



# JUBILEE HOUSE COMMUNITY

*"You shall not oppress one another..  
...for I am the Lord your God." Lev. 25:17*

December 1995

**Doing development work** is to help people better their lives. We began our work with the focus of getting



New water in Roberto Clemente

water and latrines into the community of Roberto Clemente. What does it mean for them nine months after this became a reality?

Well, obviously, life is a bit easier not having to walk so far for water. Life is cleaner because people are not using their yards as a toilet.

Another aspect is that before the water and latrines were installed 5 babies died between Thanksgiving '94 and the middle part of January '95. The last one was while Nora Laws, a volunteer holding medical clinics, was here. We went to the wake and felt only a tiny bit of the mother's anguish over losing her child.

In the 9 months since the community has had clean, potable water and latrines, only one baby has died. We had been told how much difference clean water and latrines would make; now we know.

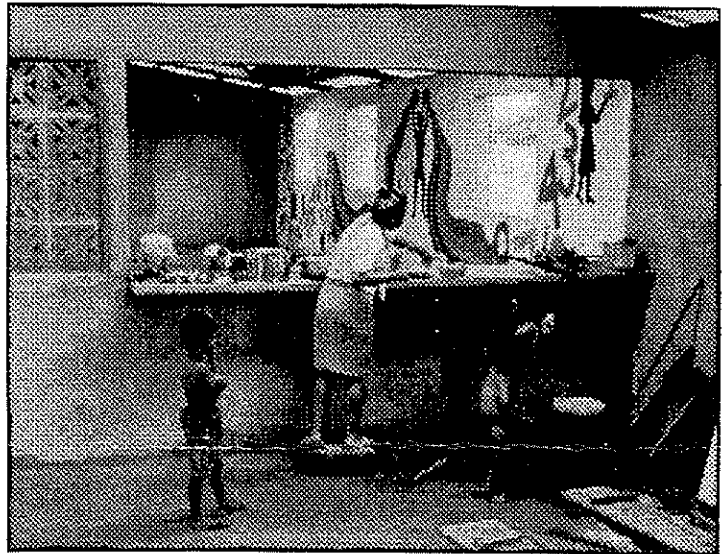
**By the time you read this the feeding center** should be

finished and operational. The feeding center will not only serve as a place for preschool and the feeding of 300 kids daily; it will also serve as a demonstration model for appropriate technology.

The feeding center is wonderful. It truly is. It has a beautiful mural, sky-lights (no need for lighting), solar-composting latrines, a space-age

looking cook stove, a serving wall, hand-crafted wooden tables and chairs (from a cooperative), toys, art supplies, and a chalk board.

Women are organized and waiting for approval from Soy Nica (an organization that provides food and limited supplies). There are about 30 women working on the project.



Azucena serves lunch to workers/kids

Most of the funds for the

feeding center were raised by Nora Laws and her church, Parkway United Church of Christ. They sent a delegation down to work on the center, but the vast amount of work was organized by a man named Fidel Perez.

Fidel is a skilled carpenter, an assistant evangelical pastor, and president of the community. None of these "jobs" brings in any money for his family. With his family, he lives in a tiny shack where he also keeps all the hundreds of pounds of cement (so no one will steal them) needed for building the feeding center. When the sesame project was hiring workers, he didn't go to work in the fields because he wanted to get the center finished.

You cannot imagine the amount of time and energy this man has put into this project (and the water and latrine project) for no money. Not only time and energy, but he has been robbed several times as well, because people know that the "gringos" give him money to buy supplies. Why does he do all this? Because his God calls him to work for the good of all and he follows his God.



Children dig feeding center septic tank.

**Health care** is an important aspect of our work here. Twice weekly we hire (with a small honorarium) and transport a doctor up to the rural communities for clinics. We not only transport the doctors but also provide the medicines. Without our trucks, drivers, and medicines, literally thousands of people would have no access to medical care.

