



OUR STORY: FROM AN ADVENTURE TO A LESSON IN PERSEVERANCE

TIN ROOF BY THE NUMBERS

5 ...first-time visitors from Highland United Methodist Church who went to Nicaragua on our recent trip. **Read more page 2.**

7 ...November 7th marks our annual fiesta celebrating the accomplishments of Tin Roof. **Read more page 8.**

18 ...years Familias Especiales has been serving disabled individuals in Matagalpa. **Read more page 7.**

25 ...years Tin Roof founders have been working to alleviate poverty in Nicaragua. **Read more page 1.**

28 ...communities served by our healthcare initiative in remote Mulu-kuku. **Read more page 7.**

802 ...new Spanish children's books delivered by Tin Roof and church teams on our recent trip. **Read more page 4.**

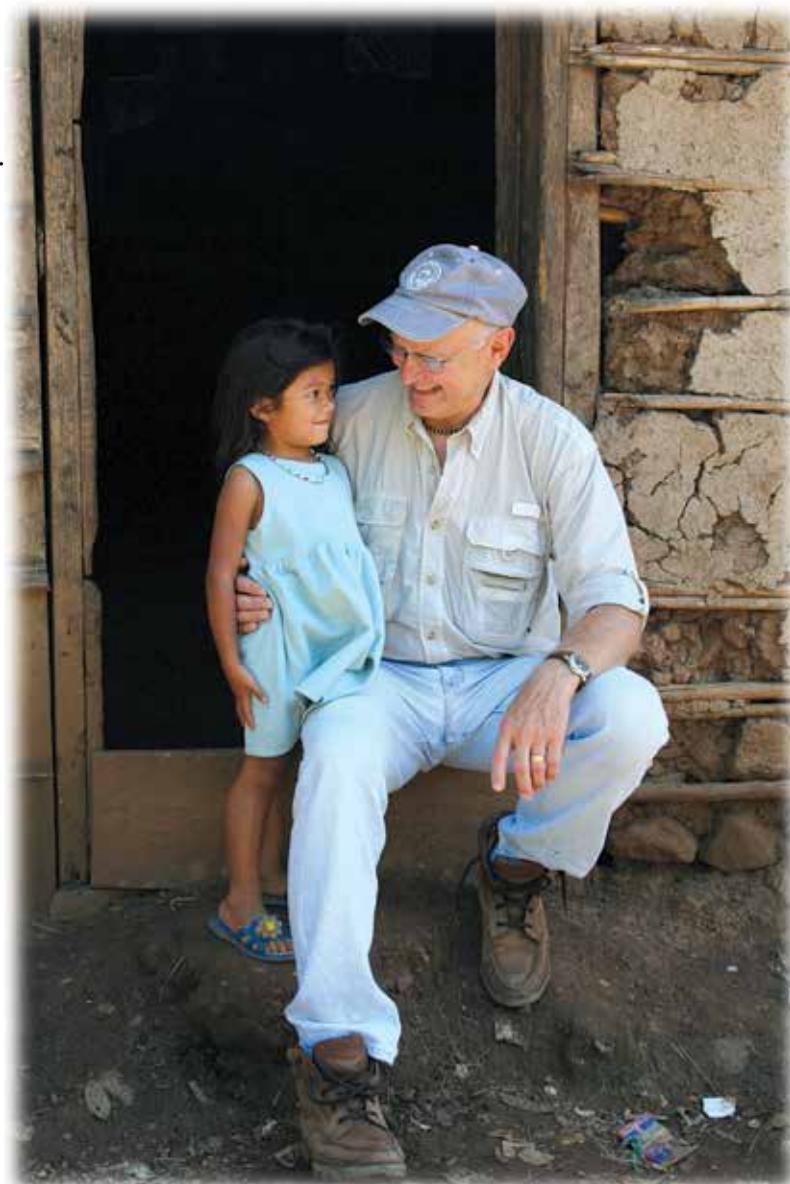
by Charlene Meyer

January 1990. Twenty-five years ago. That's when it all began. What started as Al's Indiana Jones' big adventure has turned into an even bigger venture than Indy's *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

It's hard to believe it has been 25 years since Al landed at the Sandino Airport in Managua, Nicaragua. The country was preparing for their first free election. There were armed guards everywhere you looked. The airport was in deplorable condition. The VIP lounge had a sink with running water. The only problem...there was no connecting pipe...you washed your feet while also washing your hands!

