

THE HARTFORD CATHOLIC WORKER



ST. MARTIN DE PORRES HOUSE
ST. BRIGID HOUSE

What does God require but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly... Micah 6:8



Brian Kavanagh

God had made everything beautiful in its time, and has put eternity into our minds.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

FALL 2005



THE HARTFORD CATHOLIC WORKER

Established November 3, 1993

Volume 13 Number 4

The Hartford Catholic Worker is published bimonthly by the St. Martin De Porres Catholic Worker community. We are a lay community of Catholics, and like minded friends, living in the north end of Hartford, working and praying for an end to violence and poverty. We are not a "tax-exempt" agency. We do not accept government funding. Our ability to house the homeless, feed the hungry, and work with the children depends on contributions from our readers. We are not paid. We can be reached at: 18 Clark St.,

Hartford CT 06120; (860) 724-7066, doucot@sbcglobal.net and www.hartfordcatholicworker.org We are: Brian Kavanagh, Morlianna Evans, Sarah Karas, Angela Thomas, Jacqueline, Christopher, Micah and Ammon Allen-Doucot.

THE SCOOP FROM THOMAS COOP.

Thomas Cooper

(Thomas Cooper, 13, is a regular at our Saturday arts-n-crafts program.)

Dear Everybody at the Purple House,

Thanks for being like parents to me and supporting me (especially Jackie and Chris) all these years. I really want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. When I was down in the dumps you were always there no matter the situation you were right by my side, supporting me and protecting me and encouraging me to get through it. You are my true heroes and guardian angels.

I never had to think that you were going to let me down. You always came through for me and I appreciate it. You are my true friends.

To the Doucot bro's: Even if we have our differences you are like brothers 2 me. You are so many things: fun to be around; smart; intelligent; respectful; and my true best friends and I love u like brothers with all my heart.

To Brian, Mo, Sarah, Angela:

Sarah- Even if your food is nasty I still love u.

Brian- If when your mean, I still love u.

Morlianna- You are the sister I never had but I have always thought that you were like a sis. to me.

Angela- I want you to be my friend.Ω



St. Martin's Calendar

- ✦ Please join us on **Tuesday, October 5, November 2 and December 6 at 7:30 PM** for the celebration of Mass at St. Brigid House, 18 Clark St., Hartford. Refreshments and conversation follow Mass.
- 🌐 **Sunday, October 23, 7PM:** *Stop the Genocide: Crisis in Darfur* at the Hartford Stage, sponsored by the The Jewish community Relations Council. For more info. contact Betsy Richards 231-6435
- ☺ **Calling All Elves!** Our annual Christmas Party for the neighborhood kids will be on **Saturday, December 17 from noon-three**. To volunteer please call us at 724-7066.
- 🌐 Our vigil for an end to war continues on **Friday's from 11:30-12:30** outside the Federal Building on Main St. in Hartford. Please bring a sign and join our call for an end to the American military occupation of Iraq.

RETURN TO NICARAGUA

Clare Kobasa

Revisiting a place that had a strong impact the first time around can be a risky move. Fortunately, going back to Nicaragua only served to increase my love for the country and my interest in the people. Last summer I traveled to León, Nicaragua with a small agriculture delegation, and spent most of the trip wide eyed with excitement. This summer I traveled with a much larger group from the Educational Center for the Arts, the arts high school that I attend in the afternoons. With some of the initial amazement gone, I was able to see something new in the places I visited and the work I did.

The first full day there, the group climbed a volcano, Cerro Negro, and played on the beach in Poneloya. It was a nice, sunny beginning to a week that would also be about working. The visual artists in the group, myself included, spent the week restoring a mural in the Casa Cultural, the cultural center in León. It had been painted by the artist Daniel Pulido with a group of children and was a celebration of the work of an indigenous poet. Over the week, the badly faded mural was transformed into a explosion of color. In restoring it, the work became something of our own creation. With the mornings satisfyingly full of art, the afternoons were left open for exploring and discovery.

