

A Special Tribute and Fond Farewell

With the exception of one of Tres Islas' donors – designer Laura M, of Saratoga, Wyoming – none of us at the Tres Islas Orphanage Fund ever had the pleasure of meeting Thomas H. O'Leary, also of Saratoga.

Yet every December for several years, Mr. O'Leary made a donation to pay for 50 weeks of food for the boys at Fr. Tovar's Home for Boys. . Hogar San Pablo Orphanage.

The check came without fanfare in a simple envelope. And yet, inside was a tremendous annual gift of support for the boys for which we were all grateful. The boys' lives made a vast improvement receiving the nourishing food each week that Mr. O'Leary's benevolent donation purchased for them.

In exchange, the boys drew pictures for Mr. O'Leary depicting their life at the orphanage, life in Mazatlan in general and laced with words of gratitude: "Gracias!" and "Querido mucho!" (We love you a lot!)"

This last year, the boys drew a depiction of their home, the orphanage, surrounded by a fence, complete with cows and horses and a strong appearing cowboy in the center of it all. Of course, the cowboy was Mr. O'Leary.

The caption at the top of the page read, "Rancho "O'Leary!"

It was a poignant expression of gratitude and, little did we know, it would be the final thank you from the boys to the benevolent Tom O'Leary. On April 28, 2009 Mr. O'Leary died unexpectedly.

He was a great man in many ways: a graduate of Holy Cross College, a Marine officer veteran, vice-chairman and director of Burlington Northern, Inc., president and CEO and ultimately chairman of the board of Burlington Resources and a director of The Kroger Company and BF Goodrich.

We salute the great Irishman Mr. O'Leary and humbly thank him once again for his many years of support – even though he won't receive his annual drawing this year from the boys thanking him in their words and from their hearts.

His death leaves a big void in many lives and activities throughout the United States, and certainly at the Tres Islas Orphanage Fund and in Mexico – at the boys' orphanage.

If you would like, or if you know an organization that would like to support the food purchases for the boys now that Mr. O'Leary is unable to do so, please let us know.

Because of his benevolent heart and kindnesses that he generously bestowed on others, Thomas O'Leary had many friends.

One of his closest "friends" who was constantly at his side was his faithful dog "Bingo" – who appropriately served as one of Mr. O'Leary's honorary pall bearers at his funeral, in typical Wyoming and true Western-style.

An Irish Blessing

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
The rain fall soft upon your field,
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.