

ALONGSIDE MINISTRIES EN NICARAGUA

Evangelism Through Relationships

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Whooo-weee.... it's a warm one. April is living up to its reputation of being the warmest month of the year. As is typical the wind has died down to an occasional gust and a little breeze which feels so good for that moment but without the breeze it's just plain hot. We're up in the nineties everyday and I'm sure it's over a hundred in the city. We try not to move too fast or do too much or the sweat starts to pour. Wouldn't you know it, the air conditioning in Kathy's car went out a couple of weeks ago just in time for this little heat wave. Oh well. Not only does the natural air conditioning work just fine, it also gives Kathy that sexy wind-blown look. (ya... right!)

We've had quite a string of visitors in the past couple of months but right in the middle of them all we had Semana Santa (Holy Week). All of Nicaragua quiets down and closes down during this week. Many of the Nicas head to the beach for some long awaited r& r. It's a week off of school and many of the businesses are closed for at least 2 or 3 days of the week. It just so happened that we had a little break of our own right here at Quinta Amen, too, and we just stayed around home, did some necessary house jobs, slept in and had our own week off as well. Thank you Lord for those wonderful times of relaxation.

What's Happening at El Farito Ministry Center

Our 2007 preschool year is off to a great start. We started with an enrollment of 12 students, 4 second year (4 and 5 year olds) and 8 new students. They are a sweet group of children but several of them give us a challenge now and then just to keep us on our toes. In the next several newsletters I'd like to introduce you to each of our students so you'll have a chance to know them a little better and can pray for them, too.

Jose Raul Ramirez Ney (we call him Raul) is one of our 2nd year students. He just celebrated his 6th birthday, which makes him the oldest by a couple of years, but we feel he is in just the right place for his developmental and educational needs right now. Last year he was pretty quiet and timid. When he did talk it was difficult to understand him due to a speech problem that was compounded by the loss of almost all his baby teeth due to decay. This year, though still toothless, he started school with such confidence. He's a leader in the class now and has a lot more to say. Though he's still a little difficult to understand his speech is improving and as he gets more and more practice we hope it will continue to do so. He's a thinker. It is fun to ask him a question or present him with a problem and watch him ponder the answer. Give him a few minutes and he most often comes up with the right response. You can see the confidence on his face and it always brings a smile to our faces. Being a 2nd year student he will be eligible to participate in our scholarship program next year.

Ulises Argel Ney Ramirez is our other 2nd year boy. We celebrated Ulises' 5th birthday in February. Also one of our more quiet students he still has a lot to offer to our class. We call him our "little man" as he often comes to school quite well-dressed in freshly pressed jeans and a tucked in button down shirt.



Raul



Ulises

Personally, as the mother of 3 sons, I think Ulises needs a little more opportunity to really be a boy and get dirty. When we bring our students over to the sports center for a play day it's wonderful to see Ulises run and play soccer, get a little sweaty and even a little dirty. I'm not sure his "mamita" (grandma) appreciates it very much but we think it's a developmentally important part of his education. Ulises has big brown eyes and a fleeting smile that's hard to catch on camera. He loves playing with cars and trucks and tools... all things "boy". We hope he will be participating in next year's scholarship program as well.



I don't know about anywhere else but March was art appreciation month here at El Farito. We had two visiting artists that each left their mark on the walls of our ministry center. Dawn Gray, a gifted artist from North Carolina linked up with Manna Project and then with us and was willing to spend several days painting a big lighthouse scene on the outside wall of our ministry center building. One of these days the wall will be finished with the words, "El Centro Ministerio El Farito" (The Little Lighthouse Ministry Center) and the text from John 8:12 "Jesús dijo, 'Yo soy la luz del mundo. El que me sigue no andará en tinieblas, sino que tendrá la luz de la vida.'"

The interior of our ministry center received a special touch from Taira Anderson, an art student at Western Washington University in Washington state. Taira was just 14 years old when she visited Nicaragua for the first time on the same team that our family was on 7 years ago. Nicaragua must have captured a little piece of her heart because after all



these years she returned with the desire to give a little of her heart back to Nicaragua. She did just that through a wonderful mural of a lighthouse and village scene on our classroom wall. It adds color and beauty and has prompted questions and discussions with the children about what a lighthouse is and why it's painted on the wall of El Farito. Again, we will add the words of Psalm 119:105, "Tu palabra es una lámpara a mis pies; es una luz en mi sendero," to finish off the wall and give it a little more meaning to the children.

