
Amigos de Honduras

Vol. XXI, No. 3

August 2014

SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

Joan M. Larimore San Francisco del Valle 1986-88

IMPORTANT: At the first of the year (2014) the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) changed banks and suddenly Amigos was not receiving rebates from those of you who pay dues through NPCA (DC). Slowly it is now getting straightened out but I still have not received rebates for May to July of this year. Consequently, you may have paid but your due date will be incorrect.

PLEASE DO THIS: Check the due date on your last Newsletter. You will find it on the address label. If it isn't current, send me an email to amigosdehondurasjl@gmail.com or a note to me at 2334 Sunset Ave., Enumclaw, WA 98022 with just your name and your most recent NPCA due date. If you pay your dues through Amigos, you are fine.

Thanks to the two people who have questioned their due dates and got the investigation started. Please note: several members are two or three years in arrears. If I do not hear from you, I'll assume that you wish to be dropped from the Amigos Roster. Pues, muchas gracias a todos who so faithfully send your dues without having to be reminded!

Our bank account is at \$7399.54 but that does not include those of you who have paid NPCA dues May to July. We still do not have a Grants Chairperson but your Amigos officers are looking at worthy causes and just made one grant in August. (Look elsewhere in this issues for details.) Thanks to Miles Powers, Patti Soderberg and Dale Schmitz for their recent donations to the Grants Fund. If you are interested in volunteering to be the Grants Committee Chairperson please contact me. We can put you in contact with former Chairperson Rozanne Cull for any information you need on how to proceed and to get the names of the people who served on the Grants Committee.

Last item: No one has stepped up to send the pdf edition of our Newsletter. Once you enter the emails in your computer it is fairly simple and fast. Our editor, Loren Hintz, can create an electronic version of the Newsletter which he can send you. Any volunteers?

EDITOR'S COLUMN

Loren Hintz Olanchito 1980-82

The big news this summer has been World Cup in Brazil and the immigration crisis in the US. Please take time to read the articles about immigration in this issue and decide what you can do to help. Our next issue will be in November. I would like to share your stories about Thanksgiving and

Christmas in Honduras. Any thoughts will be welcome. Please contact me at ldhintz@bellsouth.net ; 804 Kings Mill Rd. Chapel Hill NC 27517; 919-933-8987. GRACIAS!

RELIEF ON STUDENT LOANS FOR PCVS AND RPCVS



Did you know that Peace Corps service qualifies as "employment" for the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)

program? If you are working full-time for a qualifying employer, PSLF forgives the remainder of certain federal loans after 120 monthly payments are made under a qualifying repayment plan. Under a qualifying repayment plan, your payments could be \$0 per month while in service. Signing up at the beginning of your service allows you to make the greatest number of qualifying payments. If you sign up after your service ends, you may be able to receive credit for some, but not all, of your time in service. If you plan to pursue a career in public service and have federal loans, [visit here](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sites/default/files/peace-corps-and-loan-repayment_1.pdf?utm_source=mailto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Peace%20Corps%20Update,%20August%202014) (https://studentaid.ed.gov/sites/default/files/peace-corps-and-loan-repayment_1.pdf?utm_source=mailto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Peace%20Corps%20Update,%20August%202014) and call FedLoan Servicing at 855.265.4038 to see if you qualify.

BUITI UGANU “GOOD NEWS”

Joan Larimore 1986-88

Alison and Fernando Sabio continue to work in La Ceiba for the preservation of the Garifuna language and culture. Their vehicle is training pastors who will work throughout the Garifuna communities. If you want to learn more about what they do and see photos, check out www.sabiogarifuna.blogspot.com You will see photos of the students and also two of Jonathan, the five month old son of Alison and Fernando. All three Sabios will again visit relatives and friends here in Washington State in August.

CENTRAL AMERICAN MEDICAL OUTREACH

Kathy Tschiegg Santa Rosa de Copan 1979-81 and June Chandler White

ORRVILLE , Ohio-- Central American Medical Outreach founder Kathy Tschiegg has no trouble recalling when she knew drastic change was needed in the way Hondurans received medical care. It was 1979 and she was a registered nurse serving in the Peace Corps at the hospital in Santa Rosa de Copan.

