



El Ayudante

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Spring 2009

Our Girls Love to DANCE!!!

In January, they opened a two-day teacher training conference held at Colegio LaSalle with cultural dance presentations. The event was hosted by our mission team of educators from Georgia and Nicaragua's Ministry of Education.

Ivania, Chilo, Diana, Ingrid, Yennifer and Jenny wore Las Inditas and Mestizaje costumes from the traditional clothing of indigenous women during their presentations. Mabel, Karina and Andrea wore Trecilla costumes, which demonstrate Spanish influence. After their performances, the girls were treated to lunch at *On the Run*.

The conference was attended by close to 500 teachers from over 30 schools from the Municipality of Leon. Breakfast and lunch were served both days with over 600 pounds of teacher resource material donated. According to Ministry of Education representatives and conference attendees, the event was a tremendous success! Plans for a 2010 conference are already underway.



Before 500 at Colegio La Salle

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The greatest

must become servant to all. This is one of the most important principles that we teach the children at HCN in our holistic approach to their development. Last year, we began to reinforce this principle by integrating our children into community related service projects. Projects have ranged from serving the elderly in nursing homes to assisting the Ministry of Health in the distribution of educational materials in the barrios of Leon.

In February, HCN's new English teacher and administrator, Lorvin Jose Palma Rivera, introduced our older children to a new opportunity for service that won their hearts. After driving 6 kilometers from Leon on the Pan-American Highway towards Chinandega, our trucks went off-road another seven kilometers until we reached the community of Cristo Rey (Christ the King). There we met Elena Guido and her students, 15 special needs children.

Their one classroom school was in great disrepair. The windows were broken; old chalkboards weathered by time and humidity. The small building needed painting. Even though electrical lines were less than 100 feet from the building, they had no electricity.

While Elena Guido shared her resource needs with HCN Director, Ana Cecilia Aguero, our children served the children of Cristo Rey through games, dance, providing refreshments and gifts. Amie Miles, El Ayudante long-term volunteer and doctorate of physical therapy student, evaluated the children with physical disabilities, making recommendations for exercise therapy to their guardians. While Amie made her evaluations, she patiently explained the evaluation process to our children

cont.
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Jose Benito with his Christmas present!

Thanks sponsors and friends for making this Christmas very special for the children at HCN! Each child had a chance to go shopping to choose their own present! Teresa, Jennie and Amie took the children in small groups to pick out their gift! Dolls with strollers, trucks, cars, and clothes were among the gifts purchased on a \$15 budget/child! For the children, the excitement of the shopping adventure was as fun as the purchasing of the gift!

The children also had a very special day with El Ayudante staff and their families attending an on-campus Christmas party! There was great food, Brinka Brinkas (Dandy Jumpers), games, cotton candy, popcorn, horseback rides, and presents for all the children!

The "icing on the cake" was an opportunity to attend the Tihany Circus in Managua! The circus resembled a Las Vegas show featuring magic, music, and dance. Former HCN Director, Lillian Sacasa, successfully petitioned Tihany for free general admission tickets (normally \$15) for our children!



Our precious Kimberly is in the US!!

The journey from Nicaragua to Tennessee ...

is typically about six hours through Atlanta, Houston, or Miami. But for our Kimberly, it took over two years of resolve from her new mother, Lee Ann James. Lee Ann persevered through Nicaragua's adoption process that allowed for only 10 international adoptions in 2008.

Kimberly James is now prospering in Union City, Tennessee with the love of her new family and a great community of friends! Upon arrival in Northwest Tennessee, Kimberly saw her first snow, making the prettiest "snow angels."

**Greatest
cont.**



Jenny and Amie at Cristo Rey helping a young child with a neurologic disorder

who had gathered around her.

I saw in our children a desire to absorb every ounce of knowledge from the experience. Most importantly, I saw in them a desire to serve those who came from an even more challenged place than they.

Because our children at HCN have been brought so far from the places of abuse and neglect that we have rescued them from, I sometimes forget about the roads we travelled to find them in order that we might love, restore, and prepare them. They have not forgotten! You could see it in their passion to serve the children from Cristo Rey!

