



2010-SUMMER FRIENDS OF NIÑOS ADELANTE NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hola to all our Niños Adelante sponsors and friends,

We had a very wonderful time in Zihuatanejo this February. The Niños Adelante breakfast was another successful event hosted by Jose Bustos. The students, parents, and sponsors have a great time reacquainting with each other and catching up on what's happening in the past year. Thank you to Jose for his hard work.

Jose took Jim and me on a trip around Zuhuatanejo visiting several of the schools. Very informative and eye opening as to just how hard the teachers and students work to become successful students and citizens.

The board continues to do extra duty in order to insure the program remains viable and creative and I remain grateful for all their time and effort.

Wishing everyone a wonderful and relaxing summer,

Jan Moe
President Friends of Niños Adelante

WARM WELCOME

A warm welcome to all our new sponsors(padrino's). We are happy you chose to join us and we hope you find it a pleasant experience. Be assured you will bring hope and joy to your student and family.

SPECIAL THANKS

A very special thank you to Mabeth Sanderson for her meticulous efforts as Event Planner. For the last four years she has taken care of the reservations for the benefit dinner in Zihuatanejo as well as keeping close tabs on the reservations for the Jan. and Feb. student/sponsor breakfasts. Your organized southern congeniality will be missed.

Also a very special thank you to Gary Nelson for all his very successful efforts with our financial and organizational structure over his six years on the board. Your efforts are greatly appreciated . Thank you very much , Gary.

A MEASURE OF SUCCESS

The following series of personal experiences and stories are, to say the least, very uplifting. They express in an individual way, things that many sponsors in our program know and feel. By the same token, not all sponsor experiences are successful. A student dropping from the program for one reason or another can be very disheartening. Fortunately we have many more success stories than failures. If one stands back to view the overall picture, the impact we have in the community of Zihuatanejo it is very impressive.

In the past two years there have been fifty Niños Adelante students graduate from high school! This year alone there were twenty five high school graduates and, get this, thirteen graduates from four year college institutions. It is safe to say, this year's combined number of graduates is about thirty eight more than would have graduated without support to keep them in school. What is perhaps more significant is most of these kids are the first in their families to attain even a high school education.

Jesus Pascacio Valdovinos

Future Architect

By Steve Leighton, Padrino

It all started back in 2001 when my father passed away. He had been a long time sponsor in the program and my wife Donna and I thought it only right that we finish his obligations to the student. As they say, one thing leads to another and before long, we had our own student. This bright young man was in the program and needed a sponsor. His name was Jesus Pascacio Valdovinos. He was a good looking and very smart individual that was full of hopes and expectations about getting an education. He lived in a town called San Jose Ixtapa, just north of the Ixtapa beach area. It seemed like a long way for him to go into Zihua to get to school, but that was only the beginning.

This young man comes from the typical Mexican family that has very little, but makes the most out of everything. His father was a laborer and is now too old to work. Jesus got himself a job to help support his mother and younger sister. Jose and I both cautioned him that a job can be very demanding on his time and could take away from his studies. Well, he not only had a job, but it was a full time job working at the Ixtapa Palace Hotel. By this time, Jose and I were both sure he would never be able to keep up with his studies and work a full time job as well. His comment was...WATCH ME!

We have sponsored this student now for 8 years. He has completed high school...maintaining better than a 8.0 GPA the whole time and now is in his third year of Architectural School in Chilpancingo. He lives there with relatives and studies constantly. He has three more years to go before he will graduate. As you can see from some of the pictures, he has mucho talent.

One of my favorite things to do is to go fishing. I asked Jesus if he liked to fish. His comment was, "I don't know, I have never been fishing". Well, that was not to last for long. On his 18th birthday, I took him out for a day of fishing. I am usually worried about new fisherman because they sometimes get sea sick. Not to worry about this kid, he was ready and had no issues what so ever. After trolling for several hours, the outrigger finally went off. We had hooked a nice Pacific Sail and the fight was on. He did everything he was told to do and landed the fish like a pro in no time. As it turned out, the fish was hooked very badly and had to be killed. We fillet the fish and packed it in plastic zip locks for him to take home. I'm sure his house and many of the neighbors had there fill of fish that night. It was a thrill for me...and he may have enjoyed it as well! No matter what this guy does, he will be successful. He has the drive and brains to do it all. Watch for him down the road, he will make his mark on this earth!