“Basic things, like medical tape, gloves, respirators... they just weren’t available in the poor hospitals,” Tschiegg recalled, noting the smallest patients saw the biggest impact. “I personally carried 31 dead babies to the morgue in one single month.”

As troubling as what she saw in Santa Rosa was, Tschiegg had a lot more trouble accepting that she was the one called to bring about those desperately needed changes. “I knew I had to help, but I didn’t know how,” she recalled.

“That was the motivation for me to begin to try to do SOMETHING.”

Tschiegg’s Peace Corps service ended in 1981. She founded CAMO in 1993. At that time, she was a registered nurse working fulltime in critical care at Aultman Hospital, near her home in Orrville, Ohio. She is fond of saying CAMO began with a duffle bag of medical supplies in her living room.

Today, CAMO is one of the most recognized non-profit health care organizations in Honduras. It serves around 150,000 people annually with services ranging from breast exams and prosthetics to neo-natal care and eye surgery.

The organization has grown and flourished under a unique counterpart system between visiting doctors and nurses and local medical professionals. Over the years, Tschiegg has built a network of long-term, multi-disciplinary public health care providers who offer continuing care to needy families.

CAMO has a permanent presence in Central America with a distribution center operated by its sister organization, Fundación CAMO, in Santa Rosa de Copan, Honduras. Each year, Fundación CAMO distributes more than \$2 million in donated medical supplies and equipment.

“These are medical supplies and equipment that otherwise would end up in our landfills,” Tschiegg said, explaining that what is viewed as obsolete or outdated in the U.S. can -- and is -- being used by CAMO to save countless lives in Honduras.

Along with medical services, CAMO has made great strides in community development. “You can’t have healthy people without a healthy community,” Tschiegg said of CAMO’s work in areas that include literacy, physical fitness and domestic violence. Earlier this year,

CAMO began a literacy program that built libraries and distributed books to five rural schools. Amigos de Honduras contributed \$500 toward that effort which is ongoing at a cost of \$7,500 a year.



CAMO Founder and Executive Director Kathy Tschiegg poses with Honduran school children in a classroom of a rural school near Santa Rosa de Copan.

In 2010 CAMO opened the first domestic violence shelter in Western Honduras, where domestic violence is the leading cause of death for women. Of 72 women housed in the shelter from 2013-2014, 42 of the women, or 58 percent, did not return to their abuser.

“The rate of women who return to their abusers is much higher in the United States,” Tschiegg said. “By providing these women opportunity, we are making great strides in the area of domestic violence in Honduras.”

Currently CAMO is working to develop standards of care for nursing practice.

“One of the issues here in health care in Honduras is there is no standard by which doctors and nurses are measured when they get out of school. So, there is inequality of skills upon graduation,” Tschiegg notes.

With the support of the Honduran Ministry of Public Health, CAMO has announced a four-phase project to develop, implement and sustain a nationwide nursing continuing education program. Aultman College will participate in Phase One of the project by hosting four Honduran

nurses for a month-long transcultural, multidisciplinary training course.

In the coming months, the organization will open the largest public health clinic in Honduras.

“Donated medical equipment will fill the 14 new clinics,” Tschiegg said, noting that the health center will provide services ranging from cancer screenings and pre-natal ultrasounds to vaccinations and mental health counseling. It will provide 500 medical services a day.

CAMO employs a staff of 33 in Honduras and four in the U.S, with annual budget of just under \$500,000. CAMO hosts two major fundraisers annually, with a third planned this year. It also recently began an electronics recycling program. Funding remains a constant, daily challenge.

"CAMO is more than a donation. It's a long-term investment in people – community, doctors and patients alike," says a major U.S. donor.



