



Newsletter of Companion Community Development Alternatives

Vol. 5 No.2

"THE MAGIC FORMULA FOR SUSTAINABILITY HAS YET TO BE FOUND"

CoCoDA Board of Directors Visits Partners in El Salvador

Anyone acquainted with CoCoDA will hear sooner or later about "NGOs" (non-governmental organizations). Presently CoCoDA cooperates in projects with five associate organizations in El Salvador, four of which are NGOs and one that is a church with a social mission program that performs many of the same functions as an NGO.

In May, at CoCoDA's 2000 Encuentro (the annual gathering of groups and individuals that are involved in and support CoCoDA's work), Carlos Campos, a Salvadoran specialist in NGO management and planning, reported that there are presently 189 NGOs operating in his home country, managing more than US\$22 million in development projects per year. The search for social transformation during years of the civil war, said Campos, led to the formation of NGOs in El Salvador.

Immediately following the Encuentro, CoCoDA staff and members of the Board of Directors travelled to El Salvador to dialogue with leadership of our Salvadoran associate organizations about our cooperation with them in projects, and about our respective growth and challenges as NGOs promoting democratic social and economic development. By being in their offices, travelling with them to project sites, becoming better acquainted with one another in their environment, we gained a better understanding of the complex challenges they face and the visionary projects they promote in the context of El Salvador today.

A sobering message that we heard in all of our visits is that the economic causes of the civil war and of violent crime in El Salvador are still present and pose the greatest threat to the country's future. While gains have been made in strengthening a democratic political process, the economy continues to leave a majority of Salvadorans either on the edge or in the miserable depths of crisis.

Our Salvadoran associates are devoted to helping bring productive opportunities to disadvantaged sectors of the Salvadoran population. But the viability of their efforts, they told us, depends upon partnerships with others in the international community who share their commitment to social and economic democracy. The extent to which we in the United States commit our privilege and prosperity to these values is meaningless without partnerships and programs that are effectively grounded in realities; in this case, in the realities of El Salvador.

The commentary and reports in this issue of *The Companion* present a convincing argument that such inter-dependency, what we might call solidarity, offers opportunities for us all.

✦ Tim Crouse
CoCoDA Staff



Photo by Kelly Liback

Manuel Ortega, President of the Committee for Reconstruction and Socioeconomic Development of Communities of Suchitoto, Cuscatlán (CRC), presents a summary of the CRC's history to the CoCoDA Board of Directors last May. Like most NGOs in El Salvador, the CRC was organized during the civil war in the 1980s to promote democratic social change in the country. Even though NGOs continue to provide invaluable services in projects for self-development in impoverished rural and urban communities, they struggle to maintain funding for their own operations. In the words of one NGO leader, "The magic formula for sustainability has yet to be found."

In This Issue

- ✦ **Feature Article**
Board and Staff Travel to E.S. p. 1
- ✦ **Program Updates**
Project Updates p. 2-3
2000 CoCoDA Encuentro p. 3
- ✦ **The CoCo Forum**
Poetry by Rolando González p. 4
Youth Cross Cultures p. 5
Indiana Delegations p. 5
Poetry by Bill Hemminger p. 6
Cal Krueger Memorial p. 7

supporting democratic community development in El Salvador

promoting social responsibility in the United States for more just relations with Latin America

Program Update

❖ Scholarship Fund for Popular Education

Associate NGOs: ADES and CRC

2nd quarter/2000 grant: \$3,000 ADES popular teachers' scholarships

2nd quarter/2000 grant: \$2,000 CRC popular teachers' scholarships

4th quarter/2000 grant: \$6,485 ADES popular teachers' scholarships

- The CRC, with support from CoCoDA and the Salvadoran NGO CIAZO, provided scholarships to 16 popular teachers in 6 schools benefitting 320 children in 17 communities in Suchitoto.
- The Scholarship Fund is also supporting a CRC promoter of participatory workshops relating to community development in the communities of Suchitoto.
- This year ADES is providing scholarships for 42 popular teachers with support from CoCoDA, CIAZO and four other international agencies.

