

ALONGSIDE MINISTRIES EN NICARAGUA

Evangelism Through Relationships

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Dear Friends,

We returned to Managua in January after a wonderful, snowy Christmas holiday with all of our family. Shortly after we arrived in the northwest the Seattle-Bellevue area was hit with an unusual weather pattern that dumped over a foot of snow and then stayed cold enough to keep it around for 4-5 days. We had our own winter wonderland to play in. Living with Halle's parents we were located just a couple blocks from the "city" where we had everything we could ever need within walking distance. (That means Starbucks was just a short 3 blocks away!) We spent a snowy Christmas day with 2 of our sons, daughter-in-law and 2 granddaughters. It was the kind of Christmas day that makes great memories.

Managua greeted us with warm, but not overly hot, and windy weather. This time of year is always windy which is typical of the dry season, but this year has seemed a little windier than usual. Thanks to the more moderate temperatures we've been able to keep our windows closed or almost closed to keep out most of the dust. Soon the winds will die down, the temperatures will soar and we'll wish for a breeze to cool us off. Are we never content?

When we return here in January we are always faced with the start of school just a few weeks off, the first week of February, so it's a rush to get organized with our scholarship programs and preschool. This year Myra Norman has taken on the bulk of responsibility with the preschool and now, after 3 weeks, it seems to be running smoothly with very few, if any, sniffles and tears from those little 3-year-olds. The 4-year-olds returned and settled in like the old pros they are and have jumped right into learning. It is a wonderful classroom environment!



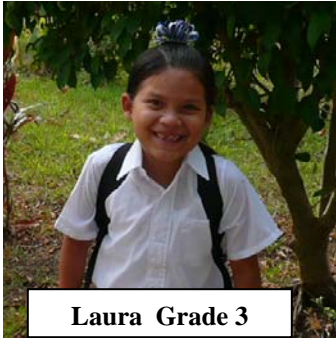
**Our 3 year olds
with
"Profe Carolina"
And
Myra Norman ,
this year's
director.**

**The week
before the
start of
school these
ladies from
State
College, PA
gave the
preschool
floor a new
coat of paint.**



Today, again after 3 weeks of school, I think I finally purchased the last textbook, delivered the last few supplies and purchased the PE uniforms for the students in the scholarship program at Covanic Christian school where we have 14 students in grades K-3. Whew! Every year getting this program off the ground always takes a lot of running around and a lot of patience but it sure feels good when it's all done. It doesn't

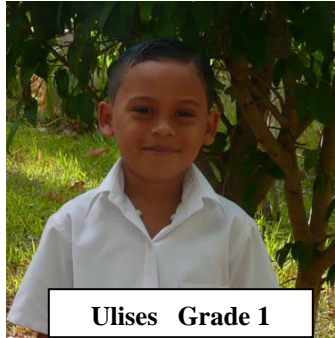
take a genius to read the joy and excitement on the faces of the students on the first day of school. They are anxious and ready to learn and they are all doing so well.



Laura Grade 3



Christian Grade 2



Ulises Grade 1



Junior Grade K

Our first team of the year from State College, PA joined us January 17th for a week of work as they blessed a small Christian school with security bars, interior walls, a new paint job, whiteboards, refurbished chalkboards and even pencil sharpeners. Previously they had only temporary walls in a shell of a facility that lacked the security bars on the windows. Now the desks, chairs and whiteboards are safe from theft and vandalism and the teachers can even display posters and student work to brighten up their classrooms. When we visited the school today each desk was occupied and the students were busy working on multiplication, subtraction and dictation. We only bothered them a little with our camera (Ya... right. One little boy looked at me and asked, “Are you a gringo?”) but we were able to catch several eager faces with bright smiles as they enjoyed learning in their beautiful new classrooms.



Third grade class at Dios Con Nosotros Christian school.

Mid-January also marked the official start of our new librarian, Rosemery. The library is now open Monday through Friday from 1-6 pm and there are children and youth passing in and out, many with book bags, as they carry books home to enjoy for a week or so before returning them. We have been so pleased with the high percentage of returning books – undoubtedly a higher percentage than is realized in the states – and know that in a small way we are making a difference in the lives of these children and their families. I recently stopped by a home over in Cedro Galan, a nearby community, and the mom asked me to return a book for her daughter. She proceeded to tell me about the book, “... a little monkey... so funny... I read it many times and enjoyed it ... it’s time to return it...” and she brought me a Curious George book. I love the fact that the mom had read it and enjoyed it as much as if not more than her daughter. Our little library is making a difference – one little book at a time.



Rosemery (center) helping hand out backpacks

Now, as the dust settles (actually that saying really doesn’t really apply until the rainy season starts) and we begin to fall into our daily routines we will start planning for a couple of college teams joining us in March. We are hoping to pour the floor of the new covered basketball court and get the roof painted and these teams just may be the ones to get the job done!

Thanks to the generosity of Manna Project Int'l and the team from State College we now have adequate funds to put a new roof on our ranchón – the thatch covered facility where we meet and eat with teams and groups. Right now it's not so bad but it has become unusable in the rainy season. We hope by raising the pitch of the roof and adding an inner zinc roof over the kitchen the new roof will last for another 5 years or more.

There's always a lot going on around our home and community/sports center. Please continue to pray for us and the work that is being accomplished. Please pray for our energy and commitment, that our focus would continually be upward and outward as we look to God for guidance and sustenance and reach out to others with His love.

Thank you!
Serving Together,
Halle and Kathy August

Thank you for supporting our ministry in Nicaragua.
Your gifts, sent to The NEO Foundation, will be used for our
general ministry activities or wherever you designate.

The NEO Foundation
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