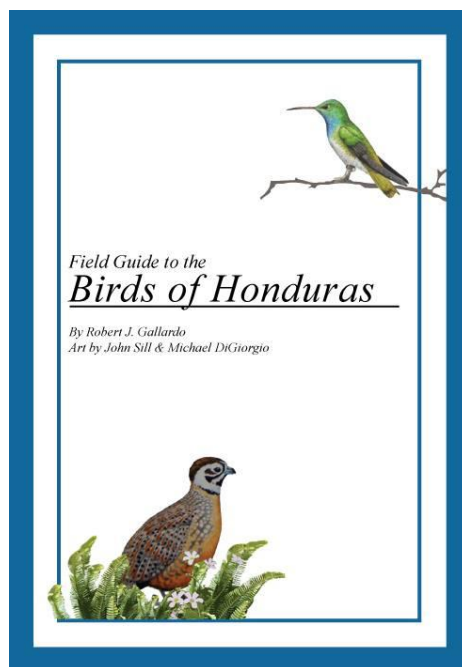
Honduran children pose for a photograph with some of the new books their school received from Central American Medical Outreach. CAMO's literacy program provided 100 books and shelving to five rural schools. The program is ongoing with the goal of bringing books to more schools.

CAMO is located at 322 Westwood Avenue, Orrville, Ohio, 44667. For more information on how you can help CAMO, please visit the organization's website at www.camo.org. Email CAMO

at camo@camo.org. (Editor's note: Orville is near Wooster where I went to college and my in-laws now live. The local newspaper frequently has coverage of CAMO's activities. I try and give an annual donation to CAMO and encourage anyone with the means to do the same.)

FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF HONDURAS NEAR COMPLETION

Robert Gallardo 1993-96 (now Lago de Yojoa)



Robert has been sharing posts on Facebook and the project is almost completed.

“This is the tale of a book that almost seemingly wasn't meant to be. This is an up close and very personal account about a bird guide and its (future) author; a kind of story that those who use bird guides rarely get to see..... It started back in Sept. 2011 when Robert met John Sill at a bird fair. After seeing John's painting of a Snowcap he knew he found a match. John painted for over a year before Robert added a second talented artist, Michael DiGiorgio. Their

brilliant artwork will make the book shine.

From the beginning Robert could not get a single publisher or any university to help with the book project. Not even a single corporate sponsor was interested. But he was not going to give up. He did join forces with the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation and MOPAWI, both conservation non-profits. To date they have fund raised about \$75,000, mostly by small donations and matching grants. The amount of field work undertaken has been massive. The stories at times incredible.....running the gamut from drug-laden planes flying overhead, a jaguar walking behind our tent, all sorts of tropical diseases, bugs, mud up to our necks, fatigue, etc. But it was all worth it. The amount of data gathered was unprecedented and crucial photos taken of birds that the artists needed. Robert has added nearly 40 new country records and continues to do so. Some of it was funded by none other than your donations.

A bit more is still needed to finish paying for the art and then to go to print by the end of the year. If you would like to help please email me at: rgallardo32@gmail.com And see www.birdsofhonduras.com

The stories are so many, the pictures that document it run into the thousands, and all those who have helped make it happen are so many. To everyone who has supported this book to date a big "LIKE" as they use here on FB. To say the very least it has been a ROUGH go of it, but the book WILL happen and you will at least know part of its story.”

WORLD CUP RESULTS Honduras did not get far in Brazil. Los Catrachos scored 1 goal against Ecuador to fall 1-2. They were shut out by both France and Switzerland 0-3. Please share with Amigos your futbol memories. Send your stories to ldhintz@bellsouth.net.

MEGA LIST OF PC HONDURAS KEEPS GROWING

Fred Corvi Choluteca 1978-81

We now have approximately 4100 names on the list of volunteers and staff who served in Honduras. We still have 200 more names to research. We started in June 2012 with a search team consisting of two. Steve Weissman (1971-1973) and me. Later, Steve wasn't able to continue but many more offered to help. Those who contributed significantly to the list and continue today are:

