



June 2016



*Spotlight: Best Start in Christ — Maternal Health*

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What does Threefold Ministries represent for you? Does your mind go to a team that you've participated with or supported? Perhaps you don't realize that our work extends beyond that. One such example is our Best Start in Christ program which began in 2008 as an outreach to (often very young) mothers-to-be and their children to age 3. 8 years later this program continues to provide support and services to the community. Nathaly Cruz and her team have supported 12 pregnancies so far this year with expectant mothers ranging in age from 13 (yes, 13) to 33. Thus far 7 babies have been born and 2

have resulted in miscarriages. Much-needed vitamins have been distributed, 'Welcome baby' packages have been distributed and financial support has been provided where deemed necessary (e.g. parents cannot afford formula prescribed for a newborn). Pre-natal workshops focus on health, and development of the growing child. Many old traditions and myths linger which require some gentle and respectful redirection or modification, which pre-natal workshops also present. In a village of 1100, there are only 6 households with a vehicle; one individual has been contracted to provide women



in labour with rides to the hospital.

This small program has great individual and family impact. We gladly accept donations towards this program— indicate "Best Start" with your payment. Thank you!

Highlights:

- Giving moms and kids the 'Best Start'
- Early 2016 Teams
- Together we're "Building a Better Future"
- The latest from Skylark
- VELA's impact in Mexico

*Renewed 'Vision' at Skylark*

48 members of the Los Medranos, and surrounding, community are reading more comfortably, or for the first time in a long time, as a result of assessments and distribution of reading glasses. Board member and devoted Threefold advocate, Rob

Fisher accompanied the February Dental team (see page 2), having been trained on basic vision exams. Thank you to the Smith family who generously donated many of the glasses that are now in the hands—and on the faces—of their new owners!



## Dental Team Visits in February



*The team enjoying some well-deserved down-time*

Dr. Raimundo, Michelle, Kathy, and Jennifer from Parry Sound Family Dentistry, along with helpers Zach and Peter (and Kayla back at home), persisted through the documentation-gathering process required by the Nicaraguan government to successfully treat over 150 patients in one week.

For a variety of reasons (diet, inconsistent access to water, generational habits,

economics), dental health is poor in this developing region. Extractions are very common in children as well as adults. That, and scaling, formed the majority of the procedures. Dental health is a key factor in overall health and although we wish, and the goal, is consistent dental care and community-wide education, extractions will be an ongoing reality at least in the short term.

Thanks so much to this mighty

team for the great contributions!



## Impacting in March

**"We would love to send more teams to do the same type of mission in the future."**

**Pastor Stafford**

A great team from eastern Florida took a hop over the Caribbean Sea in their first group trip to Skylark. The focus on community Evangelism was the first of its kind for a North American Threefold team.

Representatives from local churches accompanied the team in their community walks -and-talks where they were able to pray for and with 365 individuals. 200 people of all ages attended a celebratory gathering at the close of the

week, where many children accepted the message of Jesus.

Although Christianity is not unknown or unpracticed in Nicaragua (the majority of the population of the area identify as Evangelical or Catholic), it

was apparent to the team that the message of grace and salvation was much-needed. Thank you so much to Pastor Gary, Brian, Laurel, William, Warren, John and Harriet for the amazing week!



## First Aid/Responder Training in April



*"First aided"*

The 'Progress in Paramedicine' initiative continues to have positive impact in the local area. The enthusiastic team of Kevin, Heather, Andrea, Hannah and Mike provided first aid/first response training to 25 students, 10 of whom were second-time participants receiving more advanced instruction. The training

provided by these Ontario-based professionals is sorely lacking in Nicaragua even in those organizations that we would consider 'life saving': firefighters. The instruction that the team provides could very well result in saved lives in local situations.

It wasn't not ALL work and no

play. The team had the opportunity to ride through the nearby town on a fire truck with full sirens blaring! Suffice it to say, good relationships form between Skylark teams and thankful community members.

## Program Update: *Building a Better Future*



This program was initiated in mid-2015 with the goal of equipping 10 women per year in the local community with knowledge and skill in creating crafts which could be sold directly or through the local market. By the end of the inaugural year, 7 women completed the program, some of whom have gone on to start small businesses creating and selling their wonderful creations. All left with thankfulness and pride in having

taken part in this opportunity.

The 2016 classes filled immediately to the capacity of 10 participants. All are enthusiastic about learning new skills and using their hands to bless their lives and those of their families.

We are exceedingly proud of these women!! Watch for updates with regards to this life and family impacting program.

