

Report from Santa Teresa

Jader Castro Guadamuz wrote us last fall to thank us for the money raised at last year's benefit dance. He says, "To date we have advanced to fourteen communal wells in the communities. Most of the health problems originate from the lack of water fit for human beings to drink." Jader, a health worker from Santa Teresa, visited southwest Wisconsin in August of 1992.

Jader reports that the lack of any budget for health education has slowed down his work with health brigadistas in the rural communities, although he was panning a midwife training workshop to "reinforce basic knowledge about pregnancy and birth care, and decrease the perinatal deaths in our municipality".

"We are in the process of strengthening the care through the base health houses which have been set up in the communities, since in the rainy season the severe diarrhea sicknesses increase considerably."

Other health problems are due to the inaccessibility of the rural areas in the rainy season, and lack of medicines in the Santa Teresa public pharmacy, "which means that the patient must look for the prescribed medicine in private pharmacies which charge a much higher price than he can afford". The underlying factor is general poverty "due to the economic crisis, with a high level of unemployment and a lack of financing for agricultural crops, the main economic activity of Santa Teresa."

On a positive note, Jader reports the city of Santa Teresa has finished building the municipal market structure, which will hopefully bring in some income for the city. Sports fields for basketball and baseball have been built, and they are promoting formation of young people's teams.

An additional \$400, raised by your donations to the Sister City Project in the last year was taken to Donna Vukelich in Managua in March, to be passed on to Jader. The money will be used for either wells, latrines, or health brigadista training.

On the national Nicaraguan scene, Donna Vukelich reports that the stalemate in the National Assembly has been resolved, allowing the government to address needed constitutional reforms. However, that economic situation continues to worsen. Already the poverty rate is 70-80%, malnutrition is rising, the infant mortality rate is the highest in Latin America. Crime, drug use and prostitution come with the "social decomposition" of the economic crisis. The crippling recession is due to "structural adjustment" dictated by world creditor institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Following measures such as the overnight lifting of protective trade barriers and the laying off of thousands of state workers, the IMF is now proposing more cuts, and the complete privatization of health and educational services, banking, telecommunications, and key utilities.

Benefit Dance and Supper **Dare to Dance on Friday the 13th!**

Live String Band Music! An Old Time dance and supper featuring burritos and homemade desserts. Kettle Creek musicians and friends will play and teach squares, reels, polkas and waltzes for dancers of all ages. The event will happen Friday, May 13th, on the beautiful wood dance floor of "Blue Highways", the old Masonic Temple Building, located at 105 N. Central, Richland Center, WI.

Supper starts at 6:00 pm, with the dance beginning at 8:00. Adults - \$6.00, Kids 5-12 - \$3.00, for both events. Half-price admission for the dance only, so if you can't make it for the meal, be sure to come by later and dance. Proceeds from the benefit will go for public health needs in Santa Teresa.

We need people to make desserts for the benefit. If you'd like to contribute something tasty, or if you want to help out in some other way, please call Mary Bard at 647-2594, or Jane Furchgott at 583-2431.

Richland Area - Santa Teresa
Sister City Project
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