Jim Couzzourt (1965-1967), Steve Phelan (1973-1974), Dick Feutz (1967-1969), Mark Reilly (1966-1969), Jean Tiffany Cox (1978-1981), Nancy Smith Tsurumaki (1979-1981), Joan Larimore (1986-1988), Debra Gish (1976-1978), Rodia Flores (PC Friend 1978-1990), Matute Dodd (staff 1977-1996) and Ruben Hernandez (2004-2006). As time permitted, Dennis Kroeger (1967-1969), Carmen Medoza (Staff 1976-2006), Dean Geiss (1965-1967), and Joanne Vary Schwandes (1969-1971), Mary Eastman Sanchez (1986-1988) and Leslie Hughes-Lind (1978-1980), Jon Lind (1980-1982), Sue Spalding Golding (1975-1978) and Jim Barborak (1977-1979), Patrice Ryan (1975-1977) and Frank Almaguer (1976-1979) also contributed. Many of the Peace Corps Staff remaining in Tegucigalpa also helped. If I forgot anyone please let me know! We are totally grateful to all these people and many others who just wanted to help! Some members of the search team stayed up to 2am because that's when they could fit in time. I believe we have the absolute best network and up-to-date data base out of any PC Country! I only plead that when someone changes address, phone or email that they please let us know!

We also ask that the volunteers not mass email all 4100 volunteers. The list is solely for finding old friends and organizing reunions. We prefer NOT to

share the list with anyone outside of PC Honduras including the NPCA for several reasons: 1) We promised to all those joining the list it would only be shared among Honduras RPCVs and staff. 2) If it gets into the hands of others it may lead to many unsolicited emails causing our RPCVs to ask to be deleted from the list. 3) If I remember correctly, someone from NPCA wanted access to our list last year to which we kindly denied. We understand privacy laws but when we asked them for comprehensive lists of those who served in Honduras they would not cooperate. We weren't asking for addresses or phone numbers just names and years of service. If someone has an exception please ask the list manager Steve Phelan.

stephen.d.phelan@gmail.com
For example, USAID had a job opening for an intern in Honduras and asked that we notify all of the 2010-2012 volunteers which we did.

So here we are now, two and half years later, and almost finished! A common question is why we don't we have 5700 names on the list as many Peace Corps websites state for the country of Honduras. We believe that this number includes every single applicant accepted in to Peace Corps Honduras. What many don't realize is the high attrition rate. Many volunteers did not complete training or in the early years were deselected. Of course there are some that have simply not been added to the list. We believe that our list, for the most part, is complete for those who swore in after training and served at least one month.

As of today, the list is letter/color coded as follows: Volunteer found - Black (O) Volunteers not yet found - Red (W) Volunteers who did not respond to emails or letters - Violet (NR) Volunteer we could not find - Blue (X) Volunteers found but don't use email - Green(N) Volunteers deceased - Orange (D) Volunteers not wanting contact info on list - Blue (N)

Peace Corps Staff - shaded in blue
Peace Corps Honduras Search Team - shaded in yellow.

Interesting facts: 221 are deceased!
Of all the RPCVs on our contact list, 153 are currently living/working overseas. Here are the numbers:
Honduras 30; Mexico 12; Guatemala, Costa Rica, Spain 7; UK, Kenya, Australia 6; Peru 5; Thailand, El Salvador, Israel, Japan, Canada, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua 3; United Arab Emirates, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, South Korea, Colombia, France, Egypt, Brazil, Panama, Ecuador, Switzerland 2; Russia, New Zealand, Lebanon, Germany, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Qatar, Bolivia, Paraguay, Cambodia, Palau, Rwanda, Senegal, China, South Africa, Tanzania, Philippines, Togo, Trinidad & Tobago, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Virgin Islands 1.

AMIGOS DE HONDURAS GRANT TO PALISAL

Dale and Frances Schmitz Yamaranguila, Intibuca 1967-69

Amigos officers granted this year \$1000 to *Tools for Opportunity*, a small non-profit here in Iowa of which I am vice-president to provide training and tools to PALISAL, a lumber cooperative in Yamaranguila, Intibuca, Honduras. After the first training and tool distribution next March, 2015, the same tools will be used again and again to train carpenters in the community. We will follow-up at least annually to provide training to additional new carpenters.