We visited the Cathedral in León, which is the largest in all of Central America. From the bell tower on the roof, León looks green and tree covered. You can see the corrugated metal that covers most of the houses and the yellow-peach-red shades of most of the buildings. Driving anywhere in Nicaragua, it is hard not to notice the ornate metal grills that cover doors and windows. Though obviously

not meant specifically for decorative purposes, they turn a protection into an art.

Traveling in a large group made me more constantly aware of being noticed. We were the gringos, usually treated with a sort of gentle curiosity, but never, amazingly, with any hostility. The hospitality of the people I met continues to impress me. I was able to stay with the same family that I lived with last time, and I felt so comfortable and at home with




them. Kids are numerous in the neighborhood where we stayed, and my family had three: two boys and a girl. I played hide and seek, got my fingernails painted, and watched cartoons in Spanish. The more numerous delegation of Americans also meant that more families in the neighborhood were hosting visitors. The party that we had on the last night involved so many people that it was held out in the street. It seemed somehow appropriate that most of us were dancing too hard to even notice that tremor that shook León, an effect of an earthquake that occurred off shore.

One night, in the midst of one of the small rainstorms that sprinkled throughout the trip, we gathered most of the neighborhood kids and took them to get Eskimo ice cream at one of the little stores that dotted the neighborhood. It amazed me at how happy we were able to make the kids for practically no money at all. Sometimes the energy on the trip seemed boundless; sometimes no one wanted to do anything more than go home and crash into

bed. We got used to seeing how many people we could fit into the van, and for how many meals we could possibly eat beans and rice. I was occasionally daring, eating boa constrictor and iguana, but still content with my Fanta Roja, an indescribable red soda. I was happy to be there, and I learned something more about creating a place for myself in a country away from home.

Perhaps most interesting of all, I was able to observe others' initial reactions to a history and way of thinking that I had grown up with. One particularly notable afternoon, we jammed into the van once again for the drive slightly out of town to El Fortin. The fort, on a hill overlooking the city, was the last-stop jail for many Sandanistas captured between 1978-9. There is a beautiful view from the top, but standing below and listening

to Eduardo's description of the place and what occurred there, the mood quickly changed. It was a familiar story, of oppression under the Somozas supported by the United States government, of a Sandanista victory that was eventually toppled with U. S. pressure and aid to the contras, and of a political system that even today bows to the demands of its all-powerful northern neighbor.

As much as we ever read or hear, nothing substitutes for being in the place to actually understand the magnitude of what happened. The car ride home was an active discussion, everyone eager to do something to change the situation, and make a positive, sustainable difference to counteract the pain that had been, and continues to be, caused. Hearing everyone so ready to take action made me hopeful. It's a matter of awareness, of finding the people who are willing to take action and showing them what's really going on. For me, traveling makes all sorts of abstract ideas and history into reality, and that is an important first step toward taking action. 

WILL HE FLY?

Christopher Allen - Doucot

The caterpillar for the Definite-marked Tussock Moth (*Orgyia definita*) is simply exquisite in it's beauty. I was sitting on the back deck down at camp Ahimsa talking with the man who taught me how to swing a hammer when I first encountered this furry little yellow fellow. The Tussock Moth caterpillar is only as thick and long as the plastic encased tip of your shoelace, the aglet. It is the color of an iridescent dandelion, with four camel-like humps, two black lashes on it's head, a slender lash on it's butt and dozens of yellow and white soft spikes of lashes all over-think "punk rock hair". Magnified, one could imagine this bug crawling onto the page of a Dr. Seuss book. While I marveled at it's elegance I contemplated how it was pregnant with the potential for even greater beauty after emerging from it's chrysalis.

Summer is a time of intense involvement with the neighborhood kids for the members of our community that run our summer camp. For five weeks we had groups of 7-12 kids down in Voluntown. The first time at Camp Ahimsa is always a magical experience for these kids. Imagine going from our neighborhood where the night sky is never dark and always filled with the wail of sirens and the screech of tires amidst the puncture of gunshots to a forest night which is illuminated by the natural incandescence of the moon, never before seen stars and intermittent fireflies and filled with a symphony of bugs chicking, tweeking and chirping the night away. This is as close to non drug induced psychedelic experience one could have. It is a thrill to see.

