



SIFT IN-SIGHT

Sowing seeds of hope in Nicaragua

Summer 2014

Seeing and serving



Heather Staley and her husband Dave, SIFT's Operations Director, have been involved with SIFT since 2006. Heather recently spent a month in Nicaragua on our Spring building trip and shared her highlights from the trip with us.

It was a real pleasure for us to be part of the team visiting Nicaragua this March. This spectacular country never ceases to inspire us yet we always leave feeling challenged by the daily struggles of the lives of the people we meet.

The majority of our trip was spent on the island of Ometepe in the village of El Corozal, helping thirteen families build latrines. As the others in the team worked on the latrine building alongside family members, I engaged with the women and children with craft and beauty treatments. This way we could get to know the people in the community and begin to identify specific needs. Dr Sandra and her team of nurses invited us to their new ante-natal group in El Corozal, as well as to a luncheon club for the elderly and a school visit in Las Pilas. We saw the provision of nutrition, health education and friendship for the most needy. The commitment and enthusiasm of our doctor and nurses is outstanding.



Gabi giving out high-vitamin milk at the feeding programme

Adelita, one of SIFT's nurses, and her husband invited us to visit a remote village where they are establishing a new church. The heart for mission is alive and well on Ometepe, but lack of resources is a problem. Dr Sandra is planning a conference for church leaders on the island and a special conference for women. Julita and Gabi, who run the feeding programme SIFT supports in Urbaite, are faithful in their work with the children providing nutrition and Bible teaching.

We returned to the mainland and visited Hogar de Fe, the orphanage SIFT helps to support. Ramiro Blandón, the Director, had several projects running to train the children for the future; laundry skills and horticulture were among them. Some of the children are now working and doing well; one is a journalist, another a teacher and another became a pastor, returning to work in the neighbourhood around the orphanage.

Nestor Maldonado, who teaches car mechanics to young people from the streets of Managua, has the same vision to give individuals a new start. Nestor introduced us to an ex-bus driver who'd been shot in the leg so that he could no longer work. The course SIFT supports meant he could re-train and provide for his family.

On the Atlantic coast, in Bluefields, we witnessed the wonderful work of Margaret Storey and her love and care for the families there and her skilful operation of the education sponsorship scheme. Margaret took us to visit Casa Materna, a maternity home for women from remote communities where there are no facilities for expectant mothers. It was a heart-rending place to visit, highlighting the cultural and practical factors that cause difficulties for the extremely young mothers, often from abusive backgrounds.



The trip provided moments of realisation of overwhelming need, but also times of laughter, friendship and fun. We experienced earth tremors while on Ometepe and in one sense their power and our helplessness served to remind us that it is in God's strength and purposes we trust.

Nurse sponsorship scheme



Thank you to everyone who has signed up to sponsor one of our seven nurses. In doing so you are helping us to provide healthcare to people on the island of Ometepe who would have little access to it otherwise. All of our nurses are from Ometepe and work for SIFT because they want to serve God and their communities. They are concerned

for the whole person, whether that be through physical treatment, health education or prayer and counselling.

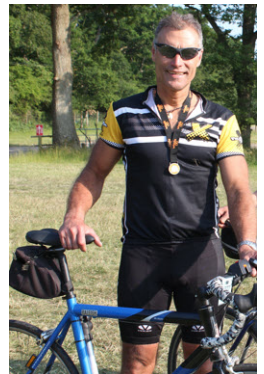
We are still looking for 26 people to sponsor our nurses for £15 a month to help make the medical work financially sustainable. Each sponsor will be matched with one of our seven nurses and will receive an annual update about their particular nurse and the medical work in general. If you would like to sponsor a nurse or would like further information about the scheme please contact Ali by phone (01297 22484) or email (ali.wilson@seed-trust.com) or visit www.seed-trust.com/sponsor-a-nurse.

Tour de force

Ray Verlaque, who was part of this year's Spring building team, will be cycling from Nice to Lyon from the 5th to 11th of September to raise money for SIFT's medical work.

Ray's 250 mile route takes in five challenging peaks in the French Alps, including Col de la Bonette, the highest point on the Tour de France at 8,900 ft.

When asked why he was willing to undertake such a challenge Ray said "Having spent one month with SIFT on Ometepe, and in Bluefields, I could see that the money was being efficiently managed and spent appropriately. I am pleased to support SIFT as my chosen charity for the foreseeable future."



If you want to help Ray reach his fundraising target of £5,000 you can sponsor him at <http://www.justgiving.com/Ray-Verlaque-Tour-Des-Alpes>.



Love from Ali

I thought I would share some of the imaginative ways in which our supporters raise money to help us continue providing healthcare facilities in four communities on the island of Ometepe.

Claire Taylor and her husband were helped by Dr Sandra in 2012 when they had a motorbike accident on Ometepe. In order to thank Dr Sandra for her help Claire made and sold hampers and gift bags of chutney, jam and fudge. She took orders from family and friends as well as at Christmas markets. Claire raised £956.50 over two years.



Congregations in the parishes of Warboys, Broughton, Bury and Wistow undertook a fundraising challenge based on the parable of the talents. At the start of 2013 Revd Peter Dowman distributed £10 notes to his parishioners and challenged them to grow the money by the end of the year. The participants did this in a variety of ways, including making items to sell and holding a lunch. Ten people from Warboys church pooled their money and organised a dinner with entertainment which enabled them to grow their initial investment by over 500%. In total more than £1,300 was raised for SIFT by the end of the challenge.



Jane Weaver, one of SIFT's Trustees, combines her hobby of jewellery making with fundraising. Jane sells a wide range of jewellery, from shamballa bracelets to pearl necklaces, at events such as church fêtes and Christmas markets as well as in the gift shop at the Jaffa Orchard Community Centre in Bedford. Since she started in 2005 she has raised over £7,400.

We are very grateful to them all for their efforts. If you are thinking of raising money for SIFT and would like help with resources please get in touch with me via ali.wilson@seed-trust.com or by calling 01297 22484.



UK Charity 1094193

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