I will personally monitor the progress of this project, as well as several Board members. Also, I have placed 19 photos in Dropbox about the PALISAL Lumber Cooperative; the last 3 are from our training workshop at the Colosuca Training Center in Gracias, Lempira. I thank you and the grant committee very

much. Tools for Opportunity is grateful, and so will be the people at PALISAL.



I was in Yamaranguila, Intibuca from 1967-1969. Frances was not in the Peace Corps but we got married at the end of my Peace Corps service. My work was in rural community development. I was the only English speaking person there, and the road was a lumber road; no electricity. I worked hard but had a good two years. Organized aldeas to build 7 one and two room schools; worked to build a potable water system in nearby San Miguelito; built two suspension foot bridges; and with a local agricultural agent started a 4-S club in town. Had two mules, but walked a lot. Left training in Puerto Rico at 184 lbs and left Honduras at 154 lbs.

Still have lots of good friends whom I visit when there ever year, but of course, some have now passed away, including a 107 year old man. Over the years as progress came to town, I helped install water in homes, sewer hook-ups, electricity in homes and telephone lines. Now there's cable TV, cell phones and a new paved road in finally all finished (so one can travel from Siguatepeque to La Esperanza to Gracias, Lempira and on to Santa Rosa and Copan Ruins.

Now we are careful about travelling in Honduras, and usually do not spend much time in Tegucigalpa or San Pedro. But out in the country towns, it's safe. Last year we travelled with a son, daughter-in-law and two grandkids from Tegus to Copan to Tela to the Pacific with no problems.

HONDURAN COFFEE BREAKS RECORD PRICE ON INTERNATIONAL MARKET

Saira Raudales June 18 2014
www.hondudiario.com

Technical manager of the Honduran Coffee Institute, Mario Ordonez said Wednesday that Honduran coffee in the "Eleventh Rate of Excellence/ Onceava Tasa a la Excelencia" exceeding \$35.10 dollars per pound in the international electronic auction." Today we celebrate the Eleventh Rate of Excellence. We are surpassing the record price of previous markets and are surpassing other Central American countries.

This means an average of \$500/ quintal and an average auction price of \$11/pound which is higher than all previous records Mario Ordonez said. The above "fills us with satisfaction, because we continue to advance and this Honduran coffee in the international market is moving to the top position."

He added: "This electronic auction occurs in different continents, buyers from Asia, America, Europe and Australia, from who are following it electronically and making offers virtually." In this auction are participating twenty three producers from many different countries, and the Honduran coffee has surpassed the old record by \$9.90/ pound.

This achievement "is raising the value of all the millions of bags of coffee we produce, it becomes like an ambassador of coffee on the international market," said Ordoñez.

The highest ranked producer was Lucinda Vasquez Romero of Guazore,

La Paz. She was ranked in the International Market with 1,320 pounds of coffee worth \$46,332 (\$35.10/pound).

LAWMAKERS ASK STATE DEPARTMENT TO REVIEW SUPPORT FOR HONDURAS

By ELISABETH MALKINMAY 29, 2014 NYT (Shared by Molly McQuaid)

MEXICO CITY – More than 100 members of the House of Representatives, outlining the deteriorating human rights situation in Honduras, urged the State Department on Wednesday to press the Honduran government to protect human rights and ensure the rule of law.

In the past few months, international organizations have raised renewed concern over the targeted killings of journalists and advocates for human and land rights.

The letter to Secretary of State John Kerry was signed by 108 members of Congress, led by Representative Jan Schakowsky, Democrat of Illinois. In it, the lawmakers argued that the government of President Juan Orlando Hernández has "adopted policies that threaten to make the human rights situation even worse" by promoting a militarized police force and using its army for domestic law enforcement.

The letter called on the State Department to evaluate Washington's support and training for the Honduran police and military.

[In its 2013 human rights report](#), the State Department acknowledged the severity of human rights abuses in Honduras. It described the "corruption, intimidation, and institutional weakness of the justice system leading to widespread impunity,"

along with “unlawful and arbitrary killings by security forces, organized criminal elements, and others.”

