

## **Champion for Underprivileged Children & World Traveling Biker** **Mike Lewis, DC**

After more than a year traveling the world by motorcycle, Mike Lewis, DC, gives new meaning to “life outside the office.” A Seattle chiropractor for 15 years, Mike began a five-year journey in March, 2009.

Before he left, he founded a non-profit organization, Write Around the World (WATW), to coincide with his journey. WATW exists to support educational projects for children in areas of extreme poverty. As Mike travels, he identifies areas that have the greatest need for WATW projects so new endeavors can launch.

As WATW puts it, “Write Around the World is Mike’s way of combining his adventure with a socially conscious project that leaves a positive footprint in his rearview mirror.”

Plexus caught up with Mike in Sucre, Bolivia, not wanting to leave. While his second 4th of July on the road passes, he will be applying for a yearlong visa to stay in Bolivia. “I do not think I will stay for the entire year, but I know I need more than the allowed 90 days stamped in my passport,” Mike states. (He adds that the fact that he has to leave Bolivia and drive three days into Argentina to apply for the visa is another story.)

“When I mention staying to others, they of course want to know what is so special about Sucre,” he says. “Sometimes I point out that it is because the weather is t-shirt friendly during the day and sleep friendly cool in the evening, or that the people are approachable and attractive, the food simple and honest, or the culture rich and interesting—but really, it’s just where I want to be right now.”

Perhaps, some of the desire to stay is because of what lies ahead. He explains, “For me, Africa has always meant everything to this trip. I consider all that I have done in South America a mere warm-up for the next continent. I know that physically and emotionally, it will be my



greatest challenge. The riding will no doubt challenge my muscles and stamina, while the poverty and desperation fill and break my heart on a daily basis. I have met so many good people along the way whose lives hang in the balance—Guatemala for example, a volcano erupts and then a tropical storm hits and everything is lost for so many. I have taken for granted, not knowing any better, what a privilege it is to live in a country where your government actually cares about you, no matter what party you belong to. Until now, I never knew how unique a concept that was.”

For the time being, Mike will be in Sucre studying his Spanish dictionary and volunteering at Write Around the World’s second project—Nanta, a center for the working street children of Sucre. Because many families in Sucre are under intense pressure to get by financially, children are forced to work on the streets, sometimes as the family’s solitary breadwinner, sacrificing school as a result. Nanta provides an alternative education center for these working children. During his stay, Mike will be volunteering at the center and organizing shipments of supplies from the U.S. and Canada.

{Editor’s Note: See the Nov/Dec 2009 issue of Plexus for more on Mike’s story.}

—To keep up with Mike Lewis on his journey, visit his blog at <http://web.me.com/mlewis30/MyGlobalAdventure>. To learn more about Write Around the World, visit [www.writearoundtheworld.org](http://www.writearoundtheworld.org)



**As winter approaches, Mike is seeking donations to buy the children shoes and warm clothing. Please visit <http://writearoundtheworld.org/help.html> to find out how you can help.**