A DREAM BECOMES REALITY

The following article was a letter sent by a student to be read at the Feb.2010 student sponsor family breakfast. She was unable to attend because of school commitments. Margarita graduated in psychology from the University of Puebla this spring.

Today is a very special day because all Niños Adelante's Students we are saying thank so much to this program who push us to get ours dreams, we saw very far this. Some have to move from home, leave our friends, the places we liked to visit and even the food we had at home before. But every sacrifice was rewarded today, thank God, our parents our sponsors, we are graduates from university. One door closes but another better is opening. Now a feel like a different person, someone who can help people, someone who is prepared to serve those in need of me. Being part of the program was a very important experience, Niños Adelante met children with young faces, shy, shorts but always smart, every year these children change, they grew not only in size, also in goals and purposes, the offices of Niños Adelante were witness to this. Thanks also to my English teachers, their patience and your time for getting that we learn this important language.

Today is also a big chance to say something for two special sponsors, two great people, two parents, from them I received not just money, they were in every moment I need them, when I felt lonely I closed my eyes and I saw their faces smiling me and telling me I can get it.

When I felt sad I saw their pictures, I read their letter and I got a laughter remembering the funny times together. They teach me how important is give a hand to people, and they always giving me their love, they made me part of their great family and we have a special times that made very strong our relationship, today I don't only have a sponsor, I have another parents and family, and all my live I will say thank you so much for this dream that now is real. This psychology is so happy because I have so much to say thank you God, He had blessed me and gave me two special Angels and their family: MY LOVE FOR YOU

JOHN and JANIE ROBINS

FROM: MARGARITA REYNOSO

Pots, Pans, and Peppers

I like Mexican people. When I smile, they smile wider. When I say, "Buenos dias," they say it back stronger. When I hug friends, they hug back tighter.

My life has been enriched by many friendships in Mexico, enriched through their love and through times shared together. In Zihuatanejo, even the most mundane events often turn into adventures of disorder and fun.

Let me introduce you to the Morales Guittierez family, amongst our favorite friends.

Catalina is the mother, the dynamo and the driving force in this family. Small in stature, she is huge in character, energy, and creativity. She is thirty four years old.

Her husband, Revi, is divinely handsome and ever-so-charming.

Their daughters are Elizabeth, age 18, and Yessica, 14. Elizabeth is lovely, with a quiet sense of humour and much determination. Yessica is a character ---cut from the same cloth as her mother. The Morales Guittierez family have opened their arms and invited us into their lives.

We have spent many happy hours together, be it grinding corn with Catalina, riding the burros that carry the corn down from the mountains or singing songs around their dining table. Whatever the activity, it often seems to turn into an adventure of disorder. Catalina is too spirited, too spontaneous, too vivacious to have a high degree of order in her life. But she is amazingly productive, and it is always a delight to share in the activities of the Morales Guittierez home.

The most recent adventure was in the little kitchen of that humble home. At the invitation of Catalina, I invited a friend --- a Canadian friend who had expressed an interest in cooking --- to accompany me to Catalina's house for a cooking class. Since I had been Catalina's English teacher, she LOVED the idea of reversing the teacher role.

Sue and I arrived at the agreed-upon time, but Catalina wasn't there. She was out doing the marketing. We swung in the hammock awaiting her arrival.

In she burst, some twenty minutes later, toting one of those Mexican plaid bolsas of thin woven mesh which fray, but seldom break. It was bulging with provisions ---- peppers, avocados, chiles, mangos, tomatos, papayas, herbs, coloured beans, bolillos. From out the top of her bag, flowers poked their bright little heads.

Catalina wiped the sweat from her brow and raced into the tiny kitchen. Within moments, every pot and pan in her possession was strewn about the little space. The gas stove was turned on, and grease was sizzling and spitting at us as we jostled for position in the small space. Bags of rice, blocks of cheese, roma tomatoes, a mound of tortilla dough, a bony chicken, all lay about on any available surface.

