



insider

**Volunteer Update
Feb.-March, 2010**

Interfaith Service to Latin America 270 Page Street West Saint Paul, MN 55107
Phone: 612-819-8877 E-mail info@isla.cc www.isla.cc & now at www.fbook.me/ISLA

January team spans gaps College students and ISLA's veterans join forces with Jalapans

Like the old bus chugging its way up Nicaraguan mountainsides, ISLA always seems to find another gear.

January's trip to Jalapa made the grade as a team of 24 volunteers, ranging in age from 19 to nearly 80, found ways with Nicaraguan friends to provide



All aboard the ISLA express. A group of 24 team members of widely varying ages and backgrounds shared a unique and successful Jan. service trip to Nicaragua. Photos by Nancy Carlson



Therese Zink led a session on health issues that included partner members of the Jalapa Womens Foundation.

much needed medical, education and construction (see stories P 2-3) services - as ISLA has done for over 15 years.

"I think we had a really good team that came together and took on a lot. It was nice having all the different ages in the group working together along with our Nicaraguan partners," said trip leader Lu Lindstrom.

Jan team cont'd P.4

OUR MISSION

ISLA'S mission is to partner with communities in Latin America through health, education and construction programs to become self-

Board Members

- Anne Meyer Ruppel, Chair**
- Lu Lindstrom, Vice-Chair**
- Katherine Schill, Treasurer**
- Dean Neuburger, Secretary**
- Dan Kramer,**
Construction Program Director
- Bob Mullin,**
Education Program Director
- Dave Dexter,**
Medical Program Director
- Dwayne Cowdin**
- Jason Ritenour**
- Tom Cooper**
- Rick Panning**
- Michelle Murphy**
- Sarah Carlson**

Administrative Director
Jon Kerr

Program Coordinator in Jalapa
Javier Eduardo Aguilar Cordoba

***It's not too late for
June 14-25, 2010
trip to Nicaragua!***

Applications and info at
www.isla.cc

Construction team builds boldly

January squad works with Jalapans on two schools

By Dan Kramer, Construction Chair

We had a wonderful construction experience on the January trip, completing two school roofing projects at Campo Hermoso and La Estancia. The construction volunteers were Wayne Kivell, Bill Lindstrom, Don Pavek, Dave Wilson, Jerry Gartner, Rich Johnson, and Dan Kramer.

In addition some of the college-age members of the ISLA team split their time between medical and construction. The youth were Maura Cavanaugh, Chris Schultz, David Anderson, Luke Dueffert, Chris Rivers, and Mike Jose.

When we arrived, the community people had removed both roofs. Only the school walls were standing. At Campo Hermoso, the walls were uneven height. They were leveled, using community help and shovel-mixed concrete. Meanwhile, Don Pavek designed a pattern for the roof truss; bought lumber from the mill; and cut the roof trusses and the overhang. The roof trusses were assembled and coated with a termite protector.

While the concrete cured, the team moved to La Estancia. It was like an orchestrated event with people measuring, cutting, assembling, coating, and lifting the roof trusses (24) into place. The trusses



ISLA construction team members more than held their own, completing two school roofs during the January trip. Photo by Nancy Carlson

were tied together with purlins and the metal roof was installed.

With the concreted cured at Campo Hermoso, the roof trusses (17) were lifted into place, tied together with purlins, and the metal roof was installed.

By trips end, the two roofs were completed and the gable ends were enclosed. At La Estancia, a security barrier was constructed. Campo Hermoso measured 20'x 60' and La Estancia measured 20'x 93'. The weather was perfect. Lunch was on site each day.



Bill Lindstrom (right) and other ISLA volunteers had plenty of help from locals in rebuilding roof projects. Photo by Nancy Carlson

Join your ISLA friends for a run (or walk) in the park and help the cause!

Saturday, May 1

in Lilydale Regional Park, St. Paul

8:30 am - 5K race \$15 / \$7 student

9:30 am - Fun walk - \$5 donation

(dogs also welcome)

Look for registration information at

www.isla.cc or call Jon at

612-819-8877

Education events warm the winter

By Bob Mullin, Education Chair

Winter is a good time to be in Jalapa, for many reasons besides the weather. December is a month of graduations, from preschools, grade schools and high schools. A week of Catholic masses for the graduates, processions through the town, students by the hundreds in cap and gown accompanied by a parent, a sound truck blasting Pomp and Circumstance a thousand times, ceremonies, fiestas. It impresses one with the great significance the Nicaraguan culture places on education. And it is special to watch a preschool boy trying to keep his cap on straight, his gown out of the mud and hold his mother's hand all at the same time.

A typical graduation, preschool or high school, starts with Mass celebrated at the Catholic church across the street from the park. Afterwards the students in cap and gown with a parent process through town to their school or to the Casa del Cultura. A sound truck identifies the route and purpose with a continual playing of 'Pomp and Circumstance' at full volume. At the high schools the students and parents actually get a red carpet welcome. Diplomas are followed by hugs, kisses and many pictures. At INAJAL (Instituto Nacional de Jalapa) the open air ceremony started with the national anthem as the flag was raised and closed with Jingle Bells. The valedictorian's speech was impressive the view from the stage



Nicaraguans are very serious about their schools and educational opportunities such as those provided by ISLA at the January scholarship program. Photo by Nancy Carlson

inspiring. To be there through it all, many times, was a truly moving experience.

Twelve ISLA scholars graduated from high school, five of them qualifying for an ISLA college scholarship. Ten ISLA college students completed two-year technical certificates.

In January the ISLA team presented scholarships to 92 returning high school scholars and a class of 30 freshman. A major portion of the support for the new students came from members of Bethel Lutheran and Faith United Methodist Churches. Thirteen college students received their support and certificates from Javier, our in-country-rep, after the team returned to the United States.



ISLA volunteer Therese Zink helped a young Nicaraguan display his scholarship certificate. Photo by Nancy Carlson

Habla ISLA?

Want to speak an international language of sharing & friendship?

Join our medical, construction and education teams in Jalapa, Nicaragua



June 14-25, 2010

Now including Spanish-English language study "intercambio" sessions as part of activities.

For info: 612-819-8877 or www.isla.cc

ISLA
270 W. Page Street
Saint Paul, MN 55107

January team spans gaps with Jalapa friends' help

Continued from p. 1

Ambitious goals were achieved in all areas, starting with ISLA's women's health clinics. Dr. Therese Zink and Phyllis Wiener, RN, obtained 238 pap smears and 26 biopsies from 21 patients along with performing several other procedures.

Working in partnership with the Jalapa Women's Foundation, medical team members travelled to several local communities providing services and leading health education sessions.



St. Olaf students participated in community health surveys aimed at targeting future ISLA efforts. Photo by Nancy Carlson

"The way the community now views cervical cancer and screening really shows the benefits of what we do. It wasn't even on the radar until we got there and then with the Women's Foundation doing outreach," said ISLA Medical Director Dr. David Dexter.

Another key trip component was the involvement of eight college-age ISLA participants led by Nancy Carlson in an ongoing community health survey of Jalapa residents. The youth went door-to-door with translators gaining information to be used for future ISLA programs.

"We just had a great group," said Dexter. "It makes me want to go back every year - just the outstanding people we meet and the volunteers. It's like Wayne (Kivell) said, 'It feels like we're coming home whenever we go back to Jalapa.'"



You can make a difference!

Your donation of any amount (gifts of \$50, \$100, or \$200 suggested) will always have impact through ISLA's medical, education and construction programs.

Send your tax deductible contribution to:

ISLA

**270 Page Street W.
Saint Paul, MN 55107**

