

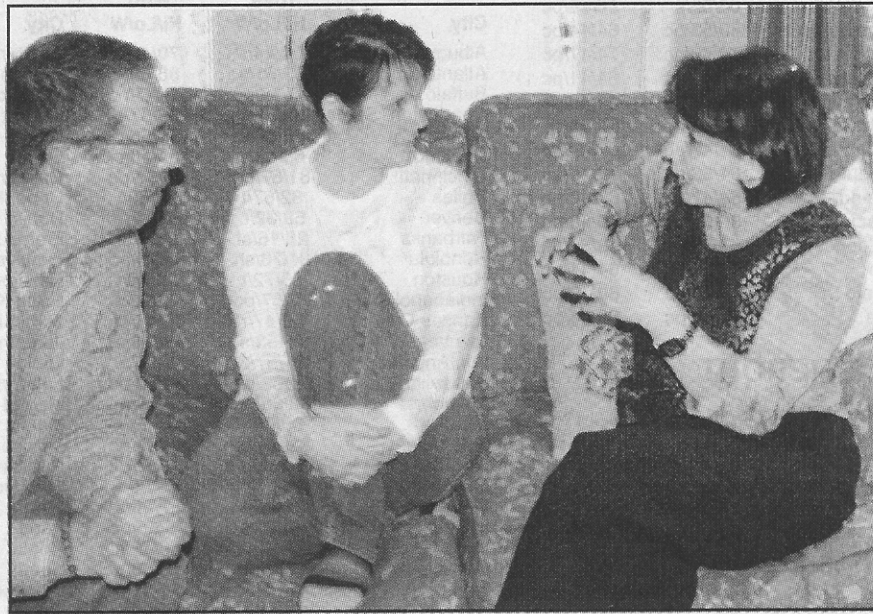
Ecuador Rotarians visit sister group in Saco

By **ROBYN BURNHAM**
Staff Writer

LYMAN — Rotarians from Quito, Ecuador traveled to Maine on Thursday for their first trip to visit their sister group, the Saco Bay Rotary. The groups partnered in 2005, and Saco Bay Rotarians have traveled to Ecuador twice. The Quito Rotarians came to Maine to see what types of projects Saco Bay participates in and do a little sight-seeing.

“In the family of rotary they are our brothers and sisters, but

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Rosalia Arteaga, right, of the Quito Rotary Club in Ecuador, speaks with sister group Saco Bay Rotary members Sunday in Lyman after visiting Maine sights and seeing Saco Bay Rotary projects.

ROBYN BURNHAM/Journal Tribune

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they are so much more than that,” said Saco Bay member Brenda Chapman Sunday at her home. Chapman hosted the group from Ecuador for dinner Sunday, after a shopping trip in the afternoon.

“We visited the Governor and Attorney General of Maine,” said Rosalia Arteaga of the Quito Rotary. “I was very well impressed.”

Arteaga was the first female president of Ecuador – serving for two days in 1997 – after the president was declared unfit to govern by the Congress. Arteaga challenged congressional leader Fabián Alarcón for the presidency, but Alarcón was sworn in with the support of Congress and the army and Arteaga resigned.

Today, in addition to rotary, Arteaga is a journalist for newspaper La Hora and hosts her own television program. Her sister, Claudia, is also a journalist and traveled to Maine with the group. Arteaga advocates for environmental issues and hopes to protect rain forests with the support of U.S. rotary groups. The Quito group plans to travel to California in the future to garner support for the project, she said.

Saco Bay Rotary has helped

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Rosalia Arteaga,
Quito, Ecuador Rotarian

the Quito group with stocking an adult education school with supplies and equipment to teach trades and life skills. They are also collaborating on securing clean water sources in Quito. Saco Bay had the chance to show their sister group the kind of projects they work on, like playgrounds, a bike path and the Kimball Health Center in Saco.

The Quito Rotary also joined Saco Bay in serving a meal at the Bon Appetit Soup Kitchen in Saco, which the local Rotarians sponsor twice a month.

“It’s important to retain the relationship and communication because we’re Rotarians,” said Lorena Vaca, president of Quito Rotary club. “We’re very close with our sister club.”

The Quito Rotary members leave the U.S. for the trip back to Ecuador on Tuesday.

— Staff Writer Robyn Burnham can be contacted at 282-1535, Ext. 329 or rburnham@gwi.net.