The letter from House members mentioned the tear-gassing of opposition legislators and activists during a protest in the Honduran Congress building two weeks ago, as well as the killings of lawyers and human rights defenders, among others.

In April, Carlos Mejía Orellana, the marketing director of Radio Progreso, a Jesuit radio station critical of the government, was stabbed to death in El Progreso. His killing prompted a statement at the time from Senator Tim Kaine, Democrat of Virginia, saying, “Too often, Honduran officials have dismissed threats and attacks against journalists, and questioned whether the violence was connected to the victims’ profession.”

Last week Aníbal Duarte, the popular mayor of the municipality of Iriona, was shot and killed in front of his family in a hotel swimming pool in Jutiapa, near the Caribbean port city of La Ceiba. Mr. Duarte administered a vast and sparsely populated territory in northeastern Honduras where [illegal logging and drug trafficking](#) are rampant. Officials in the investigative arm of the national police told local reporters that they believed a personal dispute was behind his killing.

Three days later, a government forester was fatally shot in La Ceiba as he got off a bus. The victim, José Alexander González Cerros, 33, who worked in the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, had recently reported illegal logging in the area.

The commission also expressed concern about the rising number of children and young people who have been victims of violence in Honduras. Casa Alianza, an organization that works with street children, presented a report last month showing that 270 children and young people throughout Honduras had been

killed in the first three months of this year. Two weeks later José Guadalupe Ruelas, the director of the Honduras branch of the group, was beaten by the military police.

THOUSANDS OF CENTRAL AMERICAN CHILDREN FLEE TO THE US

Loren Hintz Olanchito 1980-82

Thanks to the many members of Amigos de Honduras who have shared articles and concerns with the editor about the latest immigration crisis. The headlines this summer proclaimed that tens of thousands of children from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras are fleeing without parents to the border of the US. (Most are hoping to reach family or friends.) The statistic of Honduras having the highest murder rate in the world is repeated. There have been a number of ugly headlines and of Facebook postings of Americans fearful of this recent flight from Central America. Several RPCVs have attempted to volunteer at the government shelters for the Central American children. So far Homeland Security rules (back ground checks etc.) make this very difficult. Others of us have written our Members of Congress and letters to the editor with little result.

Former Costa Rican president and Nobel Peace Prize winner Oscar Arias said it best 8/5/14 in El Pais “There is no punishment, wall nor army that can resolve the migration crisis. The poor do not need a passport to travel.” He sees the current situation as a product of decades of the Cold War conflict and post-Cold War neglect. Now Central America is a pawn in the drug and narco-trafficking wars. There is the need for international cooperation to reduce

poverty and improve education. Something as simple as \$1000 scholarship per child fleeing would help.

Frances Robles (7/9/14, NYT) described the current situation in San Pedro Sula. “Anthony O. Castellanos disappeared from his gang-ridden neighborhood on the eastern edge of Honduras’s most dangerous city, so his younger brother, Kenneth, hopped on his green bicycle to search for him, starting his hunt at a notorious gang hangout known as the “crazy house.”

“They were found within days of each other, both dead. Anthony, 13, and a friend had been shot in the head; Kenneth, 7, had been tortured and beaten with sticks and rocks. They were among seven children murdered in the La Pradera neighborhood of San Pedro Sula in April alone, part of a surge in gang violence that is claiming younger and younger victims.”

Most of the violence is occurring in big cities but even some rural areas are affected. Friends in El Salvador tell me the violence is worse now than during the Civil War of the 80’s. A friend in Honduras shared a long article “Aguan Killing Fields” about violence in the small towns in the Aguan Valley. Some individuals and organizations are trying to help. Casa Alianza in both Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula are working with youth but mostly report grim statistics. Alberto Arce (5/24/14 AP) in “Soccer Helps Some Young Hondurans to Avoid Gangs” described the work of wheel chair bound soccer coach Luisito Lopez. In spite of the local gangs, he coaches in a field near the Choluteca River in Progreso Barrio of Tegucigalpa. The kids playing are not far from violence and even one of their former team mates Anthony is found dead.