ONE CHILD AT A TIME

As I look back on those 25 years, I think of the many children and their families who have come into our lives. I think of my first day in Nicaragua and wanting to get back on the plane. How could I possibly think I—who could not speak Spanish, was not a healthcare worker, didn't like the heat, hated bugs, and afraid



of dogs—could possibly help in this country where there were so many needs...needs I felt inadequate to help bring to fruition. As I slept that first night I heard Mother Theresa saying, "I just pick one up at a time." My mind flashed back to each child I had seen that day and they become one rather than an entire country filled with so many needs. It was then that my focus became "one child at a time."

As I was thinking about what I would write in this issue my thoughts went directly to

Continued on page 3

“TO THE WORLD YOU MAY BE ONE PERSON, BUT TO ONE PERSON YOU MAY BE THE WORLD.”

by Angela Walsh

It's easy to get caught up in our routines, going through day-to-day life somewhat on autopilot. Get up, go to work, come home, eat dinner, get the kids to and from activities, go to bed...and do it all over again the next day. But once in a while you have an experience that is anything but routine, something that makes you wake up and take notice of what's really going on in the world around you. For me, that was my recent trip to Nicaragua.

Several months ago, I was presented the opportunity, along with several fellow church members, to join Al and Charlene Meyer on one of their many trips to the poverty-stricken country Nicaragua. Being a Spanish teacher,



I was eager to go along. I knew it would be a valuable cultural experience and one that I could share with my students when I returned. And it was. But it was so much more than that.

HUNGRY FOR A BETTER LIFE

The children we met absolutely melted my heart. Our first stops were the Rayo de Sol schools in Matagalpa. Honestly, I could have stayed there all week. I got to talk to so many beautiful children, from preschoolers to high schoolers, and every age in between. They asked me questions, I asked them questions. We held hands, we read books, we took pictures, and we hugged. We crammed as many smiles as we could into our short visit.

But we also heard some heart-wrenching stories about the families there. We heard about children who need medical care, children who can't go to school, domestic violence, teen pregnancy, and the list goes on.

Angela Walsh, top, and Walton Christian Church pastor Kevin Russell, top left, with some very excited children ready to learn from the new books delivered in February.

Mission team, at left, from Highland United Methodist Church, visit Tin Roof projects in February.



We walked through the neighborhoods and saw unimaginable living conditions, homes with dirt floors, no running water, and walls that didn't look like they could hold up to a strong wind. And yet everywhere I looked I saw the most friendly, welcoming people. They didn't want a handout. They just want their children and their families to have a better life.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

My week in Nicaragua showed me that that's exactly what The Tin Roof

Foundation is doing. They are giving these families hope for a better life by providing education for the children, as well as training and jobs for family members, so that they have the means to provide themselves with a brighter future. My favorite saying has always been, "To the world you may be one person, but to one person you may be the world."

Al and Charlene have definitely lived that out. I was humbled and inspired by my time in Nicaragua with them. The trip lasted a week, but its impact will last a lifetime.

OUR STORY . . .

Continued from front page

Hope, Hope, Hope. After all, we are all about Bringing Hope to Kids. It seemed like the logical thing to share with you. From Gabrielle, being near death from extreme malnutrition, to currently attending school he now has hope. Wilder, suffering from a genetic kidney disorder, received a kidney transplant. He is now a healthy husband and father of two boys responsible for importing and warehousing donated items from the U.S. The children from La Cruz who worked in the garbage dump each day now have a school near their community, with a kitchen and garden. They are learning ways to have a better life.

