

## THANK YOU FOR A SUCCESSFUL BOOK DRIVE!

Thanks to all of you generous contributors, we have met our Santa Teresa health book drive goal. Most of these books have already arrived in Santa Teresa, and the rest are being shipped this month.

When Jader Castro visited Richland Center last August, he was told by Trish and David Swasko, former Peace Corps workers about two health related books they had found particularly useful in their work in Central America. These books are Done No Hay Doctor (Where There is No Doctor) and Aprendiendo a Promover LaSalud (Learning to Promote Health). These are hands on books about health, sanitation and medical procedures, with pictures and clear basic instructions.

Jader was hoping to establish basic health care houses in the 40 rural communities of Santa Teresa. He was excited about having these books, as a resource for the health volunteers, in the often isolated rural settlements.

The Sister City Project, along with the Gays Mills Central American Support Group has raised the money to buy these books for Santa Teresa. Much of these funds were raised at the Gays Mills group's cake-walk last November, and through a poster display and request at the Brewer Library. The most novel contribution was a plastic peanut butter jar, containing \$80.00 in change, donated by a former Richland resident.

### BENEFIT SUPPER AND DANCE ON APRIL 3

The Sister City Project will be holding a benefit supper and old-time dance on Saturday evening, the 3rd of April. Come out and enjoy yourselves while raising money for Santa Teresa.

The 6:15 soup supper will feature homemade soups, tacos and desserts. Starting at 8:00 the Kettle Creek string band will play and call old time dance music - including squares,

reels, polkas and waltzes. Dances are taught and all ages are welcome. \$5.00 per adult includes both the dinner and dance.

The event will be held at St. Mary's Catholic Church basement, West 4th Street and Main, Richland Center. If you'd like to help with the supper, or contribute a dessert, call Mary Bard at 647-2594.

#### **RICHLAND MEDICAL WORKERS SEND SUPPLIES**

Under the supervision of Frank Ward, Pharmacist at the Richland Hospital, a group of people working at the hospital have sent two packages of medicines and medical supplies to Santa Teresa. These include the antibiotics and anti-microbial medicines Jader thought were most useful. They plan to send these medicines on a regular basis.

#### **HECHTS TO VISIT SANTA TERESA**

Ilse and Rudy Hecht, Madison nurse and doctor, well known for longtime involvement in worldwide peace and justice work, are going to visit Santa Teresa for us in April. They will take the money raised at the benefit for wells and some medicines. Since both are fluent in Spanish and in the medical profession, we hope to get a good first hand report on the present health situation and needs in Santa Teresa.

#### **LOCAL EYE DOCTOR IN NICARAGUA**

Dr. John Guelig, Richland Center optometrist, was in Nicaragua for 10 days in January, participating in a traveling clinic to give eye examinations and donated used glasses to poor rural Nicaraguans. His trip was in the rain forest area of eastern Nicaragua, near the city of El Rama. The optometrists carried their equipment and generator to river towns along the Rio Escondido by outboard motorboat.

Dr. Guelig is interested in leading a similar project in Santa Teresa next winter. He hopes to have some Richland area Spanish speakers join him as interpreters.

At our next meeting, Dr. Guelig will tell us about his trip to Nicaragua, show some slides of the area he visited, and talk with interested people about making plans for next year's clinic in Santa Teresa. This will be at 7 pm, Wednesday April 21, at the Brewer Library.

#### **JADER WRITES FROM SANTA TERESA**

In October, the Sister City Project received a letter from Jader Castro, who reported on his continuing work after returning to Nicaragua.

A major effort was the workshop that he organized for volunteers who are doing health-related work in the rural regions around Santa Teresa. About 45 persons attended the 3-day workshop, which focused on planning and popular education, in addition to health care techniques. The workshop was funded, in part, with some of the money raised during his visit here in August.

Jader had spoken with Luis Matus, mayor of Santa Teresa, and Dr. Cruz, director of the Health Center, about his trip to Wisconsin. He also reported that a health committee, with members representing various political viewpoints, has been organized in Santa Teresa.

Copies of Jader's letter, as well as photos that he sent us, can be seen at the Brewer Library in Richland Center.

#### **COMMUNITY WELLS FOR SANTA TERESA**

When Jader was here, he spoke of the lack of clean water sources as the number one health problem in rural Santa Teresa.

For most rural Nicaraguans, water comes from rivers and streams, often contaminated. This contamination is the source of many deadly diseases, including childhood diarrhea and cholera, which is now common in Central America. The solution to this problem includes deep closed wells, sanitary latrines, and education about better sanitation habits.

Included in Jader's letter was a proposal for construction of communal wells in 15 communities in the Santa Teresa municipality. Each well would cost about \$350. This would be the cost of the materials (bricks and cement) and a manual pump. The people of the community itself would do the digging and construction.