We also do emergency care. For example one day a boy came over with his hand hanging down from a broken arm. We got him and his mother to the hospital and stayed with them. Many kids come with gashes and cuts to be bandaged or who need taking to the health center to be sewed up. Many mothers come asking for antibiotics or tylenol for their babies and children burning up with fevers. Because many of you provide us with medicines or money for medicines we are able to help folks who otherwise would get no help.



Women and children waiting for clinic.

**What is the sesame project?** It is growing organic sesame seed for export to provide a cash crop for *campesinos* (or "peasants"). Why sesame? There is a high demand in the U.S. for organic sesame for foods like tahini and sesame butter. Besides, think of all those little seeds on top of all those buns up there. (Of course they are probably not organically grown, but...)

We have been working on this project for two years and FINALLY the crop is in the ground and is growing just as pretty as you please!



Transplanting sesame by hand

We have been able to secure some funds from gifts, loans, and a grant from the Presbyterian Hunger Fund to provide the start-up costs. How much start-up cost does one need for farming? Well, we've learned, "a great deal" is the answer.

There are costs for organic certification, technical assistance, seeds, tractors and planters, laborers, shipping, processing, and on it goes. There is no way *campesinos* can compete with large agri-business. With our help of administration and obtaining money we enable *campesinos* to sell a crop and make a profit so that they can have some control over their lives.

We are hiring people instead of renting machinery when we can to give employment to folks. We have paid probably 100 or more folks for some work.

We are learning a great deal of how to administer this project for the next growing season. We are also learning how to watch the sky for rain, the ground for bugs, and pray that all will come to fruition, literally!



Weeding sesame with machetes

**The project in the 7 neighboring comarcas** is now out of the planning stage and into the realization stage. The Rainbow Network (TRN) has with our help hired a coordinator, a doctor to do medical consultations, a doctor to do trainings and administrative functions, and a director of the micro-enterprise project.

By the time you read this, education and housing coordinators will be hired. A clinic will be set up and running complete with medicines. Health trainings will be underway. The micro-enterprise aspect will be begun. In January the focus for the education component will be reading, and a "Habitat-for-Humanity-style" house will be built (15 are scheduled for the first year).

Whew! What a lot of work and energy! It is all so very exciting!

So how does the Center for Development in Central America fit in now that this project is underway? We will be a resource and support to this staff and the foundation, TRN. We will serve as a sounding-board for ideas. Their office will be here for the time-being while they locate another office (the one they had lined up fell through). We are thrilled to be a part of this project and partnership and are glad to be able to help in whatever ways we can.

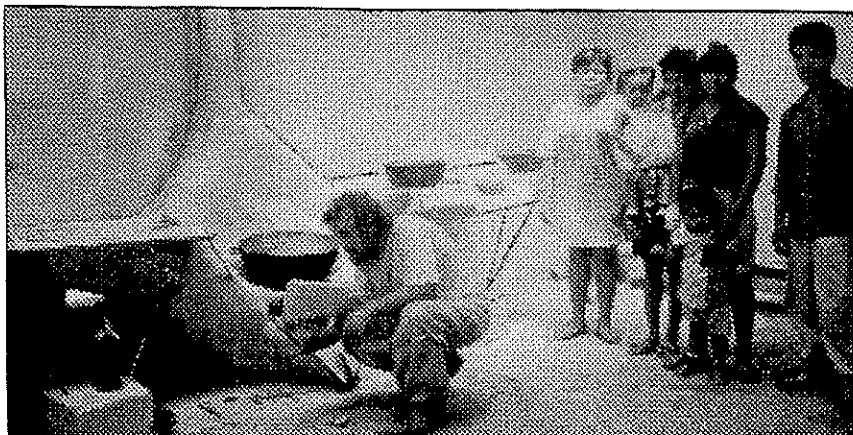
**Development work is what we came to do.** We were grateful that we were able to bring Bob Hanafin

down to work on some appropriate technology projects. He ended up working on two that can be multiplied into more projects.

He designed an energy-efficient wood cook stove. Deforestation here is a massive problem. Our whole area at one time was a dry forest, but now there are few trees. This is critical in a tropical climate. With our heat and long droughts, deserts are looming.