All these children, and so many others, represent hope. Darryl Bashford, who traveled with us on our last trip to Nicaragua, pointed out that The Tin Roof story is also one grounded in the theme of perseverance.

He reminded me of how we are continually

being told what we are trying to do is impossible. How could we possibly arrange for a young man to get a kidney transplant? How can we promise a young girl who is unable to walk she will someday be able to have her dream of dancing become a reality? How is it possible to see Gabrielle running, laughing, and playing with his friends when not too long ago he could barely hold his head up?

I suppose Darryl is right. When seeing a child in need we have never given up, even when the task seems insurmountable. When one door is closed God opens a window, or two.

NEVER GIVE UP

Can you imagine a school without books? This is the cruel reality in rural Nicaragua. A window that was recently opened was the



awesome gift of hundreds of new Spanish children's books. In this issue you will see and hear about another lesson in perseverance...three newly stocked children's libraries in rural Nicaraguan communities. Even when the light of hope seems dim, Tin Roof and our loyal supporters and partners persevere.



PLANTING THE SEEDS OF LEARNING

by Peter Schaller
Executive Director, Rayo de Sol

In the United States, we often take reading for granted. Although each town and city has their own particular challenges, there are always books in the schools and public libraries where children and adults can go to explore new worlds and ideas. In Nicaragua, that is not the case. The majority of public schools in Nicaragua do not even have enough text books for children, let alone books for recreational reading. As a result, reading levels are very low for primary students in Nicaragua, an issue that The Tin Roof Foundation is addressing directly and aggressively.

800 BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

In February a group from The Tin Roof Foundation and Highland United Methodist

Church in Fort Thomas, Kentucky, travelled to Nicaragua with more than 800 story books! The group had spent several months gathering support and donations, so that 1,000 preschool and primary students in the mountains of Matagalpa, Nicaragua, could have high-quality reading material in their schools.

The Tin Roof Foundation supports critical education programs in Matagalpa, where poverty levels are extremely high. Approximately 70 percent of the families in this area live in conditions of chronic poverty, struggling to meet their basic needs every day. More than 50 percent of the children abandon school before completing the sixth grade, largely because of work responsibilities. The lack of formal education only serves to perpetuate the cycles of chronic poverty.

SHARING YOUR LOVE

During their week in Nicaragua, the group from Tin Roof, Walton Christian Church, and Highland United Methodist Church organized, inventoried and distributed books to two public primary schools and a public preschool. The

books were received with immeasurable enthusiasm by students, teachers and parents. Despite the language barrier, group members sat down with children to read, look at pictures, color and most importantly build relationships. After just a couple of days, there was an amazing amount of love, light and laughter being shared, reciprocally.

Tin Roof's local partners often do reading assessments



with primary students and have determined that more than 50 percent of the children have difficulties with reading. In addition to providing books, The Tin Roof Foundation also works diligently to provide training for teachers. Many teachers do not have adequate training for teaching reading comprehension skills, which also contributes to low reading levels. With additional training, teachers are beginning to show more creativity and aptitude in the classroom.

CHANGING LIVES

When the group arrived at the public preschool in Matagalpa, where 80 children receive classes each day, the reaction from the principal was overwhelming. Mariangel López has been teaching at the preschool for nearly ten years and she told the group with great sincerity that she had never had books in the school before. She had never had stories to read to the children, to help their imaginations soar. She immediately sat on the ground and began to read to a group of children. Their

smiles and laughter were priceless.

Undoubtedly, it will take a few years to get the reading levels at these schools up to par, but the process has begun. Thanks to the generosity of the Tin Roof Foundation, Walton Christian Church, and the group from Highland United Methodist Church, today there are 1,000 children in a small community in the mountains who are devouring new books every day. Books are the seeds of learning, planted in the fertile soil of the children's joy.

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 and special designated gifts. 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.

