



Esperanza

Newsletter
Winter 2021



Our Mission

COMMIT is a team of dedicated volunteers from Southwestern Ontario working under the umbrella of the Rotary Club of Stratford Charitable Foundation. Our team's mandate is to provide long-term support to some of the poorest villages in Nicaragua. Our focus is to provide medical clinics, and other outreach services such as clean drinking water, sanitation, eco-friendly stoves, sustainable agriculture as well as educational and social support.



*Our newsletter name
Esperanza translated means
“Hope”*

*We (COMMIT) have hope
that our efforts will improve
the lives of our friends in
Nicaragua.*

COMMIT Website:
[Click here](#)



Canadian Outreach Medical & Mission Team (COMMIT) is a project of the Rotary Club of Stratford Charitable Foundation and works in Partnership with NPH

Working Together with Rotary



Fresh Water Coming to Nicaraguan Villages

The villages we support in Nicaragua depend on water from unsanitary wells or trucked in supply once or twice a week. Sanitation with limited or unsafe water is a challenge as you can imagine. Clean water is one of the basic rights of all human beings. We have drilled a few wells in communities in the past to help the situation, however we recognized this is totally inadequate. For the past 3 years we have been working on a Global Rotary Grant with the Rotary Clubs of Stratford and Granada Nicaragua that will bring wells, electric pumps and water towers to 6 villages and a distribution system to two of our larger villages where transport of the water is a hardship. This is combined with sanitation teaching and implementation to ensure that water is used wisely. This grant was recently approved and work will start shortly. The villages, local government and COMMIT are elated over this development. The impact not just for health and sanitation but also for the economy of those small villages is significant. Thank you to the Rotary Clubs involved, our donors and all the people that made it happen. Special thanks to Dr. Doug Thompson, Dr. Paul McArthur, and Rotarian Charlene Gordon for their incredible commitment and hard work to get this project approved.



Meeting with families in Nandarola at new well site. So excited and enthusiastic!



Hand-dug wells in many villages are easily contaminated and often dry.



One of our first wells drilled in Nandarola, which will be replaced.

Rotary Support

Rotary is a worldwide network of inspired men and women who volunteer their time and talents to support their local communities around the world. COMMIT is grateful for the incredible support and commitment from many Rotary Clubs across Canada, the United States and Nicaragua.



COMMIT team meeting with the Rotary Club of Granada, Nicaragua to discuss partnering opportunities.



COMMIT is thrilled and grateful to have members from other Rotary Clubs join our missions in Nicaragua. Chip and Mary Honsinger joined from Lexington VA, David Knoppert and Aman Rai from the Hyde Park Rotary Club in London Ontario, and Doug Thompson from Stratford.



Chip and Mary Honsinger



Thank you David Knoppert and the Rotary Club of Hyde Park for their ongoing support over the years, raising and donating more than \$25,000 for COMMIT.

Their support includes:

- \$2,000 towards the purchase of a school bus for the NPH orphanage
- \$2,500 for general COMMIT support
- \$500 for the Tio Antonio fire restoration project in Granada
- \$600 for N95 masks for the Nandaime Hospital
- \$1,000 for hurricane relief
- \$10,000 from 2019 golf fundraiser
- \$8,000 from 2020 golf fundraiser



Thank you Andy Evans (right) and the Rotary Club of Port Elgin for generous support donating fire fighting equipment and \$2,500. Janice Rauser (left).

Hurricane & COVID Relief

Not only has Nicaragua been suffering the effects of the COVID pandemic, they were also hit hard by two back-to-back hurricanes in 2020. COMMIT has donated more than \$20,000 to purchase food, roofing materials, surgical masks and other pandemic supplies for several small villages devastated by these disasters. Special thanks to Edgar Avilla and his family in Nicaragua for helping to purchase, package and distribute these desperately needed supplies.



Roofing supplies funded by COMMIT.



Surgical masks and tape purchased for the Nandaime Hospital.



COMMIT provided funding for hurricane relief.

[Click here](#) to view more information pictures and videos.

Garden Project Update

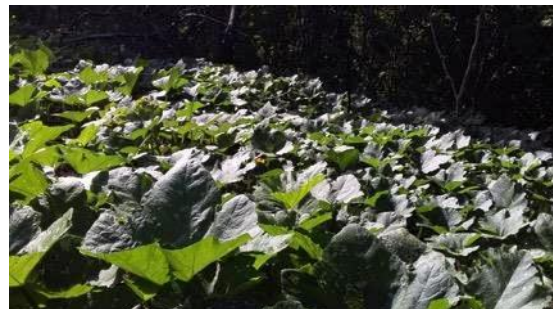
Although pleased and encouraged by the success of our garden project in Nandarola, with the recent hurricanes approximately 90% of the crops were flooded and destroyed. Fortunately the bean field planted on rolling hills with better drainage yielded more than 6,300 pounds for 19 farmer members. Approximately 1,300 pounds of beans will be stored and planted next season. The leftover bean pods have been used in the composting fields. Harvesting and transporting the beans down the steep hills was a real challenge because of the hurricane flooding, however Nicaraguans are resourceful. [Click here](#) to experience Nicaraguan ingenuity and hard work. Overall the bean project generated a profit of \$173.00 that will be invested in future crops and projects. Future plans may include a chicken farm, producing eggs to feed local communities and possible sales to grocery stores and markets. Discussions are currently under way to expand the garden project with 10 new members and starting a new project in the village of La Vigia.



