

The first organic cotton crop is in! We are thrilled that the hurricane in September and the 55 straight days of rain did not ruin the crops.

Unfortunately, the buyer we thought we had lined up moved the making of his cloth to Pakistan so we are again looking for a buyer.

We've purchased a baler, but at the writing of this newsletter it was shipped to the wrong place; therefore, we are trying to figure out how to move a 10,000 lb. piece of equipment that is about 2 hours away.

This year we are using a small, experimental, government-owned gin and are desperately trying to obtain a commercial-size one for a larger harvest.



COPROEXNIC grower with organic cotton crop

All-in-all it is exciting!

The organic coffee crop also survived the rains! It is bought and shipped! A chemist taught them a way to monitor the quality of good coffee using chemical testing...*can't explain, we're not chemists!* This will insure consistent high quality.

The wonderful news for the cooperative is not only to have their cash crop survive, but also their bean crop. This is the first time in **four years** that both have survived!

The organic sesame crop was heavily damaged as were

sesame crops worldwide. **But** in organizing the selling of sesame COPROEXNIC (the organic grower's cooperative) got upfront money for the farmers and a price commitment before widespread damage caused a price jump in sesame. Growers who were not members of the cooperative did not honor their commitment to sell to the faithful buyers/loaners because they could get a better price. The others scrambled to pay back the loan but the buyers had no sesame.

It is frustrating when a few growers, who do not understand the importance of keeping contracts and maintaining buyers who will be loyal to them when the price is low, mess it up for the others. Many of our growers do and did understand...when \$142,000 of debt was incurred with Hurricane Mitch in 1998, they worked 7 years to pay off that debt.

For coffee & organic food suppliers:

www.buildingnewhope.com
www.their-buckscoffee.com
www.onceagainnutbutter.com
www.bumblebar.com

The Spinning Plant is working on its building as the city allows! A brigade from Bucknell University (Lewisburg, PA) helped make blocks & rebar posts in January.



Bucknell brigade wiring rebar for posts

Unfortunately...there is *that* word again!...a big struggle for them and the **Fair Trade Zone (Women's Sewing Cooperative)** is the basic need to believe that people and organizations exist who do not *have* to help, but *want* to help. There always seems to be several people within any group, who feel that at any moment "someone" is going to yank the rug out from under them.

Not an unrealistic feeling - let us be quick to add. This feeling comes from experiences of having the rug yanked out time and again...with the greatest example of all being the Sandinista Revolution which was

For clothing information & suppliers:

www.FairTradeZone.jhc-cdca.org
www.maggiesorganics.com
www.pcusa/sweatfree
www.ethicalgoods.org
www.mycorset.com

strangled to death by the Contra War in the 80's.

So we have learned that we must acknowledge this and work within this distrust...and they have learned as well. We put everything in writing...sign and co-sign paper after paper...have question and answer meetings...know the importance of all members being able to read and write and some to speak and understand English...and keep plugging along working beside them.

A volunteer herbalist in the Health Center has helped get our garden in good condition and develop more recipes for natural medicines. The absolutely wonderful news is that a Nicaraguan woman, Karen (César's oldest daughter), is interning with Doreen, the herbalist, and will go to school in natural medicine and carry on the work!



Dr. Dave examining eye patients



Karen & Doreen making ginger infusion

An ophthalmologist from Waynesville, NC, is here fitting hundreds with glasses. We are hoping to expand this service and our lab services in the next few months. We had a group of doctors for 1/2 a day from Kentucky seeing patients. A Canadian living here is working to get our generator and power straightened out and churches have donated funds to help with this and to revitalize our file cabinet system.

Contributions, volunteers, donations of medicines and equipment add so much to the fullness of the care given. **THANK YOU!**

Urgent!
late breaking news...
legitimacy of
CDCA / co-op property
ownership being
challenged in court!
We need your voice!
For more info:
<http://jhc-cdca-land-news.blogspot.com>
or www.jhc-cdca.org/land.html

Interesting bits:



Dr. Jorge with two eye surgery patients

- The Caribbean coast is still torn up from **Hurricane Felix** (September)...they are really suffering.
- Food prices are really high due to major crop damages by the hurricane and rains but several governments are helping to provide beans and rice.
- The Ciudad Sandino little hospital is in full use providing eye surgery funded by Venezuela and staffed by Cuban doctors.
- Electricity rationing has ceased until further notice.

families, the price of fluorescent compact bulbs is being subsidized by the government in conjunction with Venezuela.

- Our own Josué went to Honduras to help another group set up a **bio-diesel** processor in January...we love bio-diesel!
- So many of you responded in such generosity to our call for help in our last newsletter...thank you.

[photo: Honduran bio-diesel plant Josué built]



JUBILEE HOUSE COMMUNITY
"You shall not oppress one another for I am the Lord your God." —Lev. 25:17

Community News: Elliot Waxler Woodard – our first grandchild – was born 5th of January to Jessica and Waxor in Boston. The whole family went up for Christmas and the birth. Tiff flew across the country for Christmas and we all spent time with the

in-laws, the Waxlers. Besides the enjoyment of family, the excitement of the birth, **Joseph, Daniel, and Coury** got to see their first snow...in reality or in their memory... and they loved it!

Before the Woodard/Murdocks left for Boston, we celebrated **Eibhlín's** 2nd birthday and our first Christmas as a community with **Paul, Becca, Eibhlín, and Orla** (her first Christmas). We were happy when **Pat and Kathy** returned and we were all together for a brief time.

At this writing Grandma **Sarah** just got home and we're all together again with **Kathleen's** parents, Bob and Peggy, celebrating Joseph's 12th and Coury's 19th birthdays. Precious times.



Jessica & baby Elliot, Joseph, in the snow

Reflection...

After returning from Boston, I opened a letter informing me that a dear friend, Gertrude Reid, had died. Gert was special to us for many reasons but mainly because when we had some tough times she stood by us...quietly and softly.

The father of two of our workers, Aurora and Nubia, died yesterday. We went to his *vela* (wake) and I was reminded that much comfort comes not through words but through simply being there.

These two examples are what this politically used word *solidarity* truly means...standing by someone as they pass through trouble times. Solidarity with the poor or the oppressed means **being** with them.

For Christians, the time of Lent is supposed to be the time for solidarity. Powerful Christian thought and belief arises from the belief that Jesus was the Divine's act of solidarity with us...living human, weak, helpless, poor, and then dying by state execution...solidarity with those who suffer the most.



Kathleen & Gert

Solidarity is what we all need from time to time – that "Gert" who stands beside you quietly and softly and you realize no matter what she will be there. Solidarity is also raising a ruckus to effect change when you see wrongness done to others like Jesus overturning tables in a rage in the Temple. Solidarity requires being, action, comfort, rage...it requires knowing.

Knowing the hurt.
Knowing the pain.
Knowing the suffering.
Knowing.

–Kathleen

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<http://www.jhc-cdca.org/SlightlyTwistedSpoons.html>

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STS Items shown here: fork, spoon, paddle