



**U.S.-El Salvador
Sister Cities**

MASCP

Madison Arcatao Sister City Project

U.S.-El Salvador Sister Cities

Winter 2015



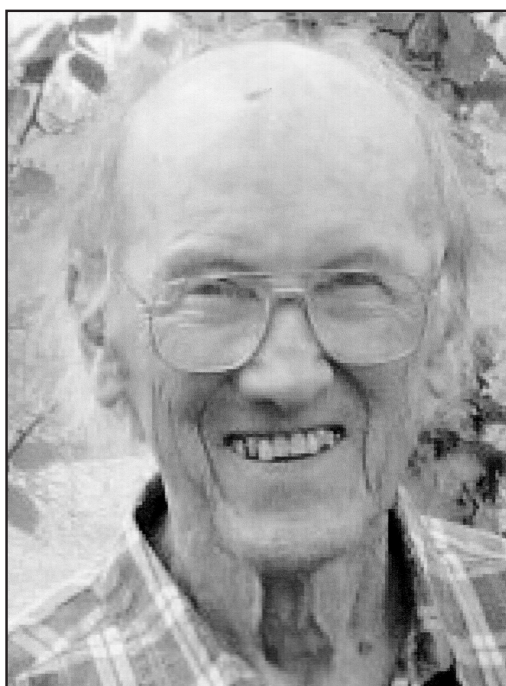
**Our Partner:
CRIPDES**

Art Lloyd ¡Presente!

We are remembering with great affection Reverend Art Lloyd who died at age 87 on August 4, 2015. In the 1970's and 80's, Art was an inspiring and passionate leader in the formation of numerous local organizations focused on U.S.-Latin American issues including Community Action on Latin America (CALA), Wisconsin Interfaith Committee on Central America (WICOCA), the Wisconsin sanctuary movement for Guatemalan and Salvadoran refugees, MASCP and the national Salvadoran sistering organization, USESSC.

These organizations were a kind of "missionary in reverse," Art would explain "where the object is to educate the U.S. and develop a constituency that would support changes in U.S. policies." Through WICOCA, Art and others led information-gathering delegations to El Salvador and Nicaragua, promoted public education events throughout the state, and pressured local, state, and national politicians to adopt more humane policies toward Central America.

Art was passionate about peace, justice, and human wellbeing, particularly the rights of those on



Art Lloyd

the margins. Throughout the years he was active in the Madison Area Peace Coalition, the Wisconsin Interfaith Coalition for Central America, Basic Choices Inc., the Apprentice Organizers Project, and St. Dunstan's Church Outreach Committee; and he helped found the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice. He also served as chair of the City of Madison Ethics Board.

Art and his wife, Sue, took leadership roles in the formation of Village Co-Housing Community where Sue currently lives. Sue is an active member of MASCP to this day.

Art was a warm, intelligent, funny and passionate person and will be sorely missed as our friend

and as our partner in the struggle to make a better world.

Donations in Art's memory can be made to:

The Episcopal Network for Economic Justice, c/o Michael Maloney, 5829 Wyatt Ave, Cincinnati, OH, 45213; **OR** to St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, 6205 University Ave, Madison WI 53705, **OR** to the charity of your choice.

Miguel Angel Mejia—a 2015 MASCP Scholarship recipient

Miguel is a freshman studying law at the University of El Salvador in San Salvador. He always knew there were two roads for him to take: to emigrate or to study. He much preferred the road to studying, and this motivated him to enroll in the University.

Because he knows there are many things in El Salvador that should be changed, Miguel thinks we should start with the choices each person makes as an individual. "The best weapon a person can have is their ideas," he says. The best way he knows to develop his own ideas is

through studying, which has been largely supported by his Desarrollo Humano Popular (DHP) scholarship from Arcatao's sistering relationship with Madison.

When asked what he has been doing in Arcatao, Miguel said he has been helping in the community store and collecting signatures to hold the mining referendum.

"My motivation comes from wanting to graduate from the University of El Salvador and become a distinguished lawyer with high principles and values.



Miguel Angel Mejia,
scholarship student

In this way I can serve my country and Arcatao, my hometown."



