

## Good News from El Salvador!

Word has reached us recently from Darren Eblovi, a peace corps worker who has spent time in our sister village of El Tablon, that the first ninth grade graduation was recently celebrated. Generally, kids do not continue past 6th or 7th grade because they are needed to work in the fields to help support their families; Heartland's efforts to keep the children in school longer are beginning to bear fruit!

Here is a bit from a recent letter from Darren...

Dear friends and family,

After El Tablon's first 9<sup>th</sup> grade graduation, named in the honor of Diego Eblovi (see pictures **DIANE--REMOVE THIS IF YOU DON'T USE ANY PHOTOS-BARB**), my four buddies and I made our way down to Nicaragua. Arriving back in El Salvador on Christmas day, I finally went back to my community to do some work. I brought three computers to my community's school, which despite not having electricity, has a solar power plant, so if it is sunny we can run them for most of the day. The kids are very enthusiastic to learn and some are doing very well. In fact, just yesterday my friend Manuel made the labels for our natural homemade cough syrup that we will be selling to a medical mission trip coming from Iowa next week. Not bad for never having touched a computer less than two months ago. I have also been working with our health committee producing other natural remedies such as shampoo, vick's vapor rub, and aloe lotion for cuts. I have been teaching adult literacy classes for those who are unable to read or write, but I will unfortunately have to suspend those due to lack of interest. Better to work with those who are more enthusiastic. For example, the kids that I have taught how to play the guitar are now good enough to accompany the choir in the church. They celebrate the word every day in the week leading up to Easter here, so we had plenty of chance to perfect our style.

### Looking for ways to help?

Perhaps you've read and heard a lot about Heartland's work with our sister parish in El Salvador, and have often wondered how you can help in a way that wouldn't involve being on a committee or traveling to a third world country. There are MANY ways to help. Consider adopting one of the following projects: water filters to make drinking water safe; providing tools and seeds to enable a family to become more self-sustaining; scholarships to send kids to high school; funding a microloan for various projects.

Look for more information about these opportunities in upcoming newsletters.