GIFTS HELP HONOR A LEGACY

If you're a long-time reader of *News from the Rooftop*, you've probably noticed each issue includes "gifts in honor" and "gifts in memory," deeply meaningful ways to honor someone special or to remember a loved one who's passed. Perhaps you've donated in someone's honor or memory. Perhaps you—or a friend or family member—would prefer to have your birthday, anniversary, graduation, or holiday gift sent to The Tin Roof Foundation.



When you give a gift in honor or a gift in memory, you honor what that person means to you and you help to establish a legacy in the support of important Tin Roof programs. These gifts enable us to promote education, nutrition, healthcare, and other self-sufficiency initiatives in the communities of kids just like those pictured here.

Sharing your special gift with another is the most selfless gift you can give. Losing a loved one is never easy, but knowing their legacy lives on can certainly ease the hurt.

To make a gift in honor or a gift in memory, simply note "In Honor of [person's full name]" or "In Memory of [person's full name]" on the memo line of your check, choose the appropriate box on the enclosed return envelope and provide the acknowledgement information, if needed.

Thanks for honoring those you love.



THANK YOU FROM MULUKUKU

Your help has reached so many people. It has been especially helpful to make exams possible and pay for meds that the hospital can't provide. For several people this has really been a lifeline since they need extended care and medication, which is absolutely out of the range of possibilities for them to buy.

This year, because of your great generosity, we have been able to work with the campesino "doctors," health promoters in 28 different communities. We have had four training sessions with them here at the center, including a two-week intensive course for new promoters. We have been able to obtain 29 "community pharmacies." Now at least some of the folks have medicine in their own communities at reduced prices and the promoters have received stethoscopes, blood pressure instruments, as well as kits for doing suturing and to handle birthing, when needed. All of this is possible with the funds you have so generously given. Thank you!

MULUKUKU'S HISTORY

Mulukuku, estimated population 43,000, is located in the North Atlantic Autonomous Zone of

Nicaragua, 91 miles from Matagalpa. (Traveling by bus it's a 6-8 hour ride!) It was established as an asentimiento, or refugee community, during the early years of the war with the contra. People who lived in the remote rural areas and who were threatened by the contra were brought to Mulukuku for safety. During the war a training school for the Nicaraguan army was located in the community.

The community straddled the only road in the region that connected the Department of Matagalpa with Lisawe, Siuna, and eventually Puerto Cabezas. A large bridge crossing the Rio Tuma had been under construction and was nearly complete, when, in October 1988, Hurricane Joan struck Nicaragua. The bridge was destroyed and the community devastated. Since that time the bridge has been completed and Mulukuku has become a regional commercial center.



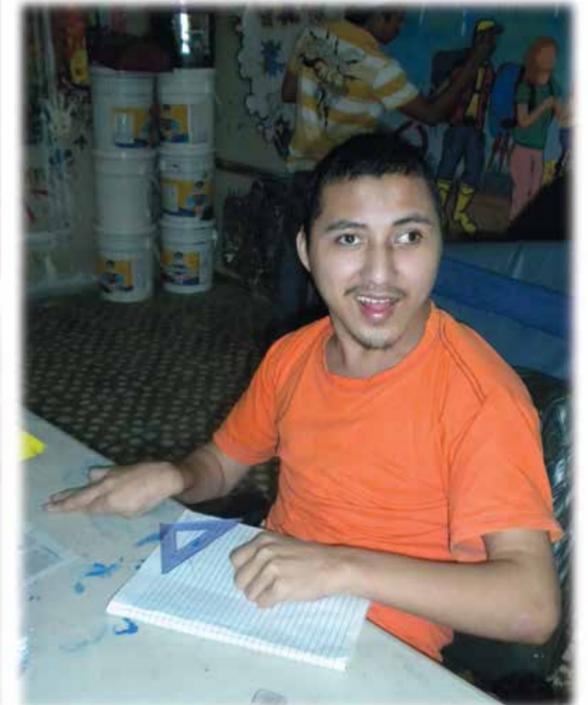
A THANK YOU FROM FAMILIAS ESPECIALES (SPECIAL FAMILIES)

"I want to thank all of you for so much generosity and care I cannot say thank you enough times. I am praying especially for each one of you. You have made a difference in many lives by your generous support for Special Families. You have given me so much hope in humanity in a time when many things seem to say there is no hope ... but you and I know that Hope is alive.

