



20-40-60 ETIQUETTE

Closing time

Holiday guests are overstaying welcome.

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THE ARCHIVIST

Thanksgiving, then and now

President Abraham Lincoln declared Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863.

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Rotary outreach



Cutline retina display semibold
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Rotarians' partnership brings lifesaving equipment to hospital in Latvia

BY CLYTIE BUNYAN

Staff Writer
cbunyan@oklahoman.com

RIGA, LATVIA — Some of the babies weigh 1,000 grams, some less. They're so tiny they can fit easily in the palm of your hand.

A few years ago, many would not survive in the preemie ward at Riga Childcare Hospital Neonatology Clinic. The doctors here are excellent; the nurses, too, well-trained and offering the most watchful care these infants need to survive. But without high-tech, lifesaving equipment, premature babies and those born with diseases like congestive heart failure would have had difficulty surviving.

The Riga clinic found a friend in the local Rotary clubs, which reached out to Rotary International and partnered with Club 29 in Oklahoma City and clubs in Sweden and Hungary to buy machines

to assess oxygenation of tissue and to provide early detection of diseases and the need of urgent therapy.

That's a need and worry business-man Janis Verlis remembers well. The birthrate in Latvia is low — not unlike its Baltic neighbors or some European Union countries — averaging 20,000 per year, with 6 percent preterm. The Riga clinic is where babies in crisis are sent from all over the country. It treats an average 800 newborns every year. Of those, 350 are prematurely born and about 45 are smaller than 450 grams.

So when Verlis' granddaughter, Esther — now 5 years old — was born 25 weeks early, his family feared she wouldn't survive. She weighed 820 grams, or 1.8 pounds, to a healthy

SEE OUTREACH, 2C

Below is a partial view of the city of Riga with the Riga River in the background.

[PHOTO BY MARTIN O'GWYNN]



THE OKLAHOMAN GRAPHICS



Bob Medley and Mary Jane Calvey exchange club flags with the president of the Riga Rotary Club at a joint meeting with clubs from Sweden and Oklahoma City. [PHOTO BY MARTIN O'GWYNN]

Larry Stone, Bob Medley, Clytie Bunyan and Martin O'Gwynn are shown with Latvian host Inese Priedniece under a marker commemorating Rotary Founder Paul Harris' visit to Hotel Riga. [PHOTO BY



Mayflower Medical Outreach travels to fill a need

BY DAISY CREAGER
For The Oklahoman

Mayflower Medical Outreach began when volunteers took a trip to Nicaragua, looking for a need to be filled.

Nancy Klos, the organization's Deaf Education Director and a founding member, said it started when a group from Mayflower Church at 3901 NW 63rd St. in Oklahoma City, took the trip in 1998. An ear, nose and throat doctor was on the trip, so the group was in tune with that area of

NEEDS & DEEDS

need.

"We recognized in the town that we are based out of, Jinotega, that there seemed to be an unusual proportion of people who had hearing health issues as well as deafness," Klos said. "We found our niche, we found a need, and that's how it started."

Now unaffiliated with the church, Mayflower Medical Outreach supports programs in Nicaragua focusing on audiology, medicine and education. For each aspect, the organization has a director in the U.S. and in Nicaragua, Klos said. Mayflower facilitates two trips a year, where volunteers provide help with construction, maintenance, translation, medical help and other areas.

Medical providers

SEE NEEDS, 2C



A student stands in front of the entry to Albergue Mayflower campus in Jinotega, Nicaragua. [PHOTO PROVIDED]

CONTACT
US

The Oklahoman Features Department
P.O. Box 25125
Oklahoma City, OK 73125

Matt Price, Features Editor
(405) 475-3690
morice@oklahoman.com

• Website: Oklahoman.com
• Email: mprice@oklahoman.com
• Fax: (405) 475-3813

Vacation stops/subscription questions
(405) 478-7171, oklahoman.com/subscribe.