Moving date

for our nine oldest girls, ages 12-14, into their new home is getting closer. The windows and doors will be installed the second week of April leaving only the interior woodwork to be completed. The home, which is located 200 feet north of the child protection center where they presently live, has four bedrooms, three baths, a kitchen/dining room, den, and laundry room. Front and back porches will allow for fellowship with their friends and HCN Family.

The significance of the home is that it allows our protection center to meet the requirement of the Ministry of the Family that children in centers 14 years and older must live under a different roof than children under that age. With the addition of eight little girls to our center last month, the new home will also relieve overcrowding in the girl's wing at HCN.



The new girls home will be ready soon!

Update from Cristo Rey

The special needs classroom has been completely renovated during an event that brought together 40 children from the Cristo Rey Elementary School, El Ayudante's mission team from Manchester, Missouri, and the children from HCN. The classroom was painted, windows and roof repaired, a new door hung, and landscaping completed during the morning hours. The team from Manchester UMC donated school supplies for use in the special needs and elementary schools.

While the renovation was taking place, Manchester's medical team served the community by partnering with the local public health post to see over 100 patients. Medicines were donated to the under-stocked pharmacy of the clinic at the end of the day.



Newly Painted School at Cristo Rey!



Medical Team from Manchester UMC serving at Cristo Rey!

Additional sponsors are needed

to meet the overall budget requirements for the operation of HCN. Sponsorships range from \$30 to \$335 monthly. The relationship developed between sponsor and child is important in that it not only blesses the sponsor, but affirms the child's value. For more information on the child sponsorship program, go to: http://www.nicamissions.com/w8_child_sponsorship.htm

Welcome to HCN!!!

to eight beautiful girls, ages 4 to 13! The Ministry of the Family placed six of the children in our care after they closed a protection center in Leon because of questionable practices at that center. Two of the girls were taken from very abusive home situations.

When they arrived, we sat down with each child and told them they were safe and would be loved at HCN. They are adjusting to their new home and family. They are all eager to learn and take advantage of the many opportunities available to them which will prepare them for life!



Our new girls having fun getting ready for school!!

Front Row: Reyna Celeste, Noelia, Francis,
Middle Row: Jessica
Back Row: Milagros, Kathia, Yessenia, and Laura
Pictured from Left to Right

HCN's Holy Week Schedule

April 4, 2009- Out of school and off to the movies!!

April 5, 2009- Palm Sunday-The children went to church in the am, the older girls danced at the local nursing home and helped serve with a team from Grace Church UMC, La Center, KY. Later that evening the children had dinner at the team house followed by an awesome Easter egg hunt hosted by Peachtree Road UMC, Atlanta, GA.

April 6, 2009- Swimming at a local pool

April 7, 2009- Day Beach Trip with all HCN employees and their families!!

April 8, 2009- Movies about Jesus and trivia with prizes to see who watched the closest!

April 9, 2009- Maundy Thursday- ZOO in Managua and to the food court for lunch!

April 10, 2009- Good Friday- "Las Alfombras" or The Rugs. It is a customary tradition here in Leon that on Good Friday individuals gather in the streets of Sutiaba and construct pictures of the Easter story out of colored sawdust! Also on this day in Nicaraguan homes and churches, it is customary to discuss Jesus' last 7 words during lunch. Our children enjoyed doing this.

April 11, 2009-Happy 13th Birthday Yessenia! We had games in the morning including soccer, kickball, sack races, and yes a Nicaraguan game in which everyone ties a balloon to their ankle and you run around and try to pop other's balloons! This was followed by cake and ice cream and, of course, dousing the birthday girl with baby powder and breaking an egg on her head! Oh Nicaragua! Finally the children went on a historic tour of Leon and watched the Easter processions downtown.

April 12, 2009- Happy Easter- church and decorating hard-boiled Easter eggs!



Balloon Game



Easter Egg Hunt

Holy Week

in Nicaragua is very special! With school not in session for over a week, activities were planned for the children at HCN that provided opportunities to understand the significance of Jesus' sacrifice while engaging in their culture. HCN staff also planned some "just for fun" events for the 37 children!



**One of "The Rugs"
Las Alfombras**



**Happy
B-day**



Coloring Easter Eggs