Like us on Facebook to keep up with our news: facebook.com/madisonarcatao

MASCP is pilot for Historical Documentation Project

submitted by Prof. Molly Todd

In October 2014, Sister Cities launched a Historical Documentation Project. Coordinated by UW graduate and professor of Latin American history, Molly Todd, this project set an ambitious long-term plan:

- to collect, organize and digitize documentation about the U.S.-El Salvador sistering network
- to record oral histories of the founders of sister cities, the earliest leaders from each of the paired communities, and those who have participated over the years
- to find appropriate permanent homes for the original materials, and launching a digital archive to make the materials more widely available

This is a quick update to let you know where things stand.

MASCP Pilot: Over the past year, the Madison/Arcatao Sister City Project has served as a pilot for this project. I (Molly) spent several weeks working with MASCP members and their documents. We've made great progress with the archival materials by collecting, reviewing, organizing, and roughly indexing around 25 boxes of material. In addition, I have digitized documents through the Salvadoran 1994 elections; converted several VHS tapes to digital format (including Mary Kay Baum's footage from the May 1986 delegation, when the Madison/Arcatao connection was formalized); and recorded and transcribed interviews with eight founders and long-term members. At this point, we have about 15,000 images (about 200 GB of memory); the majority relates specifically

to MASCP's activities (as well as its Madison-based precursor organizations), but there is also a great deal of information on the emergence of the national network, the formation of the National Center, and the evolution of the network over time.

I am happy to report that the Wisconsin State Historical Society (WHS) has agreed to adopt the MASCP archive into their collection. The WHS is nationally known as a repository for materials relating to social justice and peace movements, and because Madison played a key role in the emergence and evolution of the U.S.-El Salvador sistering network, it is a perfect home for not only the MASCP materials but also the national sistering materials. The WHS is planning to build a new storage facility; once that is complete, they will have the capacity to accept our donation and process it for public use.

I will be introducing Wisconsin—and Madison in particular—into the academic literature on “citizen diplomacy” and transnational human rights movement in an article in the *Journal of Civil and Human Rights*. It is my understanding that the article will appear in Vol. 2, Issue 2 (December 2016). If you can't wait that long to read about your history, let me know and I will share a preview of that article. (mollynmntodd@gmail.com)

Next steps for the MASCP project relate to the upcoming 30th anniversary. At the request of the Core Group, from the archival materials I have culled a list of nearly 500 people who were somehow linked to MASCP between the 1980s and mid-1990s. I understand that we will begin reaching out to these folks to invite them to reconnect for the 30th anniversary events in 2016–17 in Wisconsin and in El Salvador.

MASCP supports the *Cooperativa de Bordado* in Arcatao

If you have ever shopped at the Fair Trade Holiday Festival in early December, you've seen the beautiful embroidered goods at the MASCP table. The women in the *Cooperativa de Bordado* in Arcatao sew and embroider all the aprons, T-shirts, napkins, dresses, pillows and wall hangings that you see there. Eight women are in the co-op. They range in age from 20 to 50 years old and they learned this unique type of embroidery as small children from their mothers and grandmothers or from other women in the co-op. They have been sewing together under the same trees since before the war.

The embroidery they all do is very unusual and extremely sturdy. The technique is called *colcha* (“blanket” in Spanish) and originally came to this part of the world from Spain during colonial times. One story says that when a blanket was torn, women would fix the spot with a fancy design using this very durable embroidery technique. It originally had a Portuguese name but now it is called simply *colcha*. Today, *colcha* embroidery is not well known and those who do it as a hobby in New Mexico make extremely complicated and decorative pieces. For the women of Arcatao, it is their traditional fabric decoration and now a way to generate income for their families.

Eva Nolasco Hercules (third from left) explained how the cooperative works. She did not choose to be the

leader of the co-op but the other members elected her so she is fulfilling that role. When they receive an order from MASCP, Eva buys the fabric and thread they need in Calatenango City about 50 miles away. She divides up the work among all the members. Each member makes her own designs almost always from traditional motifs of animals and plants.

The cooperative has a little concrete block building with a large table where they cut the fabric and keep their supplies. It does not have running water or a bathroom but it is a convenient space. When they have an order, the women sew together weekday afternoons on the porch of the little co-op building where it is cooler and the light is better. Their children stop by after school and a baby is often tucked into a hammock among the women. Some also work at home. Eva sets the prices to compensate the group fairly for the materials and their labor and then the profits are distributed based on what each woman completes. The money each woman makes allows her to buy things they cannot grow in Arcatao—such as sugar and coffee.

Besides the \$1500/yr worth of embroidery that MASCP orders, they also sell to two or three international delegations who come to town each year and to visitors during their Patron Saint festivals in August and February.



