FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY

Where there's a wheelchair, there's a way

Lifting disabled children and adults from the middle of dusty Guatemalan roads into refurbished wheelchairs was enough to hook David Richard, executive director of Wheels for Humanity based in North Hollywodd, Calif. The mission to help the disadvantaged in Third World countries began 10 years ago.

"Seeing the faces of those people who get our wheelchairs — that's my paycheck," says Richard.

Earlier this year, Richard and a team of doctors made trips to Vietnam and the Ukraine to distribute more than 200 wheelchairs his organization helped refurbish. In addition to giving mobility to needy people, the team also gives disability-related medical assistance to the hundreds of people waiting and hoping for their first wheelchair.

See a story about Wheels for Humanity on page 4.

At top, a man who lost his limbs 24 years ago from a landmine will no longer drag himself along the roads of Vietnam, thanks to Wheels for Humanity.

Above, David Richard lifts young Gasper, a polio victim, into his first wheelchair in a Guatemalan village as the boy's father watches.

Above, Richard adjusts the first wheelchair of a young Nicaraguan woman who stepped on a landmine three years ago.

To the left, a grateful Maria, 101 years old, told Richard the first place she was going to go in her new wheelchair was to church. She lives in the Dominican Republic.

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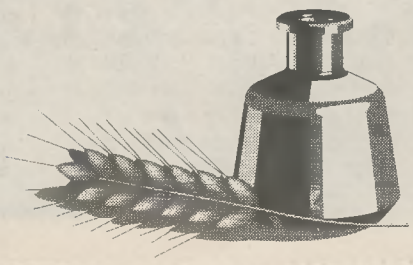
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