

NEWS FROM THE ROOFTOP



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Fall 2010

RED HEART, YELLOW ROSE: CELEBRATING CARLOS

by Al Meyer

Each time we travel to Nicaragua we make plans to check on special kids that come into our lives. Carlos Noel Llanes Pineda is one of those kids. He is the little 7-year-old who was born with a birth defect called hypospadias, which is the absence or misplacement of a urinary opening. (See *Spring 2009 News from the Rooftop*.)

The Tin Roof Foundation made arrangements for his surgery in Managua, Nicaragua in 2009. When we saw him in February 2010, he was suffering from dengue fever and was very ill and listless. We were anxious to visit with him on our trip to Somoto, about a four-hour drive north from Managua, near Honduras.

We arrived at his house, a small concrete block home, maybe 320 square feet, where he lives with his mother and three siblings. The front door stood open, hopeful of catching a breeze to cool the house from the stifling heat. It is winter in Nicaragua, which simply means the temperatures are in the 90s, lots of humidity, and rain each day. We see Carlos standing near the open door. As we approach the house Carlos runs to Charlene, giving her a big hug. I could feel the emotions just watching my wife and this small child embrace. I knew she could now relax knowing that Carlos is feeling much better. The improvement in his appearance and energy is amazing.

We exchanged greetings with Carolina, Carlos's mother. The doctor was with us and we talked about the boy's current health and future prognosis. Carlos is receiving



Carlos's Note for Charlene,
translated from Spanish

*Beloved Godmother,
I am very happy because
you very well. I am happy to
see it. I always dream of you.
I knew when I was sick you
was interested much. I thank
God. I want to always carry
you in my heart.
Love, Carlos*



therapy and his condition is improving. At this moment we are not sure if additional surgeries will be required. We are celebrating his much-improved condition.

Carlos is standing quietly next to his mother. He tugs at her apron and whispers in her ear. She nods and he quickly goes back into the house. While he is gone Carolina tells us that Carlos had a dream about Charlene. He returns and shyly hands Charlene a red heart he had made with a little yellow plastic rose attached. He also gives her a little note on a piece of folded-up notebook paper. Of course, by this time Charlene is so touched, she has tears running down her cheeks. Another big hug takes place.

Reluctantly, it is soon time to say our good-byes (until our next trip). We leave feeling assured the doctors will continue to evaluate and treat Carlos. As we are leaving we see Carlos still standing in front of his house, waving and smiling. It is a sight I will never forget—and never stop celebrating.

Thanks to Tin Roof donors, Carlos has a bright future.

BRINGING HOPE TO KIDS

OPEN YOUR GATE: OPEN YOUR HEART

by Patty Howard

While traveling through the country of Nicaragua this summer, the variety of gates caught my attention. The simple posts with barbed wire formed gates to be opened with great care. Other gates stood closed with strong bars of metal locked with a heavy chain. The simple wooden gates seemed to beckon to me to enter. As I reflected on gates, I realized all gates were either closed, cracked open, or left standing wide open inviting everyone to enter. I wrote in my journal, "Is the gate of my life built out of barbed wire with the intention to caution or harm, is it sealed shut, or do I have a simple, ordinary gate that stands open to welcome all who pass by?"

As I continued through this beautiful country with the Meyers, it was obvious their gates are open and welcoming to all. While we were in Cusmapa, at one of the schools, we witnessed the SAT program. SAT is a program working with secondary students to solve problems within their community. Here I saw how willing Al and Charlene are to "open their gates" to whatever will benefit the children of Nicaragua.

The teacher was presenting a lesson on learning about force by experimenting in the classroom with common items, learning about the amount of force needed to complete certain tasks. He brought in a wheelbarrow and had Al sit in it. He then asked Charlene to move Al from one side of the room to the other. The kids giggled and we all clapped as Charlene easily pushed him across the room. What a gifted teacher! He understood the culture and used a simple tool and common experiences to relate the material to the students' daily lives.

Before we left, Al spoke to the students with the help of Peter, the Fabretto director of operations who was our translator and driver. Al told them how proud he was of each of them and he challenged them



*"Open the gate to all who are righteous;
allow the faithful to enter."*



to continue to study hard and learn so they could make their community a better place. It was thrilling to hear one student tell how he was using what he learned at home in his family's garden.

This is just one story of the thousands that happen because Al and Charlene have opened the gates of their lives and welcomed in the children of the poorest of the poor in Nicaragua. Wouldn't it be wonderful if everybody simply threw open their gates to the sick, orphaned, oppressed, and needy and welcomed them to share in the bounty of their lives?