What's Happening with the El Farito Scholarship Program

Well, I'm happy to report that there's not much to report about the scholarship program. After all the work that went into preparing for the start of school, purchasing all the school supplies, arranging transportation to and from school and then working out the various kinks after the school year started it's nice to be able to say that everything seems to be running smoothly. I continually hear nothing but good reports about how the children are doing, what they're learning and how much they are enjoying themselves. We give the glory and thanks to God for the support of this program – for those of you who have taken on the responsibility of sponsoring a child for this school year and for the others of you who have given donations to help pay for those who don't have a single sponsor. Through your faithful giving each of the 7 students are completely funded for the 2007 school year.

I guess it's not too early to look ahead to 2008. We just recently received a donation to sponsor one of our preschool students who will be eligible to participate in the scholarship program at the end of this year. As each year unfolds I continually pray that God will reveal His will to me in regards to this program and I ask that He do so through the support that we receive. Each gift is a confirmation that He wants to bless this program and encourage me to continue to present it to you for your prayerful consideration. We have 4 preschoolers that we would like to include in the scholarship program next year. That will bring the number of students in this program up to 11. That's a financial investment of approximately \$8500. Please take a

moment to pray that God would move in the hearts of those He would like to give to support this program and the continuing education of these children. Thank you.



Raul



Anita Cristina



Anita Esperanza



Ulises

What's Happening at El Salero Community/Sports Center

El Salero continues to develop and is being used more and more for activities other than just sports. The Ranchón is used regularly for our own visiting teams as a dining room but is also often reserved 4-5 times a month by outside churches and groups for a variety of different meetings.

The library is awaiting the installation of windows before we move ahead on the tiles and light fixtures. It has already been used as it is for small group meetings when a large church group was here and they wanted to break into smaller groups. We anticipated it will get lots of use as a library and general meeting room when it is finished.

The covered basketball court has a good portion of the ground work done. Large footings were designed with lots of steel to support the columns for the roof. It was/is a major engineering project and Halle has been thankful for the input of architect and engineering experts from the February Bellevue family team. It will be exciting to watch this project grow and take shape. Ultimately it will provide a place to play basketball and futbol sala or speed soccer (a type of indoor soccer) out of the sun and rain but it will also be a great arena for large group games and indoor soccer.

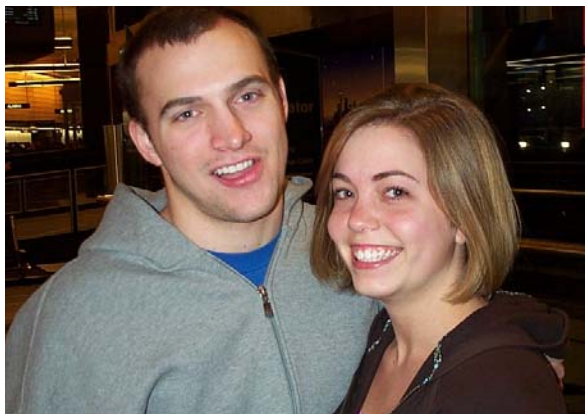


One more recent addition to El Salero is the second tetherball pole. The children and youth really seem to like this game, so thanks to one of the Manna Project March teams, we installed another pole. You really have to stay alert while walking around the sports center these days. Balls are flying everywhere!

Looking Ahead at May

Next month is another milestone in the August family. We will be traveling up to Washington state on May 3rd to spend time with family as we celebrate the marriage of our son Britton to Chelsea Geier on May 12th. We are so blessed to welcome a second daughter-in-law to the family. We love Chelsea and she already seems a part of our family so their wedding will truly be a great celebration filled with lots of joy, laughter and fun as we continue to make wonderful new family memories.

We will be in the Bellevue area for 4 weeks, returning to Nicaragua on May 31st. We hope we will get an opportunity to visit with many of you while we are there.



Please Pray...

1. for our safe travels in May.
2. for our home and ministry while we are away for a month.
3. Jolis, a little preschooler, who has some serious emotional/developmental needs.
4. Lidia, Jolis' mother, that she would be willing to work with us to help Jolis.

Please Praise...

1. for God's faithfulness everyday in our ministry here in Nicaragua.
2. for the joy of family celebrations.
3. for Kathy's return to good health – she's feeling better than ever!
4. for each team, large or small, that has visited, encouraged, and participated in our ministry.

Thank you!
Serving Together,
Halle and Kathy August

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