

Rising from the ruins in Guatemala

By Norma C. Wilson

Part five of a five-part series

In January I traveled with Sharing the Dream in Guatemala’s “Fair Trade and Indigenous Cultures” tour with my husband and STDG Board member Jerry Wilson, film maker Charles Nauman, weaver Grete Bodogaard, environmentalist Dana Loseke and information technologist Ronda Harrity.

Boating back across the steaming volcano-surrounded lake, I sensed the tension the Maya must feel in this land of awesome beauty so prone to volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, floods and human violence.

In Panajachel we took a van toward Los Encuentros, through a deep valley terraced with gardens of cabbage, beans, tomatoes and corn and up the winding mountain road to the modern four-lane Pan American Highway. Watermelons and pottery were for sale beside the road.

We climbed back through five centuries of history, to the ruins of Iximché, a Kachiquel city founded in 1470 on a flat promontory surrounded by cliffs, a site easily defended against the enemy Quiché.

Melvin, our Kachiquel guide, described the stone pyramids of Sun and Moon. He said his traditional society was matriarchal, and the queen served as leader and judge. He showed us where palace dwellings once stood, altars, patios, ball courts, fragmentary remains of paintings, trenches used for drainage, and a stone cistern where rainwater was stored. At the edge of the ruin a ceremonial fire burned. Three Kachiquel people sang to welcome the New Year and ask the Creator’s help.

Iximché was an active city when Spanish conquistador Pedro de Alvarado arrived in 1524. The Kachiquel fled, some to Lake Atitlán, others to live in the nearby city of Tecpan, first Spanish capital of the Central American Empire. But Iximché remains a sacred place to the Maya.

By noon we were in Antigua, the second Spanish Colonial city, built in a valley surrounded by Volcáns Pitaya, Agua and Fuego. After lunch in the garden courtyard of Café Condesa on the



Sharing the Dream travelers at Iximché are, seated l. to r., Charles Nauman, Jerry Wilson, Norma Wilson, Ronda Harrity and Dana Loseke; standing Miguel Nesselhuf and Grete Bodogaard.

central plaza, we explored the city.

All that remains of the cathedral facing the plaza is the front; the rest lies in ruins – stone arches, crumbled columns, and underground, the spooky king’s chapel and crypt. Behind the city’s largest active church, Señora La Merced, lay the ruins of a convent, and on its patio the largest fountain in Central America, a fountain surrounded by angels in the shape of mermaids.

The magic faded as we reentered sprawling, smoky Guatemala City for the night, but reunited with Diana and Isabel, we enjoyed helping them make the guacamole and salsa we savored along with beans, fried plantains, pineapple and tortillas.

Sharing the Dream’s house in the suburb of Mixco is relatively safe, protected by gates, security guards, steel

doors, walls and razor wire. But UPAVIM, the cooperative we visited next morning is forced to operate with even greater security.

UPAVIM – the Spanish acronym translates “united for a better life” – was formed in 1988 by women living in shanties in a squatter camp on the edge of the city dump.

We met Barbara Lorraine, a nurse from the United States who helped women living in severe poverty get training to make crafts of traditional Guatemalan textiles, and helped them market their products.

The United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) helped the women form a board of directors. Sharing the Dream and other organizations helped fund their first building, and STDG has partnered

with other UPAVIM projects, including raising \$15,000 to help erect a second building. They now house and run a Montessori preschool and K-6 school, a library, a health clinic with resident doctor, a medical laboratory, a sewing workshop, craft workshops using recycled materials and beads, a bakery, a soy milk and cheese project, and a bakery.

The women named their squatter camp “Esperanza,” hope, and the name is truly appropriate. The organization can survive in this violent neighborhood only behind locked steel doors, barred windows and razor wire, but upstairs the big windows that overlook a neighborhood of sheet iron shanties also admit light and air. Classrooms are attractive and full of busy, smiling children.

(Courtesy photo)

RESIGN

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during his coaching career. We thank him very much for his dedicated years of service,” she said.

Culver is one of 14 South Dakota high school football coaches to record 200 or more wins in their career. In 1990, he was selected as Siouxland Coach of the Year by the Sioux City Journal. In 1993, he

served as the head coach of the South All-Star football team.

In 2004, Culver was a National Power of Influence Award Finalist as presented by the American Football Coaches Association and was also presented the Distinguished Service Award by the SDHSAA.

In 2009, he was inducted into the South Dakota Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

“Gary has a very distinguished career and he’s

brought a lot of pride to this school district,” Froke told the board Monday shortly before it accepted Culver’s request to resign as football coach.

“With great respect in recognition of his dedicated years of service to the district, we thank him,” Esping said. “He’s also established a very successful youth football program within the community that is phenomenal.”

School Board member Matt Lavin summed up the challenge that will face the

district as it begins its search for new coaches.

“Those last two resignations – that’s three decades of exceptional coaching for a district,” Lavin said, “and you can’t find many districts that are going to have coaches that have put in that much time, and have been involved with that many kids, and produced the level of excellence that the district has seen year after year from both of these individuals.”

OBITUARIES

Melva Jackson

Melva Jackson died Friday, March 8, 2013 in Sioux City, IA. Mass of the Christian Burial was held Tuesday, March 12, 2013 at St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Lake City, IA and burial was in St. Mary’s Cemetery in Lake City. Lampe Funeral Home in Lake City, IA is assisting the family.

