

PLENTY BULLETIN

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SPRING AND SUMMER 2015

A Visit to Plenty's Projects in Guatemala by Carol Nelson, Board Member



More than 300 children and a few parents and grandparents who live off the Guatemala City dump are able to pick up soy milk and enriched cookies twice every week.

(photo by Carol Nelson)



Our good friends at ADIBE near Solola, Guatemala are still producing a variety of soy products like the tofu in this photo.

(photo by Carol Nelson)

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Kids To The Country Turns 30 This Year



Last December at KTC's Kwanzaa and Gift-Making event in Nashville, more than 60 children plus program staff and family members participated. The kids spend some of the time making gifts and some of the time wrapping them. They eat a pizza lunch and take part in a traditional Kwanzaa ceremony. It's always a day of pure fun.

(photo by Anita Whipple)

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Books To Kids



In January, BTK delivered over 1,000 books to Boothville-Venice Elementary School in Plaquemine Parish on the Gulf Coast of Louisiana. From top left ; Ms. Celest Green (school staff), Jim Selin (BTK), Maria Prout (school Principal), Shannon DiGenova (BTK), kneeling: Ms. Rose Riley (school staff), and students.

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Plenty International is a nongovernmental relief and development organization.

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• **Plenty, P.O. Box 394, Summertown, TN 38483 •**



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This winter my husband Don and I spent 3 weeks in Guatemala in the small village of San Pedro La Laguna on Lake Atitlan in the highlands of the Guatemalan mountains. We lived in a small bungalow at the foot of the Volcano San Pedro by Lake Atitlan. We were studying Spanish and rekindling friendships Don had made in previous trips. Don and Chuck Haren have worked with some of the local farmers doing variety trials with different types of soybeans. They also worked with some of the local women doing soy food production, soymilk, tofu and tempeh.

With Louis and Maria Eberly, who is a native Guatemalan from that area, we visited ADIBE, the soy food production facility in the town of Sololá that has been operating for over 35 years. There we found our old friends Augustine and Elena working. Today the facility is going strong, supplying a variety of soy foods and products, soymilk, tofu, ice bean and soy cookies, to shops around town and to several schools. They supply soymilk and soy cookies to over 800 local students a week, making a difference in the nutrition of those children and the community. Plenty has provided funding and technical support as needed through the years to ADIBE.

On our way down to Guatemala City we stopped at Tecnologia Para la Salud (TPS) - Technology for Health in San Miguel, Chimaltenango. Over the past 18 months Plenty and the Essential Seeds and Trees Program (ESTP) have worked to expand a nursery, and began growing and distributing five varieties of plants and tree seedlings with pesticide properties and for erosion control. More than 100 subsistence farming families from four villages, located within the Department of Chimaltenango, have participated in Phase I of ESTP. The local Mayan people that participated received tree and plant seedlings, organic soil amendments and non-GMO soy and black bean seeds to help address environmental, sustainable agricultural,

nutritional and health issues. TPS is also growing medicinal herbs. We spent a good part of the afternoon there being shown around by Miriam Iquique, one of the organizers. They have an amazing drip irrigation system that uses a foot pump to fill a water tank to irrigate the trees and plants in the dry season. Miriam is quite knowledgeable about the herbs and has them all marked with signs that have the names and the uses of the plants. They also make soaps and shampoo products. They are doing very well and are helping many people in the area.

The day before we left to come home, we went to Karen's Soy Nutrition Project (KSNP). This project was inspired by Plenty's beloved board member, Karen Heikkala, who passed away several years ago. In 2010 we began working with a group of Guatemalan women, Grupo de Soya Santa Maria (GSSM), to provide extra nutrition to the undernourished children living in the settlements around the entrance to the Guatemala City land fill and waste dump. The project is feeding over 300 children twice a week. Some of the children come in by themselves to receive the cookies and milk and some come with their mothers or grandparents. They receive a bottle of soymilk and soy fortified cookies, which together provide over 11 grams of protein, plus iron and calcium, and make a big difference in the overall health of the children. GSSM has also been providing nutrition and soy processing workshops twice a month for women living around the dump. We brought More than Warmth Quilts to hand out to several children at the project.



Miriam Iquique, one of the managers of the program, showed us around at TPS. (photo by Carol Nelson)



Soymilk for Karen's Soy Nutrition Project. (photo by Carol Nelson)

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KTC counselors and blueberries, left to right, Duma Davis, Peter Kindfield, Karuna Kindfield, Ian Nicholson, Kim Thomas and one of 2014's Kids To The Country.