**"This [program] makes us feel proud and fills our hearts with joy."**

**Nathaly Cruz, Outreach Director**

## Program Update: *Best Start in Christ—The Kids*

Our Spotlight article highlighted the Maternal Health elements of the Best Start program. There have been some great things happening with the youngest in the program, too, of course!

Over 30 babies and youngsters are participating in the program. During the first half of the school year:

- Children, parents and teachers took a field trip to the zoo! This was a first for even some of the

parents!

- A Mothers' Day celebration took place on May 24 which was truly special for the moms
- A Birthday Celebration in honour of the children with birthdays in the first half of the year was held on June 17. In some cases this is the only recognition of a child's birthday.
- Meetings and workshops have been held with the

parents of the preschoolers each month, focusing on development and communication

We'd like to express special appreciation to those who sponsor children, and ultimately the program, through "Change A Life" sponsorships. Your contributions are being put to good use in a truly impactful way.

More information is available on our [website](#).



## Project Update: *Skylark*

As our annual Construction teams can attest to, there are always things to do from a practical hands-on standpoint. Many of our buildings are already 10 years young! Many of you will likely easily recall being in the planning stages for the Skylark! Our next-highest priority is to complete a section of our boundary wall. It's not

a glamorous job, but is necessary for the benefit of the community. Local community members will be contracted for this work, but any financial or practical support that you might consider contributing would be greatly appreciated!

Many of you will have met Magdalena, our wonderful

cook at Skylark. She and her husband have embarked on a new business venture, selling produce on a wholesale basis. We are so grateful for the time that she spent with us and truly wish her every blessing in her new venture! Carolina Manzanarez and the remaining staff have things well in hand in the Skylark kitchen.



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Changing lives through the power of Faith and acts of Compassion



Our “threefold” mandate — to focus on **Projects**, develop accompanying **Programs** and fill and focus them on, and support them with, **People** — continues in Nicaragua, and we are devoted to it. Our North American resources go far in Central America! Will you help us support pregnant women in need of vitamins and education? Christian-based early childhood education and nurturing? Growing a safe and secure centre for a community? Pastoral or other Christian-based training? Needed medicine or medical services?

We accept donations by cheque to the address at left, or via credit card through [Canada Helps](http://www.canadahelps.org). Contact us if you're in the U.S. More information is available at <http://www.threefold-ministries.org/index.php/donate/how-to-donate>.

THANK YOU!

## VELA Ministries

The VELA Ministries team in Mexico have been hard at work! Their focus over recent years has been to:

- Enrich and empower pastors to be more effective in ministry
- Assist local churches in developing ministry leaders
- Encourage women to recognize and utilize their God-given gifts, and get involved in their local

church  
VELA has recently developed videos detailing their work and vision which are available on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) and their website at [velaministries.org](http://velaministries.org).



Threefold is proud to partner with VELA in reaching out more broadly in LATAM.

## Wayne's Word

Sometimes I wonder, am I really having an impact in life. Maybe you wonder too. The media remind us daily of the overwhelming needs and challenges that face us when we seek to reach out in love to others. April 2016 marked ten years since we welcomed our first Short Term Mission Team to our site, the Skylark Centre in Nicaragua. I had the privilege of being part of that team under the leadership of our founder and first Executive Director, Rev. Gary Robinson. Ten years later we have seen hundreds of team members and thousands of locals come

to Skylark to serve and many have made a new or deeper connection with God during their time with us. What about the community of Los Medranos, adjacent to the Skylark Centre? In April I, along with several Skylark staff, attended a visitation in the community after the young brother of one of our workers died after a short battle with cancer. Many in the community gathered outside the house of the family to sing, to share stories, to read Bible passages of comfort and hope. One of the community leaders spoke of the family's connection with Skylark and

Threefold Ministries. It was so gratifying to hear this community leader, unprompted, give thanks to God for the consistent, faithful ministry of Threefold in his community. I, on your behalf, was warmly received and deeply thanked for the spiritual, material, medical and educational ministry that has made a difference in the lives of so many. Our ministry goes well beyond the local community of Los Medranos as people from all over Nicaragua come to Skylark or are visited by one of our teams. Christian leaders from all over Latin America have been blessed by a visit to

this place of peace and refreshment we know as Skylark. We face many challenges working in Nicaragua but we have seen consistently that lives are being transformed and the community impacted because people like you serve, by coming, by praying, by giving. The needs are many, the opportunities great, let's consider how we can continue to make a difference in Nicaragua by living and sharing the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ. Thanks for your partnership. Wayne