



Walking in John Wesley's Footprints

BY MEL WEST



John Wesley taught that in order to live a productive, happy and satisfying life one should first, “Work hard and make as much as you can, being careful to harm no one.” Second, “Live thriftily and save all you can.” Third, “Give all you can to those less fortunate.”

Herbert and Doris Sauer of Colombia, now deceased, lived by that rule and I write to tell you the story of their amazing contributions to the work of the Kingdom of God on Earth. When Barbara and I moved back to Missouri in 1965, it was our good fortune to meet and become friends with the Sauers. I had started the Office of Creative Ministries (OCM) and we were developing humanitarian work across Missouri and around the globe.

After observing that work, the Sauers came to me and said, “We know how to make money, and you know how to spend it to get the most from it. We want you to be our mission broker. Tell us where the greatest needs are and how we can use our dollars to help.”

That began an amazing journey. I reported often to the Sauers concerning the opportunities for mission that OCM developed. Through their hard work, simplicity of living, and skills in investment, they were able to choose and support projects of their special interest such as rural health care and creative projects of all kinds. Locally they focused on the peace movement, nursing care, animal care, and civil rights. They were always interested in helping where the needs were the greatest and in ways that were simple and productive.

As I skim through old files, I see memos telling of their building a simple medical clinic for the Guayami Indians in Costa Rica, and a swinging foot bridge across the river at the foot of their mountain. They helped purchase a plot of land for a school in Guatemala so the children could raise garlic to help support the school. They supported four doctors of Rainbow Network in Nicaragua, and helped develop the TRAG (Transportation Agriculture) Project and sent those vehicles around the world. PET (Personal

Energy Transportation) Project received their early and continuous support. They sent sewing machines to Russia and Zambia and farm tools to Zaire. And that is only a very small account of the giving the Sauers did.

As time passed the Sauers began to focus on two mission projects – Rainbow Network and PET- feeling that both were a most effective response to basic human needs. In 2002 they provided the funds for the building of an entire village of 20 homes in Nicaragua, called “Colonia la Paz”, the Village of Peace. Three Sauer children, Charles Sauer, Dr. Lucy Sauer, and granddaughter Hannah, have been much involved in the mission work, and all have visited that village.

At the October 2013 board meeting of Rainbow Network, Dr. Lucy Sauer received a special appreciation award on the Sauer’s behalf. The report was also made that the residents of those 20 homes had totally repaid the cost of the houses, with that money going to build more houses. I have visited that village and it is a lovely tribute to those followers of the principles of Wesley.

My own life and the lives of many of the less fortunate in the world have been richly blessed by those dear friends who chose to follow the wisdom of John Wesley. Try it!

The Rainbow Network is an interfaith missions origination founded in 1995 by businessman and hotelier Keith Jaspers. Since its founding, The Rainbow Network has served millions of meals, educated thousands of children, built hundreds of houses and provided health care to the neediest in rural Nicaragua. The mission, “Sharing in the love of Jesus Christ by partnering with Nicaragua’s poorest people in healthcare, education, economic development, and housing” is lived out each day in the work of the Rainbow Network. The organization’s United States offices are based in Springfield, Missouri.

To learn more about The Rainbow Network visit www.RainbowNetwork.org, or call (417) 889-8088.