This summer little Juan spent just about every moment with us. With an outrageous giggle and a constant smile

having Juan in a room can have the same effect as filling the room with laughing gas. We've known Juan, 7, for about two years now. Last summer he struck up a friendship with Brian when he showed up at Brigid House every morning in his boxer



shorts holding a grocery bag with a spare t-shirt inquiring if it was his turn to go to camp. Juan lives in the same building as the family I wrote about in the last issue of this newsletter. He lives there in a two bedroom apartment with his mother, uncle, little brother and 19 year old sister. He sleeps on a couch in the living room. Juan is slight in stature and his teeth are a bit rotted. He is well loved at home, but not well cared for. His clothes often reek of urine and he is usually in need of a good bath. For a while this absence of hygiene was the result of not having electricity or running water in the apartment. His mom is losing a struggle with a heroin addiction, his uncle deals drugs without compunction and his sister, his primary caregiver, has Leukemia.

This past Holy Saturday Juan arrived for our Saturday program at 9, a full hour

early. After sending him upstairs to brush his teeth he sat down, chuckled, and ate a bowl of Kellogg's Corn Pops. We soon learned from another of our young friends that at 5 that morning, as Juan slept on the couch that his mom is frequently passed out on, the police were in the hallway outside preparing to kick in the door. Moments later Juan was awakened by the sound of hinges popping, wood cracking and pumped up cops shouting. As he rubbed his eyes he saw his sister taken away in handcuffs along with an inventory of drugs and ammunition. Neighbors overheard the police reason among themselves that with all her "twitching and flipping" it wasn't worth their effort to also remove Juan's mom. The drug dealing uncle was not at home.

With his mother's approval we took Juan in for a while until his sister, who was not able to post bond, was released.

With camp Juan again moved in with us, this time down in Voluntown. He's been having a great summer of fishing and swimming. Juan has a heck of an appetite and over the summer he's been able to put a little meat on his bones. Today, with regret, I brought Juan home. We were prepared to keep him for the rest of the summer and we want to offer to take him in open-ended but his sister wanted him back. The state Dept. of Children and Families has been by our place and has called asking about his home life. We told the DCF worker that if the state decides to remove him from the home we want to be his foster family.

Halfway through summer Greg, 19, re-entered our life. Ten years ago when we

first met Greg he too lived in this infamous building that houses Juan. Also like Juan, everybody who meets Greg loves him for his affability. Greg is also the progeny of addicted and tortured souls.

Greg's grandmother was an ill-tempered alcoholic who lived next to Brigid House for years. In one breath she would curse at us and the next ask us for a bag of food. His aunt Barbara was one of the first people we met when we began our ministry. She would appear at our doorstep three times a week looking for food; on Monday she was Betty, Wednesday: Barbara and Friday: Brenda. After we caught on that Betty/Barbara/Brenda was one in the same she changed her tune and kept telling us that she was pregnant. After a 2 year pregnancy that didn't result in a child we sarcastically asked her if she had the gestation period of an elephant.

Barbara's common law husband, Mark, was schizophrenic and addicted to heroin. Mark was also very lovable. He was gentle and always scrapping for odd jobs in the neighborhood. In many ways remembering Mark I am given pause to consider what the future holds for Juan and Greg. A few years ago I was pistol whipped while preventing Mark from being shot by his drug dealer; he was subsequently murdered a couple of years later.

Greg's mom, like nearly everyone else in the family, has a terrible addiction to alcohol. During those rare moments when she is sober Ernestine is soft spoken and apologetic. Otherwise, she is acid tongued verbally assaulting anyone in earshot.

As a nine year old boy Greg was scandalously scrawny; as a nineteen year old man he can hide behind a telephone pole. Greg is always looking to please the people he's with and so two years ago Greg was easily coaxed by his cousin into giving him a bike ride to his former employer's

home in South Windsor. Once there his cousin trashed the man's home in retribution for having humiliating him by firing him before friends and family. With too little



Brian Kavanagh

prodding, Greg joined in. Of course they were arrested. The cousin is serving a 5 year sentence. Greg spent two years out of state in a juvenile facility. When he re-entered our life he had been missing court dates and was being hunted by the police. We tried to convince him to turn himself in to avoid a stiffer sentence and a possible confrontation with agitated cops. He continually declined and eventually he was picked up. He spent a couple of nights in lock up and given a new court date while he remained confined to his mother's apartment under electric monitoring. His electronic monitoring was eventually discontinued when during a phone call to Greg the folks at court overheard the

cacophony in the background and realized confining Greg to this home was cruel and unusual punishment.

