

Alongside Ministries en Nicaragua

A.M.E.N.

Evangelism Through Relationships

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Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.

Proverbs 19:21

Dear Friends,

Boy oh boy, do we have plans and ideas. Sometimes it seems as though we're stumbling over our own two feet and being pulled several different directions as we work to accomplish some of our plans. Of course, we could never accomplish anything of much significance on our own. We are so thankful that some of our plans and ideas are shared by many of you, our friends and supporters, and that you make it part of your plans to come here and join in the actual physical work of our ministry.

We said goodbye to the Crossfire youth team from Woodinville Community Church on July 6th and immediately started to prepare for a team from Menlo Park Presbyterian Church which arrived a week and a half later. Though a smaller team they came with plans to work and work hard they did! This team of 9 worked together to accomplish a lot. Several of them worked on building a curb around 2 sides of the volleyball court to help designate the difference between the parking area and the volleyball court. Eventually we hope, with enough curbs, gates, fences and signs to encourage our visitors with cars to park in one area and not use the sports center like a 4-wheeling track or driver's education course. Building a curb, while it may sound easy, is a heavy, hard job. The stones they used are each over 115 pounds and make this a back breaking job. Besides building the curb this group has painted steel fencing and construction pipe and continued the non-stop job of cutting with a machete, raking, weeding and planting grass. In addition to the work projects this team brought down used clothing and hosted a clothing sale in a nearby community. These sales have become a greatly anticipated activity in the neighborhoods around us. We are frequently asked when the next sale will be and have been told numerous times how thankful the locals are to be able to purchase decent used clothes at a very minimal price (everything is priced between 30 cents and a dollar). Interspersed throughout their week of work was some play time, too. Between entertaining some neighboring children and playing ultimate Frisbee and basketball with the locals, they were able to cool off and soothe their sore muscles and blistered hands in the Manna Project pool. To get a better "picture" of what all this group accomplished and a better view of their surroundings while visiting down here please take a look at their website for their daily log and photo gallery.

<http://www.mppcmission.org/trips/nicaragua/2005/index.htm>

Not only do our plans keep us busy but we've got BIG plans, too. Again, we are thankful that we are not left alone to accomplish all our ideas. Last month we decided along with the Manna Project group to host an inaugural opening of the sports center and ranchón. Matt McPheely, an MPI member who was instrumental in the building of the ranchón and media center, was scheduled to leave and we all wanted to celebrate his accomplishments with this fiesta. The plan was to invite the people from the neighboring communities of Cedro





Galan and Chiquilistagua to an afternoon of festivities ending with a small dinner. The festivities included a clothing sale, face painting, Polaroid pictures, water balloon toss, tug of war and other games and crafts. The food was bought and prepared by a local woman and everything was set to go. Even the weather cooperated. And then they came... and they kept coming and coming... By the end of the afternoon we are sure there were around 500 locals enjoying this celebration. Before dinner

was served Halle and Amanda had an opportunity to speak to the crowd and share some of our thoughts, ideas and purposes in the development of the sports center. It was encouraging to share with so many the idea of being salt in the world – as we are called to be in God’s Word – and to relate to them what a difference salt makes. They understand the difference salt makes in a pot of frijoles – how much more enjoyable it makes their meal – and we used this analogy to explain how a personal relationship with Jesus Christ seasons our lives to not only change each personal life but to use that life to add flavor to the lives it touches. This, we explained, is the purpose of El Salero (The Salt Shaker). We not only want to provide an opportunity for fun and physical activity but want to flavor each life that comes to the sports center with the love of Jesus Christ.

Yes, we have many plans and ideas, hopes and dreams for the ministry activities that we undertake. However, as it says in Proverbs, “... it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.” We praise God for that truth and continually pray for our own discernment of His purposes. In all that we do, whether playing games and having fun or working hard to build a new building, court or sidewalk we desire that God’s purposes be advanced and fulfilled. Please continue to lift us up in your prayers to this end.

Continue to pray as well for our other ministry endeavors – the feeding program and preschool which continue to touch the lives of nearly 100 children each week. It is by your gracious giving that these programs are able to continue. Pray also for our newly formed scholarship program. We shared last month our goal of sending 3 of our preschool graduates to the Spanish speaking Nicaragua Christian Academy. This school provides day long classes (compared with half day classes at the local schools), high academic standards and teaches English starting at the elementary level. For our 3 graduates this would be an incredible opportunity for personal growth and academic opportunities in their lives. Please continue to pray for your part in this program. We have received responses of interest and hope to be able to notify the families of this opportunity before the end of the Nica school year (November 2005). If you have questions or would like more information please write to us or check out the NCA website at www.nca.edu.ni/nejapa/



Games on the basketball court.



**Woodinville youth
Serving Together, Halle and Kathy August**



Steve Parsons, Samuel Reyes, Steve Walner

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