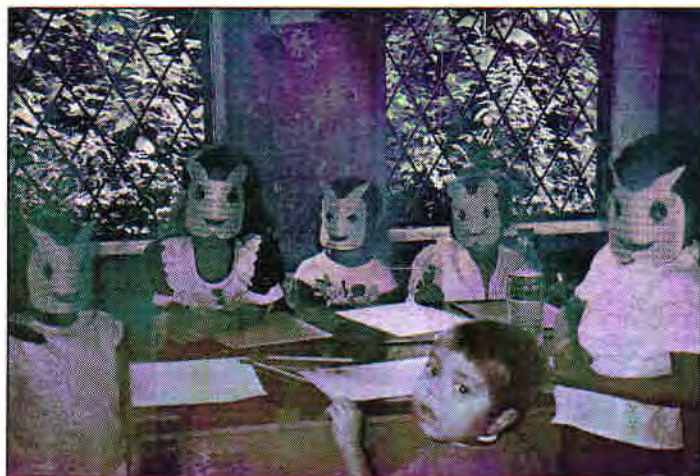


Photo by Kelly Luback

Children in kindergarten at El Rodeo School, one of the popular schools supported by ADES in Cantón Santa Marta, northern Cabañas.

❖ Santa Marta Computer Center and San Felipe School Improvements:

Associate NGO: ADES

2nd quarter/ 2000 grant: \$3,000 Computer room preparation

2nd quarter/2000 grant: \$6,510 San Felipe School fence and kitchen

3rd quarter/2000 grant: \$7,931 for purchase of 10 new computers

- The Santa Marta Computer Center construction is complete and the center, complete with 10 computers, was inaugurated the 9th of October at the 13th anniversary of the first repatriation to Santa Marta.
- The fence around the San Felipe School was constructed

The CoCoDA-River Road Unitarian Church (RRUC) delegation in July participated in both of these projects. Don Chery (left) and Colin Dixon (right) present the features of the new computers to youth and teachers from Santa Marta.



Photo courtesy of CoCoDA Archives

❖ Valle Nuevo Land Project

3rd quarter/2000 grant: €2,300 REDES survey of perimeter of entire property

- In June, the six-member Valle Nuevo Land Commission, CoCoDA staff, and consultant Ruben Escalante discussed with community residents the options for guaranteeing that the land will be available for future generations and for the benefit of the community well into the future.
- In September, the survey team of the REDES Foundation completed the measurement of the perimeter of the property.
- September 11-18, Salvadoran attorney Ana Mercedes Rivas visited Equity Trust in Connecticut and community land trusts in New England, exploring this model of land ownership, one that helps people of limited resources to have access to land and financing for homes.

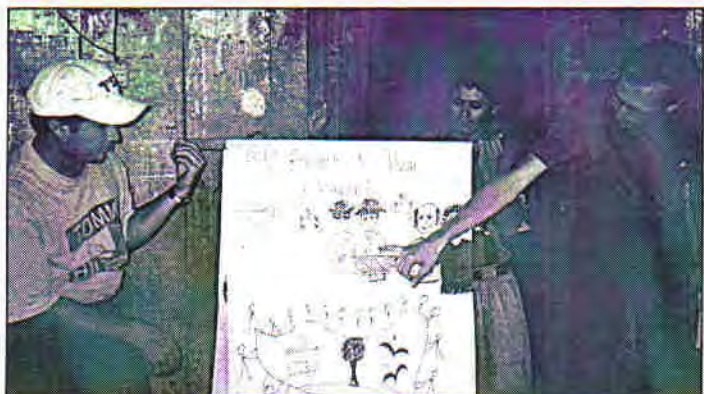


Photo by Kelly Luback

Consultant Rubén Escalante (left), Salomé Torres of the Valle Nuevo Land Commission (center) and CoCoDA staffperson Timoteo Crouse (right) discuss project goals at a community assembly.

Companion Community Development Alternatives (CoCoDA) supports democratic, community-based, social and economic development in El Salvador and promotes awareness, activism and social responsibility in the United States for more just relations with Latin America. CoCoDA supports development projects with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in El Salvador in the areas of:

- Popular Education •
- Women's Development •
- Community Economic Development •
- Democratic Communications •
- Community Health •



Salvadoran associate organizations:

- ADES: Association for Economic and Social Development, Santa Marta •
- ARPAS: Association of Participatory Radios and Programs of El Salvador •
- CRC: Committee for the Reconstruction and Socio-economic Development of Communities of Suchitoto, Cuscatlán •
- IBE: Emmanuel Baptist Church •
- REDES: Salvadoran Foundation for Reconstruction and Development •



The Companion is a publication of Companion Community Development Alternatives (CoCoDA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Most of CoCoDA's funding comes from individual members who contribute \$25 or more per year (\$15 student and low-income) and from CoCo Groups, which are independent groups and organizations in the United States that co-sponsor CoCoDA program initiatives. New members and CoCo Groups are always welcome.

