

Date: 13 May 2019

WINCHESTER ROTARY COORDINATES MAGNIFICENT HAMPSHIRE SUPPORT FOR NEEDY AMPUTEES IN ST LUCIA

Begins:

Organised by Winchester Rotary, about £60,000 worth of recycled prosthetic leg components were shipped recently to desperately needy underprivileged amputees in St Lucia. But this needed a number of amazing organisations, all based in southern Hampshire, to join together and donate their time and effort, which every one of them did totally for free.

This project was initiated by Winchester Rotarian Richard Spalding, who has a long-term connection with St Lucia. He got married there in 1992 and now spends about 2 months a year in St Lucia, partly working alongside one of St Lucia's own Rotary Clubs.

Richard had previously reported to Winchester Rotary that "St Lucia has one of the highest levels of diabetes per capita in the world and also has an unusually high number of road traffic accidents; combined, these mean that St Lucia has a disproportionately high number of amputees". He also explained that "the Rotary Club of Gros Islet (RCGI), in St Lucia, recently recognised this issue and set about helping to improve the situation for the amputees in conjunction with a local charitable organisation, the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD)), their aim being to create a new prosthetic workshop and to train some prosthetic technicians". As a result of this, Winchester Rotary rose to the challenge to help out, initially by providing some funding for the training but also by sourcing some recycled prosthetic legs, and this is where Hampshire came to the fore so magnificently.

The prosthetic leg components were gathered earlier this year most helpfully by prosthetist Alasdair Gilbertson in Portsmouth's Prosthetic Centre. They were then taken in March to the Netley Marsh based charity, Tools for Self Reliance, who kindly built a crate for the legs. Hampshire Freight Services, based in Eastleigh, then graciously drove the crate from Netley Marsh to the port of Dover. Finally, Geest Line, with headquarters in Segensworth, generously shipped the crate in *Atlantic Klipper* from Dover to St Lucia arriving recently.

Richard added: "Every member of this collaboration was essential to the unique success of this project. We are extraordinarily grateful, especially as it was all done totally for free.

Winchester Rotary is immensely proud of coordinating this team effort, and the beneficiaries in St Lucia are already showing their gratitude for the legs."

Ends

[Photo shows (L to R): Cynthia Weekes and Linda Preville (both Board members of NCPD), RCGI President Lenita, Winchester Rotarian Richard Spalding and Stephen Edmund (1st VP of NCPD)]

For Further Details Please Contact:

Gill Russell, Press Officer, Winchester Rotary

Tel: 07930 546807

Email: media@winchester-rotary.org

Web: www.winchester-rotary.org

Facebook: Winchester Rotary UK

Twitter: @WinchRotary