After spending a couple of weeks with us at Camp Ahimsa Greg informed me that he had a court date and needed a ride. Turns out the date was a sentencing hearing. When Greg's case was called the social worker from the court and his court appointed attorney were prepared for the worst- rightly so. The prosecutor referred to comments made by Greg while in lockup where he allegedly said that "[jail is not a bad place to be]". In response the prosecutor argued for a long sentence so that Greg could be taught that jail is not a good place. I had to respond. I said to the judge and the prosecutor that if they had walked a block in Greg's shoes they too might prefer prison. I explained to the judge that we had know Greg since he was a little boy, that he had been abused by alcohol since his moment of conception. As a result Greg has a low I.Q., impaired judgment abilities and a constellation of inappropriate behaviors. Greg also has a major mental illness. This kid so clearly belongs in the mental health system and not the Correctional system that I made a dramatic, and in hindsight perhaps a misguided, move. I offered to the judge that contingent upon the approval of the rest of my community Greg could live at the Catholic Worker. We agreed to make sure Greg kept his appointments for counseling and probation and I would become his representative payee for his Social Security disability benefits. The judge agreed, over the protestations of the prosecutor, to suspend a three year sentence for Greg contingent upon his successfully living with us.

For a few weeks things went relatively well as Greg struggled with structure that he never before had outside of prison.

(PLEASE SEE FLY, P.6)

FLY, CONT.

There were stupid aggravations like his calling 1-900 phone sex services, coming in past curfew and melodramatically comparing life with us to hanging himself from the Gold Building. This last comment planted the seed in my mind that Greg knew he wasn't going to make it here. He was right.

After forgetting his medicines one day his mental status quickly decompensated and chased Ammon.

Ammon was not harmed, though

he was rightly freaked out. We told Greg that he could no longer stay with us. After he apologized to, and was forgiven by, Ammon he begged to be given another chance. We had to stick with our decision. We've tried to get him admitted to a psychiatric hospital without success. It is unlikely he could get, or keep, a bed in a group home, he cannot come back here, and I doubt he can manage his own apartment and so it seems there is no room in our society for Greg.

Greg has kept his appointments with his probation officer, who is aware that he is no longer living here and for now has

refrained from "violating him"- which would mean a 3 year trip to prison. Billions for war but no space in an appropriate facility for Greg- I just want to scream.

Greg never had a chance in this society. Without a loving, and capable, family who will take care of Greg? He cannot take care of himself and he does not belong in prison. To hide, to escape, to ease the



pain of his very existence Greg smokes a lot of marijuana. When his urine is next tested by probation it will be dirty and he will go to prison.

Spending time with Greg and Juan this summer has been like looking back and forth in time. I remember Greg when he was just a little boy like Juan- not innocent- these guys have seen too much to be innocent- but not yet defeated. I think in some ways Greg knows that this society has him beat. Looking at Juan I don't want to see Greg but I sometimes do and want to cry. Looking at Greg I can't help but see his "uncle" Mark. I fear that he too sees

Mark in the mirror. Greg and Juan are the raw materials of our society; they are the natural resources of the ascending industries of our society. Their lives and circumstances keep military recruiters, prison builders, corrections, probation and police officers, mental health workers, and state social workers very busy. In a truly free society these kids wouldn't be sure

bets for prison, the morgue or the military. In a compassionate society seeing the reflection of Greg in Juan would not give me a foreboding

shudder but warm reassurance that he will be nurtured and cared for in a tender and loving setting regardless of his mental status, level of intelligence or academic performance.

I found a photograph of what the caterpillar for the Tussock Moth becomes as an adult moth. With such youthful beauty I was sure that the moth would be gorgeous; it's not. The adult Tussock Moth is a homely brown moth- you can probably find one fluttering around your porch light. Fluttering- ahh yes, this moth may have lost the beauty of it's youth but now it is free to fly.