2000 CoCoDA Encuentro



Salvadorans at the CoCoDA Encuentro perform a theater presentation on the experience of immigration to the United States for Central Americans. Here they are caught at the U.S. border by a border official and her dog.

Highlights

- Companionship in Development workshops:
 - local organizing and education in U.S. communities
 - health beliefs and practices in El Salvador
 - becoming more effective as partners in development
- Latin American perspectives on international development
- Panel discussion on the role of international development agencies: U.S. Agency for International Development, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, United Nations Development Program
- Discussion of current events in El Salvador

Thanks to the River Road Unitarian Church (RRUC) Central America Task Force, in Bethesda, Maryland, for hosting the 2000 Encuentro

❖ Other Project Notes

- Accompaniment of Emergency Action in Usulután: Fund for Southern Communities - REDES
3rd quarter/ 2000 grant: \$4,690 support for REDES outreach and mobilizing of communities in high risk flood plains in southern Usulután
- Community Health in northern Usulután: IBE
2nd quarter/ 2000 grant: \$1,500 program operations and community pharmacy

- Community Health and Rehabilitation: ADES
4th quarter/ 2000 grant: \$3,240 salary for physical rehabilitation promoter, community health education and a computer for the Community Health Program in northern Cabañas

- Radio Victoria
Operations: Merton Trust - ADES
4th quarter/ 2000 grant: \$3,795 salaries for press director and production director for September 2000 through August 2001



CoCoDA Coordinator Michael Keeth (left) translates for the Kellogg Corps 2000 Team as they present their recommendations for the Cafetín Las Orquideas Project of the CRC Women's Secretariat in Suchitoto. The team also spent two weeks doing consultant work with the REDES Foundation.

COMPANIONSHIP IN DEVELOPMENT

Photo by Beth Fiehlke

CoCoDA Archive Photo

The CoCo Forum

Quando La Solidaridad Es Más Que Una Palabra

When Solidarity Is More Than Just a Word

*Muy al sur de Maryland
Aquí donde el sol abraza sin clemencia
y el barro moldea la vida*

*Far south of Maryland
Here where the sun embraces without mercy
and mud molds life*

*Donde la pobreza
tiene nombres
y se manifiesta en
carne y hueso*

*Where poverty has
names
and is manifested in
flesh and bone*

*cuando el sudor y la
humedad
envuelven el cuerpo
removiendo el
pensamiento
que una y otra vez
intenta negar esta
dura y pintoresca
realidad*

*when sweat and
humidity
wrap around bodies
provoking thoughts
that time and time
again
attempt to deny this
harsh and picturesque
reality*

*Aparecen como gotas
una por una
retazos de solidaridad
en medio de lágrimas, sonrisas y nuevos
sentimientos
aquí al sur de la riqueza y la indiferencia*

*They appear like drops
one by one
fragments of solidarity
among tears, smiles and new
sensations
here to the south of wealth and indifference*

*Uniendo voluntades
manos
y esperanzas.*

*Uniting wills
hands
and hopes.*

*Rolando Gonzalez (Tito), 18 de julio de 2000
Santa Marta, Cabañas*



Photo by Kelly Luback

Rolando Gonzalez (Tito), ADES Coordinator of the Vocational Education Project in Santa Marta, Cabañas, helped to coordinate the San Felipe School construction project and the installation of the Santa Marta Computer Center with the CoCoDA-RRUC delegation for a number of activities while in Santa Marta.

Tito explains he wrote this poem "when I saw the members of the delegation, sweaty and burned from the sun, their clothing and bodies covered in mud, drinking water in great quantity, but with enthusiasm and smiles. What I saw was a concrete example of solidarity, when people collaborate and help, not as a hand-out, but rather as a way of constructing small foundations that will serve so that others can better their quality of life a little bit. This poem is a reflection of what people from other countries are able to do when they identify with the dreams and needs of other human beings that are far away, surviving in poverty, in a very difficult reality. This poem is for all of those people who give part of their time and their lives to contribute to change difficult and critical situations in other places."



The CoCo Forum presents reflections and insights of participants in the Companionship in Development Program. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of CoCoDA or its members.