What about you, have you opened your gate to the children of Nicaragua? You have an opportunity to join me in helping support the Tin Roof Foundation.

A monthly contribution helps feed children, pay local teacher salaries to educate the children as well as support the doctors who give the families needed medical attention.

Invite others you know to attend Nica Noche on November 6. Open your gates and support the tremendous work of the Tin Roof Foundation in Nicaragua. Enable these children to grow in their abilities to change their own life, their village, and their country.

NICA NOCHE 2010 NOVEMBER 6!

**COME CELEBRATE WITH US!
FEATURING A LIVE AUCTION, LATIN MUSIC, GREAT FOOD
AND A POPULAR INSPIRATIONAL GUEST SPEAKER**

It's pure fun! *Nica Noche* 2010 will be held at the Sharonville Convention Center, Saturday, November 6, beginning at 6:30 p.m. and will feature a lineup of events that is exciting and inspirational.

Once again there will be live and silent auctions with hundreds of valuable items including a week at a beautiful home overlooking the mountains in Abruzzo, Italy; golf items; vacation trips; Bengals and Reds autographed memorabilia; local restaurant and retail gift certificates; gift baskets (just in time for the holidays); original Nicaraguan artwork and craft items; and a stay at a beautiful condo, Marco Island, Florida, plus many, many more items.

A buffet dinner will include delicious Latin American fare, with fresh tropical fruits and veggies, and a dessert station. (Last year's was a real hit!) The entertainment will include special vocal artists as well as a live band performing Latin music.

This year, we have an outstanding guest speaker—Kevin Marinacci—a man who has brought the attention of thousands of people to the plight of the children of Nicaragua and has been extremely effective in motivating others to help in “bringing hope to the kids.” Kevin lives in Nicaragua where he has worked tirelessly for thousands of children under the banner of Fabretto Children's Foundation, a partner of The Tin Roof Foundation.

Save the date and get your tickets now! You can make a difference and have a great time at the same time.



YOUR 2010 CHALLENGE

If you've been to *Nica Noche* before, you know what a wonderful, memorable evening it is. Here is your challenge! Gather your friends and sponsor a table for 8 at Nica Noche.

The cost to sponsor a table is \$600.

The cost of an individual ticket is \$75; \$600 reserves a table for 8. And 100% of the proceeds from this event will go to “Bring Hope to the Children” of Nicaragua.

For tickets, auction-item donations, corporate sponsorships, or if you have questions, please contact Diane Douglass at (513) 671-7553 or e-mail douglassd710@aol.com.

THE TIN ROOF FOUNDATION WHO ARE WE?

The Tin Roof Foundation is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to “Bringing Hope to Kids” by providing educational opportunities, meal programs, healthcare to facilitate learning, and economic development assistance for their families, thereby enabling children to escape the spiral of poverty. There are no salaries. All administrative costs are funded by Tin Roof Foundation founders Al and Charlene Meyer. The Tin Roof Foundation, Inc. is incorporated in the State of Ohio. It is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.

TIME FOR CELEBRATION

by Charlene Meyer

We have waited and prayed for these moments. It has been difficult to be patient and not become discouraged. In the years traveling to Nicaragua we have seen children throughout the country with many needs, families struggling simply to survive the day, and the sense of hopelessness in the faces of the thousands of families that we have met along this journey. We have witnessed small victories along the way, but this trip proves to be more than small victories; we are witnessing hopelessness turned to joy.

It has been raining nearly every day since we arrived. In many ways it has been a blessing since the rain cools our bodies as we travel to each of our destinations. However, it does make traveling in the rural areas a bit more challenging. The roads have deep ruts from the heavy rains. We are thankful to have a trusty four-wheel truck that slowly grinds its way up and down the mountain paths.

The scenery is spectacular. Lush tropical plants dot the landscape in every direction. The clouds form beautiful images around the mountains and valleys. Wildflowers grow between the rocks on both sides of the muddy path. We soak up the beauty as we venture from one area to the next.

A DELIGHTFUL SURPRISE

As our trusty old Toyota truck finally reaches Cusmapa, I know it will only be a short time until I can see Gabrielle Maradiaga, the severely malnourished 5-year-old boy we met in January (see Spring 2010, *News From the Rooftop*). The images of his swollen stomach, ribs protruding, puffy face, and listless body still haunt me. What will we see once we arrive at our final destination?

We park our truck and begin the short walk down the dirt path. My eyes stay focused on the path ahead, anticipating my first glimpse of Gabrielle. Will he be alert? Will he be

laughing? Will he be walking? These and many more questions buzz around my mind.

