

Alongside Ministries en Nicaragua

A.M.E.N.

Evangelism Through Relationships

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Happy Easter!

He is risen! He is risen indeed!!

Dear Friends,

We hope that you have enjoyed a wonderful Easter celebration and can echo that shout of joy with us ... He is risen indeed!!! It is what makes our faith real and alive. Our Savior is not dead! The tomb is empty and Jesus is alive!

We enjoyed a wonderful Easter week (a little bit of vacation) and a great Easter Sunday with our church family down here. We had a delicious Easter brunch and fellowship following the service (nothing quite like a church potluck for good food!) and it was fun to watch the children's excitement with the Easter egg hunt. Some things never change no matter where you are.

March brought to a close a very busy month of construction here at Quinta Amen and El Salero. The rancho, the hub of our community center at El Salero, is partially complete. A crew of about 6 men built the palm covered structure and Halle, Matt and a few of our Nicaraguan workers have been working at building the brick walls and preparing the interior for tile flooring. As you can see in the picture below the structure includes a wing off one side which will be the kitchen. The remaining interior will have a small stage at the far end and tables and chairs which will serve as a dining room and meeting area. At this time the plan is to have the classrooms and media center in detached buildings close to the rancho but built in such a way as to have a courtyard around one of the big beautiful mango trees.

Construction continued in a big way with the arrival of a team of 9 college students from the University of Southern California. They came with plans for a week of hard work, great fellowship, and lots of fun. It appears that they completed their mission with 100% success. We can certainly attest to the hard work part. This group, along with some Manna Project volunteers, got down and dirty as they prepared and leveled the ground for a basketball court. Thanks to some help from some large equipment they were ready for the first pour of concrete by mid-week. The entire court was divided into 40 rectangles - 5 across and 8 down, and the plan was to pour in a checkerboard style so that each section would be a manageable size and could be reached from all sides. Since Murphy's Law seems to have originated in Nicaragua we shouldn't have been surprised when we met with a few challenges. The first concrete truck arrived pretty well on time and the pour started out smoothly. However, when a second truck arrived a short 30 minutes later with news that the company was sending a truck every half hour we started to panic. Halle quickly canceled any further trucks for the day and the second truck simply had to wait until they were ready. That wait turned out to be longer than anticipated when we were struck with a thunder and lightning storm, complete with a deluge of rain, for over an hour. This was the middle of March. We don't even expect clouds in March much less rain. But here, in the middle of pouring concrete we get a huge downpour. We scrambled for tarps and found enough to cover two and a half of the most recently poured squares. One square had just come out of the truck and there was very little that could be done to save it. Thankfully it was a perimeter square and the most damaged part is actually outside the actual basketball court boundaries. Halle has plans to repair it in the future. In

the meantime, each of the subsequent days of the week were spent preparing and pouring several more squares. By Saturday, the court was over half finished with 22 of the 40 squares poured and finished. It turned out to be a bigger job than anyone had imagined but we hope the USC team went home with great feelings of accomplishment. We never would have been able to start this project or to complete the work without their willingness to apply their energy and skills, without their willingness to follow directions and learn, and without their consistent good humor, laughter and positive spirits. We fully expect to see a few of them back here some day but would love to have them all return to enjoy the relational side of our ministry while playing basketball with some Nica neighborhood kids and sharing their testimonies over a cold soda after a hot game!

Kathy has spent this past month working with and getting to know the children in the small preschool in Cuajachillo (pronounced 'kwa - ha - chee - o') - a small neighborhood a few miles further past our home. The children are currently meeting in the former pastor's home but as you can see in the picture below the facility still lacks a few essentials. Kathy has been leading a few activities a couple days a week and supplying the teacher with some teaching supplies. We have plans to improving the setting with tables, a white board and other materials to make teaching and learning easier and more fun. Kathy has been having fun getting to know Paola, David, Ricardito, Mercedes, Carlitos, Magdalena, Michell, Kevin and Valeska. They greet her each morning with a loud and boisterous, "Buenos dias, Profer!"



Serving Together. Halle and Kathy August

Thank you for supporting our ministry in Nicaragua. 100% of your financial gift given through The NEO Foundation is received and used in ministry here in Nicaragua.

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