"Special Families in Matagalpa Nicaragua is celebrating 18 years of serving the community of people who have disabilities: Horse therapy, Mother to Mother program, Homes of Peace, specialized medical attention, special education, and a consortium of businesses to provide employment opportunities to both children/young people with a disability and family members of people with handicaps.

"Your help makes a big difference in the lives of our young people and children, as well as adults with a handicap. This support is helping us continue the many programs that we offer and building a community of support and care here in the mountains of Nicaragua.

On behalf of us all... Thank You.



MEMORIAL GIFTS...HONOR GIFTS

DONATED BY:

Alex & Carol Aronis
Chris & Erin Barfels
Jim & Charne Burns
Guy & Judy Chandler

Marilyn Dittrich

Gail Frazier
George & Barbara Hudson
John Laughlin
Al & Charlene Meyer

Camille & Karen Meyers
Ellen Pieper

Gloria Potter
Debbie Schaller
Sarah Slicker
Eric & Susie Swank
Nate & Allison Tobik
Margo & William Wachs

IN HONOR OF:

Al & Charlene Meyer
Wayne Barfels' Birthday
Al & Charlene Meyer
Chris & Amy Gilles
— Merry Christmas!

Bob Dittrich
Thom Lautenbach
Brad Bowers
Diana & Don Elliott
Sue & Mike Keeffe
Debbie Schaller's Birthday
Jack & Shanda's Anniversary
Cathy Rector
Diane Douglass
— Merry Christmas!
Don Potter
Caitlin Martone's Engagement
Laura Hovland
Bill & Nancy Tidd
Russ & Peggy Monjar
Jose Segundo

DONATED BY:

Jim & Ellen Bell
Clermont Springs Deli

Jack DeMarco

Jack & Diane Douglass

Esther Fellowship of
WHBC
Thomas L. Evans
John & Julie Forsthoefel
Ramona Gillock
Steve & Holly Gillock
Gary & Peggy Goldschmidt

Jesline Gormas
Jane Hoffman
Kevin & G. David Hopper
Laura Hovland
Marvin & June Jacobs

IN MEMORY OF:

Amanda Bell
Sue Sutter
Issac Hauke
Desiree DeMarco
Michael DeMarco
Jonathan DeMarco
Fraser & Betty Douglass
Hank & Dorothy Pieper
Charlene's loved ones

Nancy Evans
Robert Toft
Charlene Farrell
Charlene Farrell
Howard & Ruth Goldschmidt
Raymond A. Gormas
Michael J. Hoffman
George & Jessie Hopper
Carl & June Hovland
Charlene Farrell

DONATED BY:

Kathy & Barry Lisner

Bob & Mary Ann
Lohmueller

Rich & Beth Lohmueller
Julie Mahlin
Carl Marinacci
Mary Sue McDuffie
Keith & Marla McMannis
Al & Charlene Meyer
Anna Lee Murphy
Janet Norton
Bob Rice
Mr. & Mrs. Joe D. Rose
Lois C. Shadix
Lillian Smith
Robert & Marilyn Smith
Anita & Wayne Weaver
Dorothy Weaver

IN MEMORY OF:

Mary Hartman
Tom Brossart
Donald Easterly
Mother of Rhoda Bene
Ginny & Charles Lohmueller

Charley & Ginny Lohmueller
Charlene & Cathy's Mother
Dana Marinacci
Charlene's Mother
Elva McMannis
Mike Liu's Mother
Jim Murphy
Jerry Norton
Sue Rice Wetenkamp
Edward Green's Birthday
Carl N. Shadix
Tom & Fred Smith
Charlene's Mother
Bronson Staley
Glen Weaver

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.