As we approach the simple cement block home we see a beautiful sight. Gabrielle is laughing and playing. He no longer has a swollen stomach or protruding ribs. Yes, this will be a celebration!



This simple two-room house is now Gabrielle's home. Maria Antonio Morales, her husband, and seven children, in addition to Gabrielle's biological mother (a mother not mentally capable of caring for Gabrielle) all live in this small home. It is hard to imagine so much love under one tiny tin roof. Maria cares for Gabrielle's mother as she would her own daughter. Gabrielle runs to Maria with his arms open wide for a big hug. These are memories that I will carry with me. I could not have asked for a better celebration.



VILLAGE OF LA LAGUNA CELEBRATES

We have been in Nicaragua for a week. We have seen old friends and met new friends. We have laughed and cried as we traveled throughout the country. We have been anticipating this visit for many months. As we make the last turn we see a beautiful sight. The entire community of LaLaguna is waiting for us. They have come to celebrate their answer to prayer—their brand new community meal and education center.

They have decorated with balloons, flowers picked from the nearby hills, and made a sign to greet us. We join in the celebration with music, games, treats for the children, and finally a hot nutritious meal prepared in their new kitchen. We are so thankful the families of this community have allowed us to be part of their family.

What pride and self-assurance we see in the faces of the members of this community. They have worked so hard to make this dream come true. The community participated in tearing down the old structure and helped to rebuild the new center. We have witnessed the transformation of an entire village, a village filled with pride as they have succeeded in rebuilding their own community. It will be a celebration we will never forget.

This message is from the La Laguna community: *Thanks to the many Tin Roof donors, Montgomery Community Church, and Patty Howard, for being an answer to prayer. We thank God each day that you did not forget us. You are in our prayers. You will always be a part of our family. We love you.*



HELP MELANEY FIGHT HER BRAIN INFECTION

by Charlene Meyer

Melaney, a sweet, shy little girl of two, has a serious brain infection. She has just been diagnosed with the infection. It surrounds the shunt she has had since age 1 to drain the fluid from her brain.

Melaney desperately needs an operation. She was born hydrocephalic and still has a great deal of fluid and pressure in her cranial cavity. Melaney is only 2 years old and can expect to live a full, happy life if her infection is cleared up and she

continues to receive good medical care. But first, the original shunt must be removed and a new one put in.

Her parents cannot afford to pay for the operation, but are so relieved and happy The Tin Roof Foundation is taking an interest in their sick little girl. Would you like to help get Melaney the medical help she needs? The cost for the surgery is \$4,500. If we act now, she still has a chance at a good, healthy, happy life. Please make your donation to The Tin Roof Foundation today.



MEMORIAL GIFTS...

DONATED BY:

Mr. & Mrs. A. J. Bell

Jack Bunnell
Alan Chandler
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Mike Chase
Martha DeMar
Thomas L. Evans
Lyndon & Patricia Farmer
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Janet Norton
Richard Shirley
Jean Snook
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Nancy & Bill Tidd
Dorothy J. Weaver
Tom & Susan Young

Olivia Zivney

IN MEMORY OF:

John Bell
Esther Morton
Peggy Bunnell - Birthday
Rev. Esther Chandler
Josephine Campbell
Russell McElfresh
My Parents
My wife, Nancy Evans
Sophia Evans Farmer
Carolyn Jolliff
Jerry Norton
Harold Hamilton
Morris L. Snook
Mary Lou Polson
Mary Hopewell
Glen Weaver
Marilyn Beiting
Carolyn Reller
Tabitha Densmore

...HONOR GIFTS

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Karen Dyer - Birthday
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Kathy O'Brien - Birthday
Sophia Tapp - Birthday
Peggy Monjar, Birthday &
Mother's Day
Eastside Christian Church
Mike Zelek

FRANCISCO BEATING IMPOSSIBLE ODDS

by Peter Schaller, Fabretto
Director of Operations

Francisco Moncada was one of the first students to enroll in SAT four years ago in the community of El Chilamatal. He had been out of the public education system for six years. Francisco was born with physical disabilities affecting his upper and lower extremities. Although he was able to finish his primary education since the school was a short distance from home, his disability made it impossible for him to walk 15 kilometers (nearly 10 miles) every day to the nearest high school in Cusmapa.

We began SAT in 2007 (which means Tutorial Learning System in English) because very few secondary schools exist in rural Nicaragua, most of the kids do not go beyond the sixth grade. The SAT program is open to any student who has completed his or her primary education, including those who have been out of the education system for some time.

In addition to being a formal high school degree program, SAT is also a technical program with emphasis on sustainable agriculture and community development. Students learn about natural resource management, sustainable farming practices, small business management, and strategies for improving conditions in their communities.