Most people here cook with wood. We are watching one beautiful, living tree get hacked up slowly for firewood. To be able to reduce the need for wood reduces the need for more money to buy wood (which helps families make their pittance go further) and reduces the need for wood (which helps everyone, including all of us in the northern hemisphere).

The men who worked with Bob have been invited to lead a workshop on how to build these stoves at a conference on deforestation at the University of Central America.



Bob demonstrates cookstove to leadership group



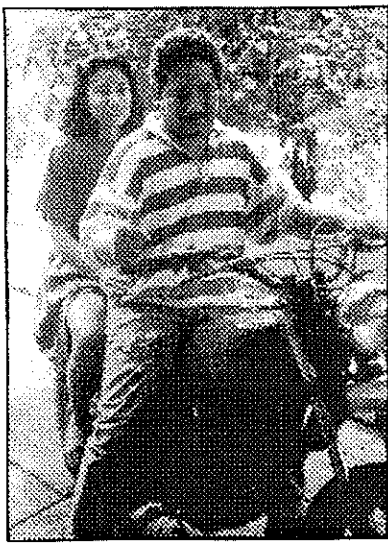
Comarca family outside their home

Bob also designed a solar dehydrating/composting latrine. This latrine, besides being sanitary, also provide compost for gardens using the sun's heat and does not pollute

ground water. These latrines and stove are wild-looking! Many are skeptical, but as women use the stoves they then want one for their own and we feel that the same will be true for the latrines.



Latrine Workshop



Co-workers Aura Lila and Cesar

## During Thanksgiving, we traditionally think of all the reasons to be thankful.

We here at the CDCA have so many reasons to be thankful and we want to write of a few. We are thankful:

- for our Board and their hard work and love;
- for all the money raised and efforts involved in the creating of a feeding center (especially Nora Laws), for water piping, and latrines for the community of Roberto Clemente;
- for all the people who have helped Pat and Kathy with their trip (especially Jim Brown);
- for all the work Dick Gilbert has done Stateside helping us and the Board with monumental tasks;
- for all the work Keith Jaspers and Larry White have done in bringing The Rainbow Network to our area;
- for all the wonderful volunteers (short and long-term), who gave of their time, efforts, and money to come and be with the poor here and with us;
- for all those who have given to us regularly so that we can continue the work here;
- for all those Nicaraguans who have befriended us, taught us, and guided us;



Azucena

and for all our blessings here of food and shelter and health (we do not take them lightly anymore).

**Community news:** Pat and Kathy's speaking tour was successful thanks to so many of you who helped them along the way. They were able to have wonderful visits with family and friends, to make new contacts and friends; and to even raise some money for the Center.

Other news from us:

**Mike** survived a bout with malaria and has turned into Farmer Mike overseeing the planting and raising of the crop of sesame.

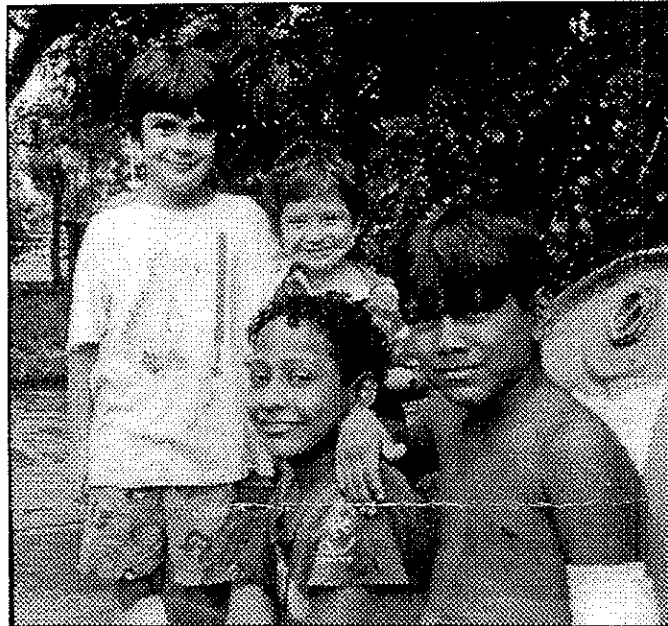
**Sarah** has turned into Forewoman Sarah overseeing the finishing work of the feeding center and several appropriate technology projects.