Arcatao votes “NO” on the mining referendum

After months of prep-work, the people of the municipality of Arcatao went to the polls on November 8th to vote “yes” or “no” on allowing mining in their region. Over one thousand people voted “no.” There were three “yes” votes and one null, meaning over 99.9% of voters voted against allowing mining exploration and exploitation in their municipality. With a 53% voter turnout (including people who have immigrated to the U.S. as eligible voters, so realistically the turnout is much higher), Arcatao is an example of political participation we can all learn from.

Arcatao is the 4th municipality in El Salvador to pass a resolution against mining in their community. It took months and years of community organizing and learning from communities where mining had existed. Now, every man, woman and child in Arcatao can tell you what probable consequences of large scale gold mining would be—violence, community division, destruction of natural resources and grossly polluted rivers and streams. In San Sebastian thirty-two tons of gold were extracted from the hills by the U.S. based Commerce Group from 1904–68. These riches went outward, but contaminated water, illness, and cyanide tanks stayed. Even though the river runs through town, it is so polluted with cyanide that everyone must buy water for daily use. The river cannot even be used for irrigation.



November 8, 2015—One of the 9 voting centers in the municipality of Arcatao

The mining referendums are not “binding” per se but they give the government and the mining companies a clear message of where the potentially affected communities stand. This vote gives us a stellar example of Arcatao’s inspired brand of community organizing—thoughtful strategy, thorough investigation, persistent reporting and information sharing through community radio, film, print and personal stories, involving youth at all levels and including the national and international press. Step by step, “*Si a la vida y no a la mineria*” is prevailing.



Women’s Embroidery Cooperative in Arcatao

Eva summed up, “We are always waiting for the MASCP order and other opportunities to sell our creations. We are very thankful to be given work.” Many thanks to Jacey for conducting the interview with Eva and taking the photo of the *cooperativa*. Jacey is a volunteer staff person in Arcatao this year.

Come visit
MASCP at
**Overture Center’s
International
Festival**

“Local goes Global”

January 9, 2016
10:30 AM – 5 PM

30 free musical
performances

International arts
and crafts

Food vendors
Family friendly

Join the 30th Anniversary Delegation to Arcatao: July 16–25, 2016

Madison Arcatao Sister City Project (MASCP) and our national organization, US El Salvador Sister Cities (USESSC), are both 30 years old next year. To celebrate, USESSC staff is planning a very special 8 days of visiting and learning in El Salvador. We will visit Arcatao, our sister city from July 17 to 22 and then we will meet up with other sistering groups from across the US and El Salvador in San Salvador for three days of celebration and sharing. MASCP founders, newbies, families, elders and youth are warmly invited to join the delegation.

We will travel as a group from Madison on July 16. The national staff will arrange for all travel, housing, meals and activities while we are in country. Housing in Arcatao will be in people’s homes and in San Salvador accommodation will be in a guest house. The full cost including airfare will be under \$1500. Partial scholarships may be available especially for youth.

For more information, please email Barb Alvarado (bmergen.alvarado@gmail.com) or Marc Rosenthal (marcrosenthal@hotmail.com) here in Madison as well as the USESSC staff: sistercities.elsalvador@gmail.com in El Salvador.

We are very excited and hope that many of you will join us to learn more about Arcatao and about the new strategies and sistering relationships across El Salvador!



Photo by Carolyn Gantner

**Thank you to the City of Madison
which continues to support MASCP and
sistering with Arcatao.**

**We also want to thank our many financial and
volunteer supporters in the community.**

You are the best!

**Your donations allow us to support projects
and scholarships in Arcatao,
create cross border delegations
and provide sharing and outreach
here in Madison. ¡Muchísimas Gracias!**

Madison Arcatao Sister City Project

Madison Arcatao Sister City Project of the U.S.–El Salvador Sister Cities (USESSC) network and their Salvadoran partners provide mutual support and raise awareness about our common struggle for peace, justice, and democracy. As partners, our central focus is building grassroots coalitions both locally and on an international level as we organize around common issues of sustainable agriculture, fair trade, labor and immigrant rights, and environmental preservation.

**MASCP
1986**



**USESSC
2015**

Madison ~ Arcatao: 29 Years of Sistering

Madison Arcatao Sister City Project, PO Box 132, Madison, WI 53701 ~ (608) 255-9117
email: joan.laurion@gmail ~ www.facebook.com/madisonarcatao

MASCP is a 501c3 organization