Francisco is in his fourth year of the six-year SAT program. With the technical component, SAT includes an additional year beyond Nicaragua's normal five years of high school.

With the practical activities in SAT, Francisco is learning new skills every day that will enable

him to identify new economic opportunities in his community. The SAT program gives students like Francisco the knowledge and skills needed to develop new income generating projects that will help to reduce poverty in their communities.

Francisco is one of the best students in his group, and is quickly becoming a leader in his community. His example of dedication and perseverance is an example to all. Francisco will be the first in his family to graduate from high school.



THE TREE THAT FIGHTS MALNUTRITION

by Al Meyer

Imagine a tree in your back yard that could not only give you a healthy diet of vegetables and protein, but also provide your family with vitamins and medicines, and purify your water. There is such a tree—Nicaraguans call it “Moringa”—and it may help end world hunger and malnutrition.

We first heard about the Moringa tree from a dear friend, Mel West. Mel and his wife Barbara live in Columbia, Missouri. Mel, a retired minister, has always been interested in farming techniques, particularly in helping to improve Nicaragua’s family farms. In his research Mel learned about how the Moringa trees have been used to combat malnutrition, especially among infants and nursing mothers.

Three non-governmental organizations in particular—Trees for Life, Church World Service, and Education Concerns for Hunger Organization—have advocated Moringa as “natural nutrition for the tropics. Moringa is especially promising as a food source in the tropics because the tree is in full leaf at the end of the dry season when other foods are typically scarce.” (Jed W. Fahey, 2005).

SUPER FOOD PODS

“It is commonly said that Moringa leaves contain more Vitamin A than carrots, more calcium than milk, more iron than spinach, more Vitamin C than oranges, and more potassium than bananas, and that the protein quality of Moringa leaves rivals that of milk and eggs.”

The immature pods are the most valued and widely used of all the tree parts. The pods are extremely nutritious, containing all the essential amino acids along with many vitamins and other nutrients. The immature pod can be eaten raw or prepared like green peas or green beans, while



the mature pods are usually fried and possess a peanut-like flavor. The pods also yield 38-40% of non-drying, edible oil known as Ben Oil. This oil is clear, sweet and odorless and never becomes rancid. Overall, its nutritional value most closely resembles olive oil.

The Tin Roof Foundation is funding the purchase and planting of Moringa trees in Nicaragua on one of the farms we support. This is in addition to tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, cabbage, mangos, and other fruits and vegetables that are currently being grown on our 20-acre farm. As these trees

grow, they will be trimmed back annually to one meter or less and allowed to regrow so the pods and leaves remain within arm’s reach. We are striving to find ways to help the rural poor have access to a more nutritious diet, in addition to providing natural medicines. Thanks, Mel, for all your help in making this possible.

If you would like to help Tin Roof continue its support of planting Moringa trees in Nicaragua, please donate to The Tin Roof Foundation today.

WHY GIVE TO THE TIN ROOF FOUNDATION?

- 100% of your gift goes directly to the project
- No salaries (all volunteers, all the time)
- No administrative costs paid from your donation

Note: We will never share your name or information with any other organization.

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE WWW.TINROOF.ORG

Same address but a totally new look and organization! That's Tin Roof Foundation's "extreme makeover" website, now online at www.tinroof.org (same address as before). We're so proud of it. Now it shows we're up-to-date and on the move. Here are some of the highlights:

- It's streamlined since we've cut non-essentials.
- It's attractive with many photos of our beautiful children.
- It's easier to donate. You can now do it online using a credit card.
- It will be easier to update so you get news when you need it, when it's hot!

Take a look and while you're online, please send us your e-mail address to hope@tinroof.org. When something comes up that affects Tin Roof or you, you'll be the first to know.

Our new website was made possible by a very generous Tin Roof supporter. Thank you so much for this awesome gift!



The Tin Roof Foundation is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to "Bringing Hope to Kids" providing educational opportunities, meal programs, healthcare to facilitate learning, and economic development assistance for their families, thereby enabling children to escape the spiral of poverty.

100% of your gift supports our programs. No administrative costs are paid from your donation.

Nica Noche 2010 Coming Nov. 6

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WE NEED YOUR HELP!



THE CHILDREN OF NICARAGUA NEED A HELPING HAND

with some of life's most basic needs—food, medical care, and education. In a land where family income is less than \$600 a year, the children desperately need your help. Donate today to The Tin Roof Foundation. Every penny you give goes to help the children.

PLEASE MAIL YOUR CONTRIBUTION TODAY

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