STEPPING UP FOR THE KIDS

by Danielle Quales



I'm excited to be taking a leadership role in the planning for Nica Noche 2015. We are already in the throes of planning the program—and it's really stirring memories from my trip to Nicaragua in July 2000. We have some fresh, exciting things planned for November 7, so it's sure to be the biggest and best Nica Noche ever!

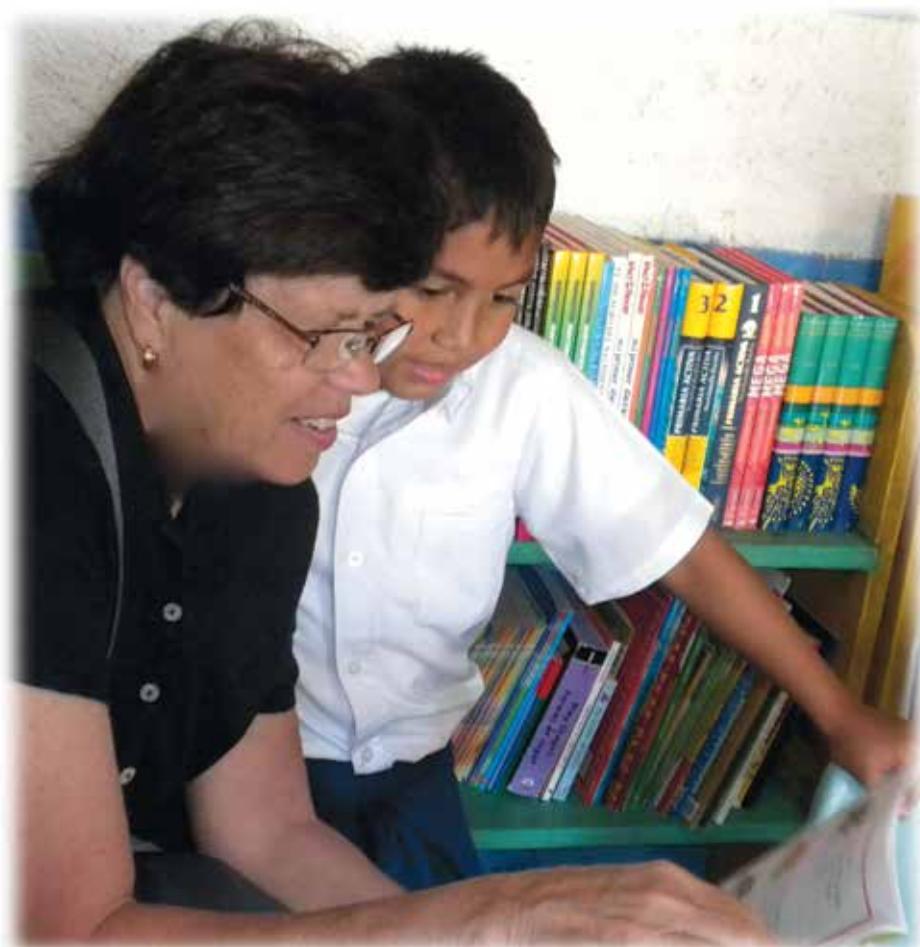
Even if you've attended in the past, be sure to secure your ticket to this year's entertaining and inspiring fundraiser event. We'll be celebrating Tin Roof's many triumphs for the kids—and also exploring the most currently pressing needs that need your support. We challenge you to fill up a table with your family and friends so you can be sure to share in the fun with everyone!

SAVE THE DATE

8th Annual
Nica Noche
Hope Across Nicaragua

Saturday, November 7, 2015
Sharonville Convention Center | Cincinnati, Ohio

Help Tin Roof Continue to Persevere to Bring Hope to Kids



Ways you can help. . .

1. Send your tax-deductible gift in the enclosed envelope
2. Donate online today at www.tinroof.org
3. Arrange automatic donations with your bank
4. Sponsor a table at Nica Noche 2015

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