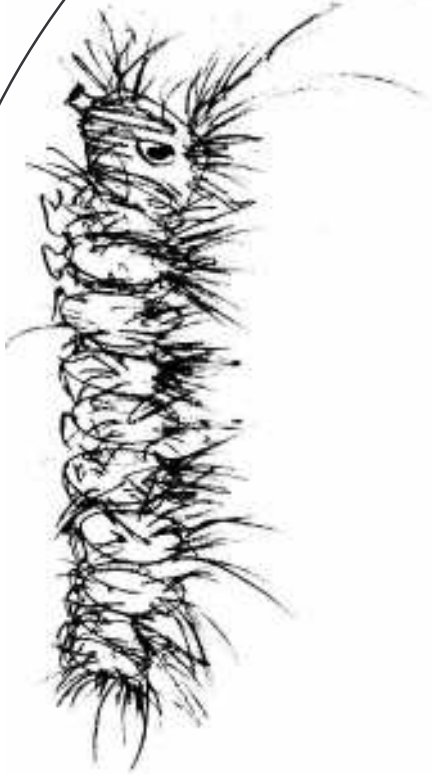
I hope Juan has a chance to fly.Ω



ST. MARTIN'S WISH LIST

- 🎵 Volunteers on Monday and Wednesday, afternoons from 2:30-5:00. Responsibilities include supervising grade-school children, reading and being read to, and helping with simple homework.
- 😊 Spaghetti sauce, tuna fish, peanut butter, jelly, and cereal for our food pantry.
- 😊 Fresh fruit for our after-school program.
- 🎵 Prayers for peace.
- 🙏 Your continued financial support.
- 👐 Thank-you

BROWN AND AGILE CHILD



Jackie Allen

Pablo Neruda

Brown and agile child,
the sun which forms the
fruit
And ripens the grain and
twists the seaweed
Has made your happy
body and your luminous
eyes
And given your mouth the
smile of water.



Jackie Allen

A black and anguished sun
is entangled in the twigs
Of your black mane when
you hold out your arms.
You play in the sun as in a tidal river
And it leaves two dark pools in your eyes.

Brown and agile child, nothing draws me to you,
Everything pulls away from me here in the noon.
You are the delirious youth of bee,
The drunkenness of the wave, the power of the heat.

My somber heart seeks you always
I love your happy body, your rich, soft voice.
Dusky butterfly, sweet and sure
Like the wheatfield, the sun, the poppy, and the water.

*It is eternity now. I am in the midst of it. It is about me in the sunshine; I am in it, as the butterfly in the light-laden aire.
Nothing has to come; it is now. Now is eternity; now is the immortal life.*

Richard Jefferies

The Story of My Heart, 1883

I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man.

Chuang-tzu

On Leveling All Things, 3rd century B.C.E.

ON BEING A CATHOLIC WORKER:

ONE HUNDRED SUGGESTIONS (MORE OR LESS)

Bill Wylie-Kellenmann

(Bill is Methodist minister and a member of the Detroit Catholic Worker community)

Take the sermon on the mount very seriously. Don't take yourself too seriously.

Convene the kingdom of God over soup. Compell them to come in. Ask how far the line goes back.

Embrace holy mother poverty. Try and figure out where your allowance went last month. Consider vigiling in the hospital emergency room to be an intercession.

Pray in places where it is forbidden. Draw a line. Stand on it. Get arrested. Do jail time as a monastic retreat or at least a vacation.

Reside in the margins. Receive mail for guests who left years ago. Suffer thievery. Persevere in non-sequitur conversation. Bless those who curse you, including guests.

Clarify your thoughts. Be stunned at the phone bill. Always carry a spare bulb with the slide show projector. Honor conscience, in yourself and others. Swing the mop like a flashy dance partner. Be skeptical of forms, bureaucracies, institutions, and people who put you on hold. Refuse to be called a saint.

Cry out for the unborn.

Keep an Advent journal and share it with your friends. Create a tradition, and nourish it. Plot the demise of small rodents. Try writing an Easy Essay. Find out it's harder than you think.

