

Putting his feet ... where his mouth is

Man walks to bring attention to children's rights

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Daniel Garcia, 51, is a man who is known for putting his feet where his mouth is.

As the founder of Children of Our World Foundation, based in San Diego, Calif., Garcia is currently walking from Alexandria La., to Oklahoma City, Okla., to draw attention to the plight of the world's children.

He has been marching across the world for nearly two decades communicating his message for "children rights and world peace."

"I'm walking for the children," he said. "There is just too much hatred and violence in the world and far too often children are the victims of these acts. Our children don't need this. Our children, and I'm not just talking about America's children, children all over the world need to see some love and peace."

Garcia was in Marshall from Thursday evening until Friday morn-

ing en route to Oklahoma. The local Holiday Inn provided accommodation for him and his Marine escort. The escort travels with him to provide assistance and watch his back from approaching traffic.

Garcia said every time he sees an act of hatred, violence or terrorism where a child is the victim or injured it tears at the core of his heart.

Garcia said the human carnage caused by the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City made him even more determined to speak up in his own way for children.

"I was in Oklahoma just after the bombing and I got caught up in the whole spirit of the tragedy and emotions of what happened. It was terrible," he said. "So many children. They were innocent victims. They never hurt anyone. It really touched me. "When I saw the aftermath of that tragedy, right then I made a commitment that with God's help that I would continue walking for children

and believing that God would protect me on all my journeys."

During his travels he has met with some of the most famous people in the world, including, Pope John Paul II, former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, the late Jackie Kennedy Onassis, Stevie Wonder, Mohammad Ali, Whitney Houston, Mikhail Gorbachev and Mother Teresa.

Garcia said after he completes his trek to Oklahoma he will cross the Atlantic Ocean where he will take his message to other parts of the world. "I've been invited to walk in Rome this year and I will be walking in Paris this August. The Pope will be in Paris in August at the World Conference on Children," he said. "I hope that the rest of the world will join me and try to make this world a better place for our children. They don't need all this hatred and violence they're seeing in the world today."