We set to work, charring and peeling green peppers, chopping onions and tomatoes, boiling and then shredding the tough little chicken. We patted out tortilla dough and fried our masterpieces in boiling oil. We pureed tomatoes with mortar and pestel. We mashed potatoes together with cheese. We added vanilla and stirred the boiling rice pot. We made a salsa so hot that tears slipped down our cheeks as we sampled it.

Catalina chattered the whole while in rapid-fire Spanish. My friend Sue responded in English. Neither understood the other but they worked side by side, both enjoying the moment. Elizabeth and Yessica, the daughters, helped as well. Yessica chopped, with her pet parrot astride her shoulder. Elizabeth shredded, slipping threads of chicken to the good-sized turtle that wandered across the table as we worked.

We laughed a lot. Catalina's love of life pours forth, and is contagious. The hours flew by, the hunger pangs increased, the cooking continued. Five hours after our arrival, we sat down to a sumptuous meal, particularly festive as it was served on a beautifully embroidered Christmas cloth, well protected by a sheet of plastic.

Catalina, Revi, Yessica, Elizabeth, Sue and I enjoyed each other's company and the splendid results of our culinary efforts.

Sue and I left the Morales Guittierez home with many hugs, and bags of left-over chiles rellenos and tortillas and rice pudding. We left with another happy Zihuatanejo memory, and with the certainty that nationality, language, and culture do not separate friends.

Shelagh Yarnell- March 2010

**Elizabeth, Yessica, and Catalina have been students in my Ninos Adelante English classes for the past two years. Elizabeth is sponsored by Len and Beth Draving. Yessica is also sponsored.

LIVE WITH AN OPEN HEART

This year, my husband Gene and I became sponsors for the first time. Our student is a wonderful 13 year old girl, Doraliz. We own an apartment in the La Madera area of Zihuatanejo and live there each winter, from November to April since our retirement 2 years ago. We were keen to meet Doraliz after having an initial email from her while we were still in Canada but were unsure how to contact and meet her.

We are lucky to know Erika Vanessa, one of the very successful graduates of Ninos Adelante who is our property administrator. When we told her we wanted to meet Doraliz and give her a small Xmas present, she promptly phoned Jose Bustos who arranged to bring Doraliz the next day.

Doraliz, arrived with Jose accompanied by her very attractive and personable mom, Maydec. We immediately liked both very much and had a really enjoyable first meeting with Jose as our guest and translator. The carefully chosen clothing that I had purchased with the assistance of Vanessa was graciously accepted and we felt that we had made a good start on our relationship

with an appropriate Xmas present. We followed up with her and her family as our guests at the Nino's Adelante breakfast, and a family swim party and lunch at our condominium. But where do you go from there..... this is the excerpt from my blog written after we took Doraliz and her brother and one sister out to Barra de Potosi and the new wild life reserve, El Refugio de Potosi, for the day.

When we decided to become sponsors, we knew we wanted to be actively involved with our student because we are here 5 months each winter. However, spending time with Doraliz has been a mental challenge for me because I tell myself, a) we don't really know her or her family very well and are unsure of their tastes or preferences b) they only speak Spanish and our communication is limited c) I am very conscious of the inequities in our relationship.

Although our sponsorship involves a relatively small amount of money on an annual basis, it is obvious that we have been privileged in the order of the world. On the other hand, her hardworking family has little. They live at the top of a steep hill overlooking Zihuatanejo. Some of the recent migrants to that area are accused of being squatters, but we believe her family own the property. Doraliz has a loan from the government and runs a small tienda attached to her families modest plywood and paper home. It is her way to contribute to supporting herself and her family even though she is only 13 and is working hard to maintain a top grade in her class and qualify for our sponsorship. Her Mom volunteers in the local community by arranging social programs for some of the areas poorest and her Dad is a gardener facing unemployment because the large Ixtapa home where he works is for sale.