Learn to say you're not on the house today. Think about installing a shower.

Agonize over your church. Rage against patriarchy. Never prepare a pre-sentencing statement. Take your chances on the Holy Spirit. Hold small children on your lap.

Find love a harsh and dreadful thing. Find love. Bless the food in the making. Be

wedding. Walk the way of the cross through the streets of your city. Study the faces of men down and out. Curse the filthy, rotten system. Marvel at the survival skills of your guests.

Weep quietly in your room when necessary. Break bread and pass a cup.

Stay in touch. Sweat. Beg. Track down a foul smell. (look behind the couch)

Be a go-giver. Loan your car to excess. Call yourself a personalist. Clean wounds. Figure out who keeps turning up the heat. Scrounge for pampers in a crisis. Practice



civil when answering the phone at 3 A.M. (you may swear if it rings again immediately.)

Devise now recipes for zucchini. Discern the times, take time, give time, do time, add thyme. There's no such thing as too much garlic, but take it easy on the red pepper.

Dress (tastefully) from the free box. Build a new society in the shell of the old. Be counted a laughingstock. Try and figure out who is pilfering toilet paper. Find a new place to hide on your day off. Read Gandhi in jail.

After a while, throw away the i.o.u.'s. Reach your limit and put a guest out. Argue over where the limits are. Keep a stash of banner in the basement. Don't let the principalities get you down.

Whip up a carrot cake for someone's

nonviolence.

Tipple the communion wine only on rare occasion.

Learn to juggle. Refuse to keep records to get government money. Refuse government money. Hell, refuse to pay taxes.

Argue economics over coffee. Argue over economics and coffee. Pray more or less faithfully. Do things for the love of Christ. Have a painting party and serve burritos.

Put a candle in a jar. Take it to a missile factory. Wait for people to come and go.

Negotiate a household truce. Scrub pots as an exercise in contemplation. Visit prisoners. Be one. Buy a farm.

Layout the paper with a flair for graphics. Mark anniversaries.

Celebrate the incarnation. Ω

NOTES, CONT.

time really means full time- girlfriend can work. She has been organizing and sorting and preparing the tutoring space and keeping all the flowers and shrubs alive.

We also send thanks out to Chris' first track coach and old friend Pete Dillon and his employer Timberland Shoes for a donation of about 500 pairs of brand new shoes. All our kids are well shod in new "Tim's" for school. Well, almost all the kids- Dwight and Anthony have size 13 feet!!! We'll put in a special request for them.

There has been a lot of moving around going here at the Green and Purple Houses. Micah moved to a room on the third floor of St. Martin House to make room in the bunk bed for little Jose who has been spending many nights, and every day, with us this summer.

Dan, our ACORN man, is moving on soon to organize communities elsewhere. Dan- we wish you well. We've taken in a new guest. She is a young woman for Togo, a small country in western Africa. G. is very quiet and hard working. We're glad to have her with us. She is staying in the room formerly warmed by Nicola and her baby Madison. We said good-bye to our friends in July. Sadly, their happy departure to a new apartment in New Britain was marred by the news that Madison's dad had been the victim of one of Hartford's many shootings this summer. We mourn the loss of another young man who never made it to his thirtieth birthday.

Chris and Micah spoke in Brooklyn this summer at the Children's Rights Summer Institute sponsored by the Third Millennium Foundation's International Center for Tolerance Education. Chris has also been doing a lot of speaking gigs about Iraq and Darfur. He recently spoke to a full house at the Emmanuel Synagogue in West Hartford on the Jewish holy day of Tisha B'av. This holy day commemorates the de-



struction of Jerusalem graphically described by Jeremiah in the Book of Lamentations. After his presentation the audience wrote over 200 letters to Congress about the Genocide in Darfur. After the genocide in Rwanda a reporter asked the late Paul Simon, US senator from Illinois, why Congress didn't act to stop the genocide. Sen. Simon said that he and his colleagues didn't think that the American people cared. When the reporter pressed him on what it would have taken for Congress to act he responded: "If every member of the House of Representatives and Senate had received 100 letters from people back home saying we have to do something

about Rwanda, when the crisis was first developing then I think the response would have been different"

Fall is coming- though that's been tough to wrap my mind around with the seemingly 90% humidity we've had. Tony Pinto, God bless him, came by today with his wood splitter to help finish splitting our wood. Chris was unable to get to it with the ax because his shoulder has been hurtin'. We send out thanks to Dr. O'Brien yet again for taking care of Chris. (He's such a baby, he made me come with him to hold his hand while the doctor gave him a cortisone shot.) We hope we've got enough wood to get us through what is expected to be a colder than average winter.