**Jessica** has turned into Actor Jessica with twice-monthly performances of her play here in Nicaragua.

**Coury** has turned into Student Coury with home schooling and a weekly Spanish program.

**Daniel** has turned into Swimmer Daniel since he has learned to swim.

and **Kathleen** has turned into a Blimp waiting for birth to come. We are all anxiously awaiting a Christmas visit from **Tiff** who is at Cornell. And most of all we all want to wish you a Happy, Happy Hanukkah and/or a Merry, Merry Christmas! And of 'course a Happy New Year!



Coury, Daniel, and friends

## What do you need? We hear this question often.

There are lots of things we want and can use, but what do we need?

### We need money for general operating expenses.

Currently we are keeping our administrative expenses low by not paying the staff (the staff have not received a salary in a year and a half, we work as volunteers); dropping health insurance for the staff; and looking constantly for ways to trim costs. But the staff do have basic needs like food and shelter and the work has basic needs like transportation costs, electricity bills, office costs, etc..

### We need gifts or loans for the micro-enterprise projects.

Currently one of the most important aspects of our work here is to enable people to make a living. With the sesame project, creating or expanding small businesses, and helping cooperatives stay afloat, we help to reduce the poverty that is created by 80% UNemployment.

### We need a volunteer agronomist or experienced organic farmer for a commitment of one to two years.

None of us are true farmers and we are learning by the seat of our pants. Many people here have land and could grow food but they need to learn how to grow organically to keep costs down and not destroy the environment any more than it is already destroyed.

### We need your prayers.

With no salary and insurance, we live on faith and our faith needs strengthening. It is scary with one community child in college, one going soon, two small children and one on the way to not have any sort of financial security (of course we have much more than our Nica friends), and so we need your prayers.

As you plan your holiday giving, please consider an Alternative Gift to the poor in Central America through a contribution to the Center for Development in Central America in honor of family members or friends. We will be happy to acknowledge your gift to them with an appropriate card.

### YES! I want to support the work of the CDCA in the following ways:

Enclosed please find my tax-deductible contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_. (For a minimum gift of \$25.00, you may request a copy of "Grits, Greens, and Gallo Pinto", our versatile cookbook.  Yes, please send me a copy.)

I am pledging \$\_\_\_\_\_ (monthly/quarterly/annually) for 1996.

Please acknowledge my enclosed tax-deductible Alternative Gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to appropriate family/friends.

(Please enclose a note listing each recipient's name/address, and the way you wish each card signed.)

Please make checks payable to the JHC, Inc. and mail in the enclosed envelope. Please also note any name or mailing address corrections below, and your email address if you have one. We want to stay in touch!

# Reflection.....

Up there in the States the days are getting darker and colder. Here in Nicaragua, the rains should be ending and the days bright and the nights filled with the light of the stars and moon. As up there, here Christmas is celebrated with lights.

Lights are also a Hebrew tradition for Hanukkuh. To light a candle is to remember the pain that the Maccabees endured, survived, and overcame. Within our community we often sing a Peter Yarrow song, *Light One Candle*, to help us remember as well.