Melva is survived by her children, Robert (Sharon) Jackson of Atlanta, GA, Theresa Jackson of Sioux City, IA, John (Lori) Jackson of Sioux City, IA, and Colleen (Michael) Catanach of Santa Fe, NM; 15 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren; daughter-in-law, Terri Jackson of Lake City, IA; twin sister, Margo (Ronald) Brockmeyer of Spirit Lake, IA; sisters, Carolyn Joss of WI and Joanne Shuck of AZ; and brother, Mark Happe of Spirit Lake, IA. She was preceded in death by her parents, Leo and Jessie Happe, husband, Robert, and son, Dan.

Melva June (Happe) Jackson was born on June 20, 1936 at Spirit Lake, IA to Leo and Jessie (Poyzer) Happe. She graduated from Spirit Lake High School in 1954 and the Nursing College in Mason City. In 1957 she married Robert Jackson at Spirit Lake, IA. For 50 years

Melva worked as a nurse in different locations. She worked at Spencer, IA, Vermillion, Green Cove Springs FL, and Lake City, IA. Melva was also a member of St. Theresa’s Sodality, SMCH Hospital Auxiliary, Meals on Wheels, and the Monday Club.

To leave a condolence for the family please visit www.lampefuneralhome.com.

Norman Miller

Norman Earl Miller, PhD, retired emeritus professor of chemistry at the University of South Dakota for 29 years, went to be with the Lord, March 9, 2013. He was born Aug. 14, 1931 in Tinley Park, IL, to Herman and Lillian Lietz Miller. He is survived by Pauline (Rozdilsky) Miller, his wife of 61 years; a brother, Sherman (wife Earleen); sons, Jason (Randi), Byron (Jodi), Britton (Jan), and Auston (Sue);

daughters, Rhoda Bibollet (Christian), Selah Cross (Earl) and Leah Miller (Hung Kang), and 33 grandchildren.

His heart was for original research in chemistry, during his six years at the Central Research Department of the DuPont Corporation and at the University of South Dakota. At USD, he inspired hundreds of students with his enthusiasm for chemistry and learning. He was involved in the University of South Dakota Faculty Senate for many years and an active member of the American Chemical Society for more than 50 years. He authored many research papers, some of which were presented in international forums, and holds several patents as an outgrowth of his research.

At 15 he became a committed Christian when he learned of Christ’s sacrificial atonement for him. He never

waivered from this commitment and had an insatiable desire to know God fully throughout his life. He served God humbly in every church Pauline and he attended, in many capacities. Dr. Miller’s life was characterized by Micah 6:8, “What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

He enjoyed sailing, gardening and woodworking throughout his life. Contributions in his memory can be made to Home Sweet Home Foster Care, 245 Lomont Dr, El Paso, TX 79912; Good Samaritan Society – White Acres, 7304 Good Samaritan Ct, El Paso, Texas 79912, and/or the Norman Miller Scholarship Fund, the Chemistry Department, the University of South Dakota.

www.plaintalk.net

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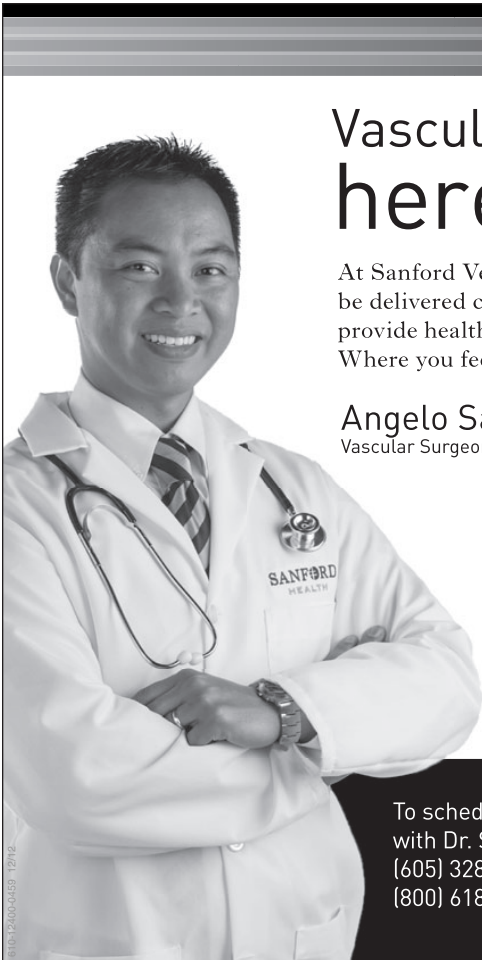
NOTICE

THE ANNUAL SPRING LOAD LIMITS will go into effect in the near future on Clay County roads. Limits will be enforced as posted. We ask for your cooperation at this critical time of the year. Studies show that roads lose over 60 % of their strength during the spring thaw. Research by the South Dakota D.O.T. claims road damage by one legally loaded truck causes as much damage as 9,600 cars. One truck with 20% overload causes as much damage as 19,200 cars.

You can be assured, we will not have the load restrictions in effect any longer than necessary to protect the large investment you have in your County Highway System.

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