The harvest from Holcomb Farm has been wonderful this summer- especially the watermelon. We send thanks to the farmers in Granby and to Sam S. for his donation of a share in Holcomb Farm.

We just heard the good news that our beloved George Rishmawi will be coming in early October and staying until Christmas. If anyone wants him to bring his family's Olive wood products to a craft fair please give us a call.

Well folks I'll finish here so Chris can get this to the printer. As always, summer is a rather dry time for donations of both food and money. Two weeks ago our faithful blue pickup finally gave up. We bought a smaller, more reliable and fuel efficient pickup for our furniture and food ministries but we now have 2 loan payments for our vehicles. There are also a lot of mouths to feed around here these days. If you can spare it- we are most grateful for your support.

Hey, did I mention that Fall is coming?Ω

Notes from De Porres House

Jackie Allen

I am always the last one to hand in my contribution to the newsletter. This time, I am so late that it was supposed to be at the printer's today. Chris told me I can't leave for Voluntown and the ALC retreat until I hand it in. Needless to say, I am feeling pretty short on both energy and inspiration.

It's hard to think of Fall when it's so hot and humid. Even though Micah and Ammon have already started school (before Labor Day!), I am still in summer mode. I keep thinking of running away to Misquamicut beach, or come-swim-a-cut as Jose likes to say. Today I finished unpacking all my 5 bags from camp. Anything to put off writing the all informative "house article"!

So 5 weeks of Summer camp are over. Chris and Angela pitched in for a week or so a piece, but Sarah and I did the whole white knuckle 5 weeks. Just cooking and cleaning for that many kids is daunting; during week 5 we had 11 puberty age boys. We did our best to offer the H.I.P. (Help Increase the Peace) program for 3 of those weeks with the help of Danny and Harold from the Voluntown Peace Trust. We always try to infuse our swimming and campfire time with some conflict resolution work. Sometimes it's like pulling teeth. There

has been such an escalation in the violence in the neighborhood and world in general that it's hard not to feel like it is a futile attempt at change. Just yesterday 4 young men with guns piled out of an



overturned stolen S.U.V. that had slammed into a neighbor's house in a failed murder attempt. Last week this same house was sprayed with automatic gunfire in the middle of the afternoon. Maybe all we can do is plant seeds and hope for growth.

We are grateful to Octo, Nancy, Jory, and Tony from the Open Door Community of Atlanta, for strengthening

the ranks of peacekeepers in Voluntown this summer. There are plenty of funny stories, and some not so funny ones, from camp this year. We all busted up when big Anthony shooed away a spider saying "go away father long legs, I don't like you" and when he said to the sunfish Jose caught "what's the matter Mr. Fish- hook got your tongue?" We are thankful to the Holy Spirit for everyone's safe return to Hartford. We thank God for the generosity of the good people of St. Peter Claver, St. Helena, St. Timothy's and St. James Episcopal parishes, all of West Hartford, and of Corpus Christi parish in Wethersfield. Their donations of food and money make Camp Ahimsa possible. Thanks also to Bill the Bike Guy and his wife Pat the Bike Babe for the use of their minivan all Summer! You guys all are great!

Sarah and I had just finished cleaning and packing in Voluntown when at least 100 backpacks arrived for the neighborhood kids. Angela to the rescue! Angela is our newest Catholic Worker. She moved in during May to be closer to her Americorps teaching position. When her term ended in August she decided to join the Worker full time. When it comes to Angela full

(SEE NOTES P.9)

18 Clark St.
Hartford, CT 06120
(860) 724-7066

Place Label Here, Please