

A PLACE OF OUR OWN

Story and photo by Priscilla Carrasco

A PLACE OF OUR OWN

High up on Pumpkin Ridge we sat looking over the valley; the Moralez children and I. It was evening the end of a long day. The children were still in their work clothes; their hands stained from the berries they had picked. We could see fields of strawberries below us in the valley. Fields of thick green rows that promised hours of hard work each day.

"What do you think of when you are working in the fields?" I asked the children. Julian, fifteen years old spoke, "I think of home in Texas; the friends I had there. I was happy just walking through the streets of Edinburg. We lived there all the time until we moved here. Oh, I think of many things when I am in the fields."

"So do I," said Frank, Julian's younger brother. "I think about my dog Brownie. He dances, you know."

"Yes," said Julian, "you should think more about the strawberries. How many flats did you pick today?"

There was no answer; Frank and Brownie were running down the hill.

"I get sleepy when I'm working in the fields," said eight year old Mary. "But, I still keep working. I have to."

"Yes we have to keep on work-



Three of the Moralez children rest in their doorway after a long day's work. Tres de los niños Moralez descansan después de un día largo de trabajo. Izquierda a derecha, Julian, 11 años, Frank 9 años, y Hope, 15 años.

ing," said Hope, Mary's older sister. "We have a large family, nine kids and it's only right that we help our father earn money to keep us all."

"If we earn enough money we can have a house of our own and stay in one place," said Julian. "I'd like to have a house where there is

room for all of us. I'd like it to be white outside," said Julian, "and all blue rooms inside."

"There'll be a place for Brownie too," said Frank, who had returned.

"Yes, a place for all of us," said Hope, "that's what we're working for."

Arriba por Pumpkin Ridge e bamos sentados, mirando el va Los hijos Moralez y yo. Fue po tarde el fin de un día largo. Los niños todavía estaban vestidos de ropa de trabajo; sus manos n chados por las fresas que hab piscados. Pudimos ver los cam de fresas debajo en el valle. C pos de circos verdes que pro tieron horas de trabajo dur largo todos los días.

"¿Qué piense cuando está bajando en el campo?" les p unté. Habló Julian, de 15 a "Pienso de mi casa en Texas; los amigos que tuve allá. Estuve andando por las calles de Edinbu Vivíamos allá todo el tiempo h llegamos aquí. Pienso de mu cosas cuando estoy en el cam

"Yo también," dijo Frank, hermano menor de Julian. "Pien sobre mi perro, Brownie. Sabe él baile."

"Sí," dijo Julian, "Ud. debe pet sar más en las fresas. Cuantas piscaste hoy?"

No hubo respuesta. Frank Brownie estaban corriendo por monte.

"Me canso mucho cuando es trabajando en el campo," dijo de ocho años. "Pero sigo trasp jando. Lo tengo que hacer."

"Si, tenemos que seguir traliv jando," dijo Hope, la hermay mayor de Mary. "Tenemos una familia larga, nueve hijos y tener que ayudar nuestra familia en ar dinero para cuidarnos todos b

"Si ganamos bastante dinero podemos tener una casa propia quedar en un lugar," dijo Jul "Me gustaría tener una casa don hay campo para todos. Me guo ría que fuera blanca de afue dijo Julian, "y todo azul adent

"Habrá lugar para Brownie t bién," dijo Frank, que había l ado.

"Sí, un lugar para todos de no tros," dijo Hope, "Es por esto estamos trabajando."

Help us plan for next year

WE PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

The seasonal farm worker thinks about the future:

The year is going so fast! What will my life be like next year?

I am a seasonal farm worker. I need to think about the future. Where will I be? How will my family get along next year? Will the Valley Migrant League be there when I need a friend?

Is it true that I can help the Valley Migrant League make plans for next year?

Here is an answer:

Tom Current, a member of the Valley Migrant League board, has a message for you. Please read this message carefully. You can help make the plans for next year.

A message to all of us:

We are now making plans for the Valley Migrant League for next year. We need the best answers to these three questions:

1. Of all the different things that the Valley Migrant League does, which things are the most useful? That is, which things help the farm

workers to improve their lives, their income, and their future?

2. If the VML cannot continue to do all of the things it is doing this year, which things can we drop, without too much harm?

3. What new things should the VML do that are needed by farm workers and their families?

The Valley Migrant League wants our ideas:

We know that the best answers to these questions can come from people who take part in the VML programs — farm worker families, staff members, and VISTA Volunteers at our program centers — and also community volunteers helping on our programs. The Board of Directors of VML needs to know what these people think.

So there are going to be 4 meetings, each one in a different opportunity center, for your convenience. Please come to one of these meetings, to express your ideas.

Come to one of these meetings:

If you cannot attend:

If you cannot attend one of these meetings, please send your ideas on paper to VML Program Committee, Box 128, Woodburn, Oregon.

The members of the VML program committee:

The members of the VML Program Committee are Kenneth Breeding (farm worker representative who lives at Turner); Bernardino Gonzales (farm worker representative who lives at Woodburn); Phyllis Haas (teacher of pre-school children who was day care program consultant in Sandy area in past years); Milton J. Peterson (sociology professor at University of Portland); and Tom Current, Chairman of the Committee (who helped plan VML program when it started).

The Program Committee will want to listen to everyone's thoughts and then meet with the

Salem Opportunity Center, Saturday, June 18, 8:00 p.m.
West Stayton Opportunity Center, Monday, June 20, 8:00 p.m.
Independence Opportunity Center, Wednesday, June 22, 8:00 p.m.
Dayton Opportunity Center, Friday, June 24, 8:00 p.m.

TO ALL READERS OF OPPORTUNITY NEWS:

Do not fail to read this article. Next week it will appear in Spanish.

Area Directors and other VML leaders to discuss what the program should be like in 1977. The staff will write a suggestion program and the Board of Directors will study it, make the final decisions and send it to Washington, D.C., for approval (we hope).