

NICARAGUA REVISITED

In August 2005 I traveled with Director Karen Teichman to Nicaragua to observe the work of the Rainbow Network there. We were very impressed with the work and their coordination with Hunger Plus for their feeding programs.

On October 22, 2006 I traveled to Nicaragua again. This time accompanied by District 7350 Governor, Jerry Friedman. When we arrived in Managua we were met by Jerry and Joanne Larson from Nipigon, Ontario, Canada. David Standlee from Huntsville, Texas and Dan Cote from Galveston, Texas met us later that evening.

Since our Rainbow representative, Mark Struckoff, was delayed by a whole day; we spent Monday sightseeing. We visited an active volcano near Masaya, cruised around the islands near Granada and shopped in a market filled with local crafts.

On Tuesday, Mark and the Nicaraguan staff of Rainbow network took us to visit a brand new network called Ciudad Dario. This network was just started on August 1. We visited several feeding programs, the presentation of micro loan money, a new housing development and a clinic.

The highlight of the day for me was getting to meet two of the high school students that my husband and I sponsor. Bertilda Jessenia Amador and Patricia de Jesus Zamora Rojas are both first-year high school students. They are lovely young ladies who have great dreams for their future because of their Rainbow scholarships.

On Wednesday our tour continued. We started at one of the Rainbow offices where I was able to meet our third student – Edwin Robin Ocampo. This delightful young man will graduate in December 2006 and would like to attend college and pursue a career in journalism.

We went up in the mountains by four-wheel drive to visit a village where we met with two doctors and their patients. One of the doctors left by horseback with his tub of medicine to treat his patients in a nearby village which can not be reached by vehicles. The doctors expressed a need for shoes so that the children will not pick up parasites through their feet. We also attended a meeting of high school aged students who are teaching and later visited schools to observe their work. We were entertained by the children of another village while the adults were trained in water purification.

The differences between the established networks and the new network were quite evident. The villagers who had benefited from Rainbow Network for several years were much more advanced. They were happy and well fed. They were used to Rainbow Network visitors and quite well-adjusted. The new villagers were less trusting, very curious and more needy.

David Standlee was particularly interested in providing water wells for several of the villages. He is working with the Rotary Club of Tulsa, Oklahoma to provide the money and expertise needed to drill the wells

We were able to meet with Rotary Clubs in Masaya and in Managua with the goal of establishing contacts for matching grants in the future.

Rainbow Network has done a remarkable job with the established networks. Several of the villages are almost able to sustain themselves without Rainbow Network support.

Even with all of the work of Rainbow Network, there is a great need for food for the wonderful people of Nicaragua.

They are working hard to make better lives for themselves and their families.

As a member of the Board of Directors of Hunger Plus I would recommend that we do all in our power to support the Rainbow Network in Nicaragua by providing food and monetary help.

Kelly C. Wike,
Secretary – Hunger Plus, Inc.