Last month, our Sister City Project sent \$350 for one well to Santa Teresa. We hope to raise money at our benefit supper and dance for more of these life-saving wells.

## NICARAGUA NOW

According to Donna Vukelich in dusty, dry season Managua, the situation in Nicaragua is very tense right now. There is military activity in the north, where attacks by rearmed groups like the "Recontras" have been on the increase.

The political situation is unstable as well. The ultra-right is trying to push out President Violeta Chamorro and the more moderate members of UNO. The former UNO coalition has dissolved, leaving Mrs. Chamorro allied with the Sandinistas against the right wing.

Much of the aid promised by the U.S. to Nicaragua on the condition of Mrs. Chamorro's election in 1990 is still frozen in Congress due to the influence of Jesse Helms. (Write to your Congressmen and urge the release of the aid. Violeta Chamorro is Nicaragua's democratically elected President and needs U.S. support.)

There is continuing conflict over land ownership, whether the land belongs to the returning rich Somocista landowners who fled to Miami in the 1979 revolution, or to the campesinos who received and have worked the land under the Sandinista land reform program.

The economic situation remains grim, with over half of the work force unemployed and high poverty levels throughout the country. Conditions in many Pacific Coast regions were further exacerbated by last September's tidal wave.

## EL SALVADOR

Salvadoran José Marroquin went back to visit his family in San Salvador for the first time since he arrived here as a political refugee 7 years ago. Even though the war is over, he was very disappointed by the present conditions there.

In a situation similar to Nicaragua's there were no retraining programs, no land given, few jobs available for soldiers on both sides of the conflict. As a result of the demobilization and general poverty, there is increased robbery, violence and gang activity.

The peace negotiations are at an impasse, as President Cristiani hasn't dismissed some generals by the agreed deadline. There has been some death squad reemergence,

José and many other FMLN supporters feel that some of the FMLN leaders have betrayed the cause of the poor people and have sold out to the government. As in Nicaragua, the present generation of young people is not politicized, seeing no alternative to the current system.

Some good things he saw were the positive presence of the U.N. peace keeping troops and more awareness and government involvement in trying to prevent more deforestation. It is interesting to note that many of José's observations were confirmed by the report of the U.N. Truce Commission, which was released in mid-March.

José will be talking about his trip Sunday evening, April 21st at the Kickapoo Exchange, Gays Mills.

### IN MEMORIUM

The Sister City Project lost one of its strongest supporters when Terry Kandal of Cazenovia died in November. Born in Chicago in 1915, Terry worked for 30 years as a tool and die maker at Electro-Motive division of General Motors in LaGrange, Illinois, where he helped start and was president of United Auto Workers Union Local 719. Terry was always ready to tell about the strikes and struggle of his early union days and always ready to walk the picket line with recent Wisconsin strikers.

We miss Terry at our meetings. He was an activist who lived by his convictions, and was always the first to whip out his checkbook for Central American causes. As his wife Gert says "Terry didn't care about money for himself, but he believed all people should have a better life."

## GUSTAVO PARAJÓN ON THE CENTRAL AMERICAN SITUATION

Dr. Gustavo Parajón, Baptist minister, physician, and founder and president of Nicaragua's Council of Protestant Churches (CEPAD), spoke in Madison on February 13.

His speech detailed how Nicaragua and the rest of the Third World have been affected by the imposition of the "New World Order".

According to Dr. Parajón, the fall of the Iron Curtain set off a world "avalanche" where the North overwhelmed the South. The industrialized, capitalist countries of North America and Europe now hold the lion's share of the world's power.

During the cold war, the capitalist countries often helped aid and develop countries of the South so they wouldn't "go communist". Now that this is no longer necessary, the North is free to go in for complete economic domination and exploitation of the South.

In this new world order, because of the debt crisis in Latin America, the U.S. and such organizations as the I.M.F. are able to dictate the terms of "structural adjustment"

in the countries of the South, on a model that keeps the country dependent on outside aid and markets, and insists on great cuts in essential government services.

In an already poor country like Nicaragua, this means cuts in education, medical care, agricultural credit, food subsidies for the poor. Unemployment and poverty increase, resulting in hunger, prostitution, crime, and environmental degradation such as deforestation and sale of endangered species.

Nicaragua has a "dessert economy" depending on export of sugar, coffee, bananas and cocoa to the countries of the North. The base prices for these products are lower every year. Farmers don't want to plant crops because of low prices, and government loans go to the rich rather than small producers who are afraid to lose their land if they can't pay back the loan.

Dr. Parajón's appearance in Madison was sponsored by the Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua (WCCN).

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