Transporting bean harvest.



All hands were on deck helping with the bean harvest.



Beans a plenty.

Meet our Team in Nicaragua



Edgar Avilia- COMMIT Country liaison and Project Manager

My name is Edgar Avila and I'm originally from Mexico. I have been with Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH), which means our little Brothers, and Sisters since I was 11 years old. I have worked and lived in Nicaragua for more that 22 years. I married a beautiful Nicaraguan and have two incredible boys. My life has been blessed and growing up in a home where people always see and care for the less fortunate in the poorest countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, has impacted my focus on life. So, Rotary and COMMIT fit right in my beliefs. I thank God for the opportunity he has given me to belong to Rotary and COMMIT and this wonderful Canadian team. It is work that always gives a lot of effort into making a difference and positive impact in the country of Nicaragua.

GRACIAS! Thank you...

Jimmy Espinoza- Agricultural Project Agronomist and Translator

I am Jimmy Espinoza a translator and interpreter for COMMIT Canada in several areas (medical, construction, agriculture etc.). I am a farmer with experience and knowledge in organic farming of fruits, vegetables, plantains and others. I am fully committed to pour my knowledge into areas that are needed and committed to help families and the community improve their quality of life and make a better life for themselves.

Why do I work for COMMIT? I work for COMMIT because it is an organization focused on improving the quality of life for my fellow Nicaraguan people through the investment of lots of different projects. COMMIT reaches out to the communities and empowers them with the necessary tools to be self-sufficient and to eventually be better citizens for our country.





STEPPING UP

COMMIT Team Members David Knoppert, Janice Rauser, Doug Thompson, Beverley Neeb and Mary O'Rourke have been walking, running and riding for the past several months, stepping up for our villages in Nicaragua. Their collective goal is to travel more than 15,000 kilometers, raising \$15,000. ***As of January 2021 they will have walked, ran and rode more than 10,000 kilometers raising \$10,000!***

To donate please contact:

David Knoppert at: davidknoppert@sympatico.ca

Janice Rauser at: Janice.e.rauser@gmail.com

Doug Thompson at: douglas.john186681@gmail.com

Beverley Neeb at: bev.tavistock@gmail.com

Mary O'Rourke at: patandmaryorourke@gmail.com



Last year's COMMIT Golf Tournament held at the River Valley Golf Course on September 12th raised more than \$10,000. Thank you Doug Thompson, Janice Rauser and our volunteers for all their hard work in making this event so successful. This year's tournament is tentatively scheduled for the first Saturday in June stay tuned for more details.

2020 Tournament Champs from left to right Richard Allen, Rob Taylor, Garry Foster & Mike Rosser ("The Birdie Boys").

COMMIT Projects

Over the past eight years, COMMIT has delivered more than \$300,000 in supplies, equipment and financial support to several remote villages and hospitals in Nicaragua. Even with the challenges created by the COVID pandemic, we are committed to continue our work and support in Nicaragua. Our focus over the next 3 to 5 years is to:

- Provide COVID and other disaster relief in the way of financial support, for supplies and education at a cost of \$3,000 US;
- Drill 4 new fresh water wells and upgrade the water system in Nandarola (Funding received through the Global Rotary Grant);
- Expand our Garden Project at a cost of \$10,000 US;
- Expand our Stove Project to the 110 remaining families in the village of Nandarola at a cost of \$28,000 US;
- Upgrade another village Community Centre at a cost of \$10,000 US;
- Continue to collect and ship supplies and equipment to Nicaragua at a cost of \$12,000 per container (estimated value of contents \$50,000 to \$100,000).

We very much appreciate the support of our donors and COMMIT needs your help so that we can continue our mission work in Nicaragua.

20 donors each giving \$500 would ship one container; build a new community centre or purchase 40 ego friendly stoves!

Thank you.

For more information please contact:

Doug Thompson at Douglas.john186681@gmail.com or 519-949-1634

Janice Rauser at Janice.e.rauser@gmail.com or 226-880-1712

COMMIT Website: <http://commitwithnphnicaragua.simplesite.com/>