I am sometimes unsure as to how to handle visits to her home where there is no place to sit and I feel like I am at risk to be perceived as critical. I want to know how to handle giving gifts, as I am constantly aware of how much they need and how little they have. So this Saturday it was a great relief to have some really fun time with Doraliz and her brother and sister. We laughed, we played and we ate. Gene finds it easier than me to just be with them and laugh and not worry about how to talk or what to say....he has the gift of being a Mexican at heart! It is the lesson I hear in yoga everyday....to be able to move from my thinking mind and live with an open heart. Doraliz may just be the gift I need.

Trish Suess, Victoria BC Canada

FYI

Junior high and high school students are paid monthly during the school year. College students receive their support in two payments, August and January. All are grateful for the financial aid that makes it possible for them to attend school. Thank you!

WEBSITE

Don't forget to visit our website at www.friendsofninosadelante.org

THANK YOU

We would like to thank the Catholic Community Foundation for their donation of \$500 to Friends of Niños Adelante. Your support is appreciated by the many students who benefit from the program.

ESTATE PLANNING SUGGESTIONS

It has been brought to the attention of the board that when planning one's will and a donation to Friends of Niños Adelante, simply contact your estate planning attorney. Leaving a donation can be done in two ways, providing a specific dollar amount or suggesting a percentage of the deceased's estate. We would like to encourage all sponsors to give this suggestion some consideration. We are thankful to all who support our students in such a variety of ways.

GET YOUR PASSPORT

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative(WHTI) now requires all passengers to present either a PASSPORT, PASPORT CARD OR ENHANCED DRIVERS LICENSE when leaving or entering the U.S. and visiting Mexico. Please allow plenty of time to have your passport, passport care, or enhanced drivers license processed.

DISCONTINUING STUDENT SPONSORSHIP

If you are unable to continue to support your student please try to find a replacement or you may notify Bob Albright, bobalb@comcast.net

SHARING INTERESTING EXPERIENCES

We are looking for stories of interest from those who would like to share an experience with other sponsors. Please contact Leif and Lois Lindblom at

leif@lindblomfamily.com or at P.O. Box 677, Oscoda Mi, 48750

We are grateful to Shelagh Yarnell for her dedication in helping us to see the joy of sponsoring. Thanks also to Steve Leighton for his story on their future architect. Welcome to Trish Suess as she shares her journey to Live With an Open Heart. Many thanks to all those who have shared their stories with us.

SPONSOR/STUDENT REUNION BREAKFAST REGISTRATION FORM

Many padrinos have said that the becado breakfast is the highlight of their visit to Ixtapa/Zihuatanejo. This is the time to see your becado, hear about current Niños Adelante activities and experience the energy of a room full of kids and parents who appreciate the support they receive from Niños Adelante. Translators will be available to help you and your becado get the most out of this experience. We hope that you will be able to join us at one of the two breakfast gatherings. Please use these Breakfasts to meet and visit with your student and his or her family in place of having Jose arrange a private meeting. As you can well imagine, the months of January and February are very chaotic for Jose.

Breakfasts will be held at the Hotel Fontan in Ixtapa at 9:30 A.M. on **Sunday, January 16, 2011** and at 9:30 A.M. on **Sunday February 13, 2011**.

Register now! Jose must notify your student to attend the breakfasts. This notification takes place during beca payout day on the first Saturday/Sunday of the month in which the breakfast will be held. We therefore need to know your intentions to attend the January event by December 22, 2009. By the same token we need to know your intentions relative to the February event by January 27, 2010.

As in the past, padrinos are responsible for the breakfasts of their becados and their families. Cost of breakfast is expected to be about \$11 per person.

(Note: please include only yourself and your family and friends in the count of guests below. Jose will contact the students and their families to determine the number of students and family members attending)

Please reserve _____ places for me at the January 16 Breakfast

Please reserve _____ places for me at the February 14 Breakfast

I/we will be staying at _____ in Ixtapa/Zihua
from __/__/11 departing __/__/11. (this information helps Jose communicate with you if necessary).

My name is _____

I would also like to host the student of the following Sponsor/s

**Please fill out the above and email this completed form to
jrobins@moviemerchants.com**

Janie Robins

226 Hamburg Mt. Rd.

Weaverville, NC 28787