is it's people-to-people giving," Brentnall said.

As for the used ambulance, Anderson said it would be acquired later this summer. He hopes his new friends from Ameca will visit this fall and drive it home.

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