UNITARIAN CHURCH PARTNERS WITH SANTA MARTA IN PROJECTS

Language is No Barrier in Cultural Exchange Among Youth

This year in my English class, I read Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "Chronicle of a Death Foretold". I didn't particularly care for the book, but one image is still fresh in my mind. Marquez repeatedly describes memory as a shattered mirror, one that must be reassembled piece by piece. I feel that this image describes what my first trip to El Salvador has meant to me. It has led me to reassemble, remember some basic and beautiful truths.

A few days before we left for El Salvador, I wrote in my journal that I hoped El Salvador would rejuvenate me, and I feel that this has definitely happened. From the moment I got off the plane and onto our crowded sweat-soaked bus, I was struck by how green everything was, how foliage seemed to burst out of the ground, backdropped by mountains and a fresh blue sky. I found this same enthused vitality imprinted in the spirits of those I am fortunate enough to know by the end of this trip. Getting to know

these people was not easy for me. I speak almost no Spanish, and I'm also a very verbal person. Body language is not my forte. Yet I still leave El Salvador

of the 10 de octubre school, even though we've never conversed one on one. This trip has taught me to love people in silence, and I think it's high time I learned how to do this.



Photo by Kelly Luback

Ninth grade students in the 10 de octubre School laugh during an English class, one of the cultural exchange activities of the CoCoDA-RRUC Delegation to El Salvador in July.

certain that I have friends here. Chunga, my sister in Santa Marta, cried when we left, and I cried too even though I've never spoken a coherent Spanish sentence to her. I feel touched by the revolutionary spirit of Alicia, the director

has forced me to remember that people are still born to struggle, and that they can rise to this occasion. It has raised my hope, and touched me painfully, beautifully, deeply.

✦ Elisabeth Golub

Elisabeth Golub, 16 years old, is one of the youth who participated on the CoCoDA-River Road Unitarian Church (RRUC) delegation to Santa Marta last July. The RRUC Central America Task Force raised \$21,000 for the Santa Marta Computer Center and San Felipe School Improvements projects, then sent a group to spend two weeks living and working with Salvadoran partners in these projects.

INDIANA DELEGATIONS LEARN ABOUT HEALTH CARE, WITNESS OF THE CHURCH IN EL SALVADOR



Photo by Beth Rieble

Father Michael O'Mara (left) of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Indianapolis organized a CoCoDA delegation to visit rural communities in Suchitoto and to learn about the role of the Church in social transformation in El Salvador. Barbara Lawrence (right) works with community residents in northern Usulután on a trench for a potable water system funded by the American Red Cross. Barbara was part a CoCoDA delegation from Evansville, Indiana that studied the state of health care in El Salvador, particularly in rural communities.



Photo by Lara Carr

The Dream Is Real

Corn clings vertical to mountains, joins sun and air and earth, an ancient iteration.

I look at ordered rows, see yield and return.

*Houses bend low to the ground, conceal spiders and snakes in the rafters hacked from woods, trap smoke and dust, keep out inspecting light, shelter chicken as well as human residents.
I'd plumb and wire and clean them out.*

*The cleared and patchy earth bleeds dirt when June pours rain.
I see the trees that once stalked this land, before the need for beans and corn made war with ranging forest. My mind fills tilled fields with teak and coconut, my schooled concept of appropriate husbandry.*

My world works in competition and measurable success. Good pupil of my culture, I see all else in its shadow.

The cotton shirt I wear is made in places I'll not ever know, where cotton culture may keep people poor, the soil spent. My morning coffee comes from trees that thrive in the rich aftermath of volcanic tragedy. The trees bear caffeine witness to a spoiled history of plantations and servitude.

*What of the people do I put on with my knit shirt?
What of the land do I take in with the morning drink?
Can hearts see what eyes disregard as poor or primitive?*

Awake, can I ever know that I may have cried in dreams?

Bill Hemminger
El Salvador, 2000



Photo by Kelly Lubeck

Bill Hemminger participated in the community health delegation to Usulután this July. He is a professor of English at the University of Evansville, a musician, gardener and poet.

JOURNEY TO EL SALVADOR

Memorial for Cal Krueger in El Sitio Cenicero

The CoCo Encuentro, May 19-21, in Bethesda, Maryland was a wonderful springboard for my journey to El Salvador -- a bittersweet, but joyful journey.