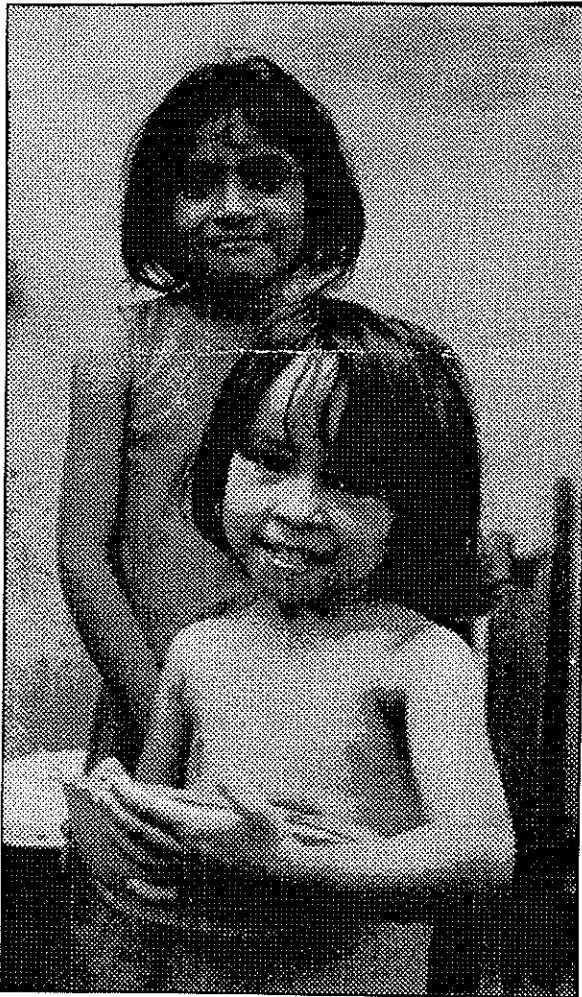
I am (without Peter's permission but with - I feel sure - his blessing) going to use and slightly change his song for our reflection of the pain that the Nicaraguans have endured, have survived, and we hope will overcome.

Light one candle for the Nicaraguan children  
With thanks that their light hasn't died  
Light one candle for the pain they endure  
When their right to exist is denied  
Light one candle for the terrible sacrifice  
Justice and freedom demands, but  
Light one candle for the wisdom to know  
When the peacemaker's time is at hand...

Nicaraguans have endured so much from decades of brutal dictatorship of the Somozas, from years of a civil war that resulted in a revolution to overthrow the dictator, then from years of another war while Somocistas with U.S. backing tried to gain control again, and now from an economy ruined by war, neoliberalism, and bad economic practices. The Nicaraguans are poor, devastated, racked by pain and yet so many struggle to:

Not let the Light go out  
It's lasted for so many years  
Not let the light go out  
Let it shine through their love and their tears.

These same Nicaraguans struggle and fight so hard so that their brothers and sisters can:



Light one candle for the strength that we need  
To never become our own foe  
Light one candle for those who are suffering  
The pain we learned so long ago  
Light one candle for all we believe in  
That anger won't tear us apart and  
Light one candle to bring us together  
With peace as the song in our hearts.

They cry out to each other:

Don't let the light go out  
It's lasted for so many years  
Don't let the light go out  
Let it shine through our love and our tears.

Now it comes our turn, those of us in the First World especially those of us from the U.S. that has been the cause of so many of their tears...It is time for us to hear their proclamation:

What is the memory that's valued so highly  
That we keep it alive in that flame?  
What's the commitment to those who have died  
When we cry out they've not died in vain?  
Have we come this far always believing  
That justice would somehow prevail?  
This is the burden and this is the promise  
And this is why we will not fail.

Can we respond in kind and kindness?...

Don't let the light go out  
It's lasted for so many years  
Don't let the light go out  
Let it shine through our love and our tears  
Don't let the light go out  
Don't let the light go out  
DON'T LET THE LIGHT GO OUT!



Air Mail to Nicaragua: JHC c/o FUNDECI - Casa Benjamin Linder, Barrio Mons. Lezcano, de la estatua 3 c. al sur, 1 1/2 arriba, Managua, Nicaragua

**Center for Development in Central America**  
Jubilee House Community, Inc.  
2425 Spicewood Drive  
Winston-Salem, NC 27106  
phone: 910/922-4794  
email: [jhc@uugate.uni.rain.ni](mailto:jhc@uugate.uni.rain.ni)

**NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION**  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
STATESVILLE, NC 28677  
PERMIT NO. 31

Address Correction Requested  
Return Postage Guaranteed