“If life offers many lessons, so does death. Luisito is not about to let

Antony's tragic end pass without comment, any more than he would miss the opportunity to herald Izaguirre's rise out of the slums. They are two sides of the same coin. They never learned Antony's last name, but Luisito was able to ferret out a few more details from the kids: The boy slept in the street at times, joining an estimated 1,000 children who are homeless in the capital. He apparently had become involved with the 18th Street gang, possibly selling pot for them, and ran into trouble crossing a border into Mara Salvatrucha territory. Tegucigalpa's borders, invisible to outsiders, are dangerous even for those who keep their distance. Almost the only passport from the gangs for crossing from the nearby Divana or 21 de Ferrero neighborhoods to Progreso is a bag of soccer equipment, carried to a Saturday or Sunday afternoon match and home again before dark."

How many RPCVs have seen the Dallas Morning News photo of folks screaming against immigrants? **July 23:** "A photo on the Metro cover in Saturday's paper has a lot of people talking. One letter writer, Richard Elsea of Sachse, shared a common reaction: "As I continued reading Saturday's paper I kept returning to the photo of the protester and her fellow activists. Why did that hate-filled visage resonate so deeply? Seeing angry protesters screaming at someone or about something isn't uncommon. Then I realized how much it reminded me of a 1957 photo from Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. If you squint and let the image blur to a monochrome, you can almost see Elizabeth Eckford walking just to the right of the photo."

Also did you hear about the protesters in Arizona who tried to stop a bus because they thought it was full of children detainees? Instead it was local kids on a field trip. In response to false claims by the governors of Mississippi and North Carolina, a few folks published articles. The Transactional

Records Access Clearing House of Syracuse University (7/29/14) looked at data from 2005 to 2014 for immigrant minors under 18. They found that in spite of statements to the contrary, the majority of minors placed with families attend their later immigration hearings and if they have access to a lawyer over 92% show up.

A Mississippi Immigration Lawyer tried to educate his governor of the facts of the "rule of law." He pointed out that the constitutional right for due process is for all persons regardless of citizenship or immigration status. If an individual is fleeing for reasons of fear of violence be it gang, home abuse or government violence, they can qualify for asylum protection. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops and the United Nations have pointed out that many of the children arriving in the US qualify for refugee status. The 2008 anti-trafficking law also requires a due process hearing that minors must receive.

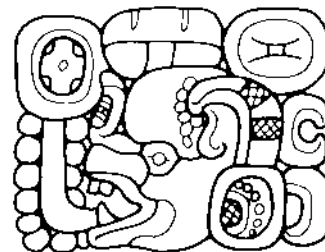
The Office of Refugee Resettlement is the US agency that handles the children. Children are first placed in shelters and then released to a sponsor (ideally a parent or relative.) A background check is done on the sponsor and prior to release the children receive vaccinations and medical screening. No information can be released that can compromise the child's location or identity. In North Carolina 1200 immigrant children have been placed with families.

Randal Archibold (8/2/14 NYT) in "Hope Dwindles for Hondurans Living in Peril" describes Pastor Jorge Riva's story. Gangs gave him 24 hours to leave his church home and removed everything. When he first moved there 20 years ago folks celebrated birthday parties and enjoyed a normal life. Now people are afraid to have parties because gang members may show up. Hurricane Mitch, 2009 coup,

economic down turn and maquiladoras closing have destroyed the economy. Youth deported from the US, often joined gangs to survive when they returned to Honduras. Gang members go house to house demanding a rent or war tax. Besides local gangs, cartels transporting cocaine are now in Honduras.

When I arrived in Olanchito in 1980, almost no one had relatives in the US. Now it is common. In 2000 about 283,000 Hondurans lived in the US and the estimate today is 500,000. But the current population of Honduras is 8.4 million and most Hondurans will remain at home with their families. There is no doubt that the headlines are grim. This reality is one reason Peace Corps Honduras pulled out. However, a number of NGOs continue to work in Honduras and the Grant Committee of Amigos de Honduras wants to support them. Also the many Honduran RPCVs have an important role to play in educating politicians and the public about Honduras. Please take the time to respond to misinformation if you read about it. Contact your local officials to provide a safe place for refugees. Please remind Congress and the President to invest more in education and development in Central America. Share with Amigos any positive responses you receive. Gracias.