At the April, 1997 Encuentro in Evansville, Indiana, my husband, Cal,



Gena and Cal Krueger in their home in Toledo, Ohio, in 1996, with Alfonso Rivas, then President of the CRC in Suchitoto, now CoCoDA representative in El Salvador. Cal and Gena served as a team on the CoCoDA Board of Directors. Gena continues to serve on the Board as a representative of the Toledo Area Committee on Central America (TACCA).

expressed the desire to have his ashes taken to El Salvador. Cal was terminally ill with multiple myeloma. He died May 24, 1997. Three years later, the CoCoDA Board delegation to El Salvador was the perfect opportunity to honor his request.

Actually, Cal and I began this journey to El Salvador when the Toledo Area Committee on Central America was formed in 1982. In the eighties, Cal worked tirelessly on the issues and policy of our government toward Central America. The members of TACCA involved themselves in the usual: marches in Washington, D.C., picketing, leafleting, hosting speakers from the U.S. and Central America, hosting "Sanctuary" caravans, letter writing, fundraising, regular monthly meetings in "Cal's Church," networking with local and national groups, Pastors for Peace

Caravans, visits to our congressional representative, vigils on the 24th of each month at various area churches to remember the people of Central America, the Co-Madres and Archbishop Oscar Romero -- and more.

Two persons from our group visited the community of El Sitio Cenicero, one in 1990 and the other in 1991. Accordingly, TACCA and the community of El Sitio became partners in a project to help El Sitio purchase land.

In October, 1990 Cal and another TACCA member with the help of a knowledgeable and dedicated councilman on the Toledo City Council were instrumental in

pushing a resolution declaring Toledo and El Sitio "Twin Communities."

In the year 2000 the journey to El Salvador is full circle. Cal had "come home." Joining us for the day and a half in El Sitio, Suchitoto, and the commemoration for Cal on Saturday, May 27, was my son, Steve, representing his two brothers and two sisters and families; Dick Hanusz representing TACCA, and Dick's daughter, Clare, from Honolulu. She and her husband, Nevi, had been married by Cal.

In El Sitio, the CoCoDA Board members were greeted with enthusiasm by a large gathering at the El Sitio school. That evening an excellent program was presented by the people of the community. The next morning, a procession was formed at the school to walk to the site where a memorial plaque had been placed in honor of Cal. A Delegate of the Word was in charge of the program which included remarks and greetings by a number of people. At the end of the program, two coconut trees were planted on either side of the memorial plaque. Steve poured his father's ashes into the holes. Children and others pushed dirt into the holes to cover the roots of the young plants. And, in this way, Cal continues to nourish the goodness of life.

At the same time as the commemoration in El Sitio (9:00 a.m. - two hours behind EDT), family and friends, including Pat, Dick's wife, gathered (11:00 a.m. EDT) in the chapel and around the peace pole on the grounds of Sylvania United Church of Christ (Toledo) in a unity celebration to remember Cal and the people of El Salvador.

I traveled home to Toledo on May 31, Cal's birth-date. This time, coming back into a culture and a way of life different than the communities in El Salvador, has been difficult for me. My heart is with my friends in El Salvador. Part of my life is there, in El Sitio Cenicero, Suchitoto, a sacred place.

✦ Gena Krueger



Gena Krueger smiles, surrounded by community members of El Sitio Cenicero, behind the leaves of a coconut tree, which was planted in honor of Cal, her husband.

Gena Krueger, member of the CoCoDA Board of Directors and the Toledo Area Committee on Central America (OH), travelled to El Salvador with the CoCoDA Board May 22-31.

*We envision
a global
community
founded on just
relationships
among people
and nations,
rooted in the
democratic
sharing of
resources for
sustainable
social and
economic
development.*

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CoCoDA
Vision Statement

✦ This issue of *The Companion* was produced by the CoCoDA staff, Kelly Lubeck, Editor.

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*It is vital that we not homogenize cultures into extinction.
That may well result in a deficit of values as crippling as any
trade deficit. Globalization can provide both the harmony of
ideas and the celebration of diversity...*

*We must never forget this new global system is made up of
billions of individuals, each of whom has a face, a voice, and
a right to participate. As overwhelming as the idea may
seem, technology is there to give everyone that opportunity...*

*Ideas are the new world culture, and we must
spend ours wisely, to the benefit of others...*

Queen Noor Al Hussein of Jordan

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