

One of the most poignant stories coming out of Nicaragua is the story of Andy Uyl, a FOTOCAN member now for five years and counting. Andy was first "voluntold" by Ken and Diane Speers who conspired with Andy's wife, Margot to go on a team project in February of 2015. Andy and his Watson's Home Hardware work mate, Ken, travelled together that first year with the other team members. Andy painted school classrooms and erected window screens for the boys' living quarters. He became quite enamoured with the whole experience and especially with two year-of-service ladies, who assisted in the kitchen of visitor's house, then known as Casa Madre Teresa or Mother Teresa House. By the end of the two week project and with permission from Margot, Andy had sponsored his first two pequeñas, Katherine and Ruth from NPH Nicaragua.



Andy and Margot added Carmen to the family. Andy again joined and led the second year of the farm team in 2018, still unable to have Margot join him.

After some social unrest, Andy returned to Nicaragua to prepare for the third and final year of the farm team commitment. It became evident that we could not produce the funds and manpower for this final year and had to extend the project another year. That did not stop Andy and others from returning to Nicaragua this past February. With a new godchild, Carlos, added in November, Andy stepped onto Nicaraguan soil again, this time with his beloved Margot at his side. During Andy's birthday celebration in country, Andy surprised Margot by adding Emily and Greysi to their growing NPH family. Margot had absolutely fallen in love with the two year-of-service girls, working at Casa Santa Teresa. In Margot's words, "We have learned that whenever the Lord closes one door, He opens another! Andy's disappointment (about the farm team postponement) caused me to rethink my feelings about making the trip. I'd always been of the mind that it was better for me to work and use that money to support godchildren rather than pay for another person to go. But after prayer and soul-searching I decided



that this would be the year to go. Besides, the godchildren were always asking when I would come! We also love Casa Padre Wasson and the special love we see blooming there. We feel it a privilege to be a small part of this wonderful place!"

Andy and Margot

The following spring, Andy and Margot vacationed in The Azores which is known for its amazing tile work. They visited a tile manufacturer and Andy caught sight of a beautiful portrait, in tile, of Mother Teresa. Andy immediately purchased it for the house in Nicaragua, which meant leaving behind personal belongings to carry home the heavy tiles.

In 2016, Andy returned to Nicaragua, Mother Teresa tiled art in tow, to paint and repair the soccer court. He came to know Oscar, who was using his drawing talents on the walls they painted. Another godchild joined the crew.

The tiled portrait of Mother Teresa was erected while Andy was not present and by then she had become a saint in the Catholic church, Saint Teresa of Calcutta. When Andy returned the following year, he was now concerned with farming practices at the homes' three farm areas. The gentlemen of the first "Canadian Farm Team" worked side by side with their "Three Amigos" who operated each of the farms to complement, assist and work to better the farming practices and pump some Canadian funds into the food production for the children. With Ruth becoming independent,

President's Message

What makes FOTOCAN and the NPH family different from all of those big charities that you see during commercial breaks? When you explain to friends and family why you support FOTOCAN, what do you tell them? Here's just my suggestion.

FOTOCAN doesn't just feed the hungry child. Yeah, we do that too. But more than that, we raise the child and support them right into adulthood. We help to launch them with a university degree, a trade skill or a business plan. We break the cycle of poverty that would otherwise lead to more abandoned children.

One example program is called Chicas Poderosas, or Powerful Girls. This program teaches young women to have greater self-esteem and confidence; make healthy and appropriate decisions regarding their relationships and life. In short, it encourages young women to pursue their potential instead of allowing themselves to be trapped by teen pregnancy and poverty that is expected in their machismo culture.

Donations are down across the globe. NPH has had some challenging budget cuts this year. Please help us to maintain these empowering programs. We know that each of you is doing what you can. Please help us to spread the message of success. Get a friend or relative to check out our website and see if they can match your support by sponsoring a child, a project, or a straight donation.

Many thanks for all that you do.
Andy Ross

Making a Difference,
one life at a time



International volunteering has always been something that I have wanted to do. Now that I am retired and family obligations are different, I realized my goal in February 2020 with FOTOCAN at the Nicaragua NPH home.

Upon arrival I read the sponsorship board and was touched by the need for sponsorship for a family of six who had arrived at the home recently. I selected the oldest girl of 10, not knowing what to expect of her or of me as her 'madrina'. Our first meeting was very stifled given the language barrier and her reluctance to relate to me. The outing to the beach town of San del Sur was the turning point. As we walked along the beach I searched for a way to relate to her. No knowing what to expect, we started skipping stones. After building some trust, I took her hand and ran into the waves with her. From this point onward she engaged with me and started to understand that I had her best interests at heart. As I encouraged her to skip a beautiful skipping stone that I had found, she shook her head indicating that she did not want to skip the stone and quietly put it in her knapsack as a keepsake. The next day at NPH she saw me across the yard and came running towards me and gave me a big hug. As the week progressed I received drawings of her and me and lots of interaction. It was quite unbelievable how a few days could build such a friendship. The last night we spent time with all of the members of her family who had been successfully sponsored over the two week period.

IMPORTANT:

Canada Revenue Agency had made a change to the requirements for Charitable Receipting.

RECEIPTS MUST NOW INCLUDE THE DONOR'S MIDDLE INITIAL

When you make your next donation please provide this information or email us at

info@fotocan.org