"The backbone and commitment to justice of the strongest and most generous nation in the world is trembling at the presence of 50,000 children and responding by taking away legal rights from vulnerable children. It is shameful," Democratic Representative Luis Gutierrez said. (Reuters 7/15/14)



Amigos de Honduras Membership Info

Use this form to renew membership or notify us of a change in address. Or, copy and give to a friend whom you think might like to keep in touch with Honduras and RPCVs. Other than your name, enter only the info that has changed.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Phone: _____ e-mail address _____

Peace Corps Info:

Years of service: from _____ to _____ Group # _____ Site(s) _____

Job _____

Post-Peace Corps Experiences (occupation, marriage, children, travels, interests) _____

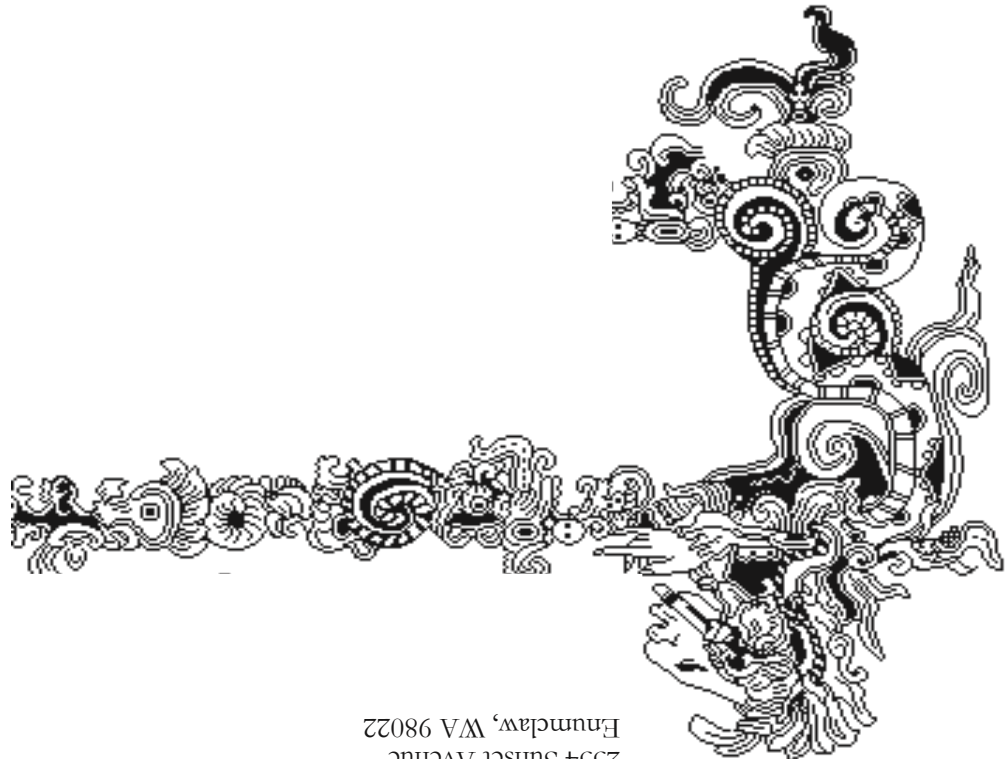
Make check payable to Amigos de Honduras: Mail to Joan Larimore, 2334 Sunset Avenue, Enumclaw, WA 98022

8-14

Aviso: the date on the mailing label is the expiration date of your membership - please renew if you're due!

Amigos de Honduras	\$15 <input type="checkbox"/>
Amigos & NPCA	\$50 <input type="checkbox"/>
Amigos, NPCA & another group name of other group _____	\$65 <input type="checkbox"/>
contribution to projects Amigos will fund in Honduras:	
\$	_____

I would prefer to receive my newsletter in .pdf format.



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