

Every month since February 1987 the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation has produced one-hour TV programs on issues related to peace, social justice, economics, the environment, and nonviolence.

The Olympia FOR's program airs several times every week for the entire month on Thurston Community Television (TCTV), channel 22 for Thurston County's cable TV subscribers. You can see TCTV's schedule at www.tctv.net.

You can also watch the program described below (and more than 90 of our previous interview programs and special programs) at the Olympia FOR's website, www.olympiafor.org. Simply click the TV programs link to reach www.olympiafor.org/tv_programs.htm, scroll down, and click the program you want to watch.

Many of our website's TV program listings also include a .pdf document describing the program.

NOVEMBER 2011

"OUR ONGOING RELATIONSHIP WITH SANTO TOMÁS, NICARAGUA"

by GLEN ANDERSON, PRODUCER AND HOST OF THIS TV SERIES

Since 1988 our local community has built and sustained a strong relationship with a sister community in Nicaragua. The Thurston – Santo Tomás Sister County Association (TSTSCA) has built peace and across thousands of miles of distance by interacting face-to-face with back-and-forth delegations and by collaborating on practical projects in Santo Tomás. While the Reagan Administration was making war on Nicaragua, people in Thurston County and Santo Tomás forged relationships of mutual understanding and respect. Bypassing governments, we just went ahead and did what was needed – and what was right.

In March 1987 the second episode of the Olympia FOR's TV series featured Jean Eberhardt, who had returned from a Seattle to Nicaragua Construction Brigade project and was organizing an Olympia to Nicaragua Construction Brigade. The relationship grew and TSTSCA, a non-profit organization, was created the next year.

Olympia filmmaker Carol Burns collaborated with TSTSCA members to produce a documentary about TSTSCA's early years and many activities, and the Olympia FOR is airing it twice a week throughout November, including immediately after this interview program. See newsletter page 6 for more information.

TSTSCA's partner there is the Santo Tomás Committee for Community Development. We collaborate with mutual respect and understanding. This is truly a grassroots effort that relies entirely upon ordinary people in both communities.



In 2011 a delegation of six students from The Evergreen State College spent ten weeks of Spring Quarter in Santo Tomás conducting hands-on activities, and several other Olympia community members spent most of July there.

TSTSCA will decide soon whether to organize a delegation from Santo Tomás to visit here in 2012 or 2013.

The members of our spring and summer delegations have funded their delegations and included extra support for projects in Santo Tomás. While these delegations create visibility here, TSTSCA's work in Santo Tomás continues all year around and it needs ongoing financial support. The Committee for Community Development identifies and prioritizes projects, and TSTSCA considers them and responds with financial support for several ongoing projects that the Santo Tomás community has identified as high priorities. These include:

- The Scholarship Program currently will help nine Tomasinos attend college in 2012 through to their degree completion.

- The Comedor/library project provides free lunches to about 150 poor children each day – and books and space where kids can read and study. This \$7,200-per-year project needs our ongoing support for small salaries for three staff members of the kitchen and library.
- TSTSCA helps the Santo Tomás community in other ways. The relationship is one of shared humanity and mutual appreciation rather than paternalism.

To request a copy of TSTSCA's latest "newsy update" with more information about these activities – or to learn more about TSTSCA and its activities – please contact Jean Eberhardt at (360) 943-8642 TSTSCA@gmail.com