Fun on the beach at Kids To The Country.
(KTC photos by Anita Whipple)

In 2014 we served more than 300 kids in the summer and winter sessions of Kids To The Country. At the end of the year counselors were asked: 1. What do you think is a meaningful aspect of Kids To The Country for kids? 2. What do you think is a meaningful aspect of Kids To The Country for YOU as a counselor? 3. What was a memorable moment? One counselor wrote:

"Many of the kids we get are on lots of different meds for various disorders. In the outside world kids get labeled and treated as their diagnoses. KTC gives these kids an opportunity to just be normal, it gives them a chance to just be kids without being treated differently because of a disorder. KTC helps me with each of my goals. I have three major goals in life: Be a mother. Be a youth therapist. Change the world. For the first two, it gives me training. As for the last one, every child that has a positive experience at KTC takes that positive energy and spreads it. The more people, especially the children, who go out and spread positive energy, the closer we are to changing the world!"

"A memorable moment? A counselor-in-training was lying under the stars and said to me 'This place is so beautiful. I've never felt this way before. I feel happy.'" — Karuna Kindfield, Senior Counselor

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BTK volunteer, Barbara Clinton, passes out books along the Mardi Gras parade route in Slidell, LA. in January. (photo by Anita Whipple)



Laurence Copel who runs the Lower Ninth Ward Street Library in New Orleans joined Books To Kids in the Slidell parade. Last year Laurence won the Lemony Snicket Prize for "Noble Librarians Faced With Adversity." (photo by Anita Whipple)

Bayou Christmas, December 2014



Elaine Langley (in Santa cap) with friends on Isle de Jean Charles. This was the ninth year Elaine has played Santa for the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw families of Louisiana's Gulf Coast.

El Salvador: Community Agriculture by Chuck Haren



In December 2014, farming families in the Rio Lempa area of El Salvador attended a workshop about using the neem plant.
(photo by Chuck Haren)

With support from the Atkinson and Trull Foundations, during 2014 Plenty provided materials and technical support to help farming families in the lower Rio Lempa area of El Salvador learn how to use neem and other local plants as insect repellents, and to improve their capacity to produce dry legumes and other nutritious foods.

Plenty Belize by Mark Miller

Plenty Belize has been awarded contracts by the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to install solar-powered electrical systems in two Mayan villages in the southern Toledo District of Belize. Since its creation in 1991, the GEF has been a “partnership for international cooperation where 183 countries work together with international institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector, to address global environmental issues.” The World Bank is funding Plenty Belize to install 3-kilowatt solar-powered electrical systems for health clinics in the villages of Santa Teresa and Pueblo Viejo. These systems will power refrigerators, laptops, lights and fans in the clinics. GEF is funding Plenty Belize to set up “Barefoot College Solar Power” in Santa Teresa. Barefoot College is a program in India that trains women to be solar technicians able to install and maintain solar systems in their villages.

Plenty Belize is participating in a “Train the Trainers” project with funding from the Social Investment Fund. Five young women (1 Plenty staff, 2 volunteers, and 2 from our partners at Socio-Economic Outreach and Department of Youth Services) and two supervisors are being trained by the University of the West Indies (UWI) on Management Skills, Customer Service, Conflict Management, and Record Keeping. After the trainers are certified, Plenty will hold 12 workshops for members of community-based organizations, women’s groups, youth groups, farmers groups, coops, and others to help them improve their management skills. We expect 12 people to attend each workshop.

Pine Ridge Gardens by Tom Cook



Walter Yellow Hair in his garden on Pine Ridge.
(photo by Robert Reifel)

The Gardens Project provides a hands-on gardening experience. We pair trained Native project staff with Lakota families in developing and maintaining their own gardens. Focusing on organic and indigenous-based practices for access to nutrient-rich fresh foods, we work with 200-300 Lakota families across Pine Ridge Reservation representing 5% of the populace. At no cost to participants, other than their own labor and determination, the program has become widely recognized for its support of self-sufficiency. Operating continuously since 1985, the project reflects the resiliency of community self-help among a depressed population. Ushered in by a 10-week, prime time radio program, listeners are led through the steps, methods, and calendars of planting and caring for vegetables they will grow for themselves. Our project addresses food insecurity by increasing people’s involvement with the source of their food. To increase access to healthy and nutritious foods the project proposes to support 300 home gardens in seven of the nine districts of the Reservation by June 1, 2015. Program Manager Milo Yellow Hair will manage work activities including equipment repairs, tractor placements, fuel and labor payments and will train and supervise all of the workers. He hosts the Monday morning radio talk show on KILI Radio in bilingual format and with expert guests promoting organic gardening, nutrition, and the health benefits of outdoor activities. Each year the radio shows are enthusiastically received and are a large reason why the number of home gardens have remained strong over the years. You can tune in here: <http://www.kiliradio.org>

By the end of April, 16,000 seedlings of a dozen varieties, will have been planted in the project’s greenhouse, and seed packets of 19 varieties sorted and packaged for distribution by the tractor operators. Five tractors will be deployed across the 4,000 square mile service area, and staff will respond to applications gathered at the various district centers. After the average last frost date of May 15, the seedlings will be distributed from the district and community centers, as well as to gardens directly. From late June through September young adults will be employed to assist elderly and disabled gardeners with cultivating and watering their fields, and photographing gardens for reports on current status.