



## 2017 SPRING-SUMMER NEWSLETTER

### President's Column

*By Steve Leighton*

Another year has come and gone in our beloved Ixtapa/Zihuatanejo. As I reflect back on this year, it has been another great one. I was able to make the early January breakfast with sponsors that are not usually at the large February breakfast. It is a smaller group and I had the privilege of meeting some new sponsors and students. One in particular was the student of Don & June Rush. The student is Cindy Ivette Cervantes Pacheco. Cindy recently graduated as a nurse from the Instituto America here in Zihua. Cindy had a plaque with her graduation certificate on it and I took a picture of Don & Cindy together. I was not quite sure who was prouder...Don or Cindy!

During our February breakfast, we spent more time on the students and less time on the traditional dance performance. We had 6 students talk a bit about what the Niños Adelante program means to them. Three spoke in English and three spoke in Spanish. One of the English speakers (speech is in the newsletter in its' entirety) was given by Daniela Perez Campos. She is the student of Stan & Emily Karhoff. There were four words in her speech that stuck in my mind. She said **"you are changing lives"**. This is coming from a 14 year old girl that has been in the program for 3 years now. For a young lady like this to say those words was totally AWESOME to me. That is what we are all about in Niños Adelante and I cannot say another word about it!

One of the other speakers that day was Cristina Pineda Gonzalez. She is the daughter of Hortensia & Fortino. Hortensia was the student that my Father supported many years ago. I get very "choked up" every time I see this young lady and her parents, just knowing how proud my Father would be of this family today. I wrote about this family in the newsletter last winter. Once again, it reminds me of the way we are "changing lives" in many of these great kids and families.

Thanks for all you do for the Niños!  
See you next year in Mexico.  
Steve

### Update - Cindy Ivette Cervantes Pacheco

*By Steve Leighton*

This is sponsor Don Rush with the student Cindy Ivette Cervantes Pacheco. Cindy graduated in 2016 from the Instituto America (a private school in Zihua). Cindy graduated with a degree in nursing and was showing her graduation certificate to her sponsor Don at the January breakfast in Ixtapa. Don & June Rush live in Corunna, Indiana and currently sponsor two other students. I'm not sure who is prouder in this picture...the student or the sponsor!!



## January and February Student Breakfasts

By Bob Albright

The combined attendance of the 2017 January and February Student Breakfasts amounted to just over 400 sponsors, students and student family members. There were over 285 at the February event alone. This year's entertainment at the February event was home grown. The English class students in chorus sang several songs in English and then individual class

members provided short inspirational speeches delivered both in English and Spanish. There was even a little bit of "American Idol" action provided by one young vocalist.



## February Breakfast Update

By Steve Leighton

This year during the February Annual Breakfast in Ixtapa, we took a bit of a different approach to the program. Instead of the traditional dancers, we asked some of the students to talk a bit about what Niños Adelante means to them. The student sponsored by Stan & Emily Karhoff, Daniela Perez Campos gave the following speech:

### • DISCURSO •

Good morning. my name is Daniela Perez-campos, I'm 14 years old and this is my 3<sup>rd</sup> year in Niños Adelante. Before I was here I was just a girl who liked to go to school but I actually have no goal or dream and I thought I was studying without any sense.

Later with help of my parents I got into niños and my life changed. Now I have a reason why to study, I want my sponsors be proud, my parents...

~~Be~~ ~~ing~~ Being in niños means a lot for me and my family, because not only did we make new friends, we made our family bigger and today I want you to know that not only are you just paying for students education, you're changing lives and many students including me are blessed to have this opportunity, because sometimes people just need an opportunity to do big things in life.

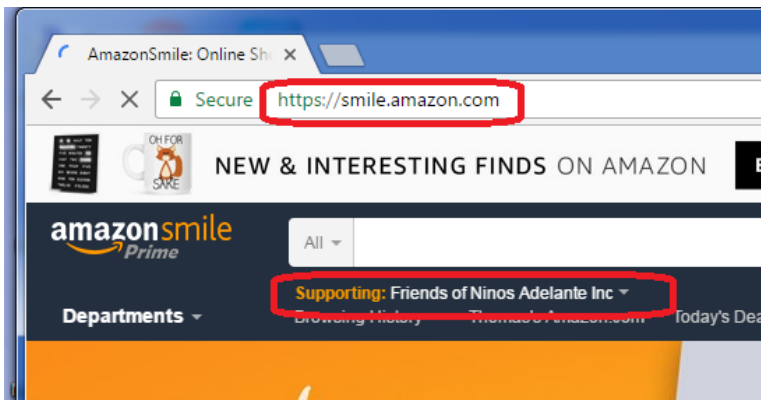
Today I want to thank all of you, all the sponsors here for giving us that chance to be great.



THANK YOU

*This was an awesome statement about our program and sponsors that was written totally by the student. This is what we are all about!*

## Amazon Smile Benefits Friends of Niños



Many of you likely make purchases from time to time from Amazon. When doing so, if you were to go to Amazon Smile, you can select Friends of Niños Adelante as your non-profit and then Amazon will make a small donation for every purchase that you make. Signup is at the Amazon Smile page <https://smile.amazon.com/> You only need to select Friends of Niños Adelante one time and then place future orders from the smile.amazon.com page. It is then

automatic for every purchase. It does not cost you anything and the organization will benefit from it.

Please pass this on to all of your contacts and let's see if we can build another source of income for our Friends of Niños organization. Thanks to all for helping us out and from the kids!

Steve

### Where Do Our Kids Come From?

*By Steve Leighton - President of Friends of Niños Adelante*

Many times I am asked about the selection process of the kids in our Niños Adelante program. For the most part, the process begins with our Director, Jose Bustos visiting with the 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. Although education is compulsory through grade 12 a high percentage of kids drop after 6th grade. The poorer families will often push their kids to find work and help support the family.

There is NO SHORTAGE of these kids. There are many and we cannot help them all, but we can help some. Jose will meet with the teachers and other educators to find the brightest and poorest of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes. Once he has made some selections, he will then meet with the family and student to get their "buy in" for the program. By that I mean he gets a verbal commitment from the parents and students that they really want to get an education and will stay with it until they graduate. Many things can happen along the way that will change that commitment, but at least they all start out on the same track to get that education.

Often sponsors will meet people along the way while visiting the Ixtapa area and will want to help their kids with an education. While this is well meaning, sometimes the students simply do not qualify for our program. As tempting as it may be to find and select your own students, it is imperative that we let Jose handle this process. He, after consulting with teachers and parents, should be the one to make the final decision as to who will benefit most from our program. Jose's Process has proven to be most successful over the years. So, I ask you please do NOT recruit students. Leave that process up to Jose.

A side note: The Friends of Niños Board of Directors has voted to limit the number of students we will support in the program. It is physically impossible for Jose to manage more students than he already has. Over the years, attempts to expand the Zihuatanejo infrastructure have met with little success but we continue to search for solutions.

## Beginning English Classes / Letter to Sponsors

By Margaret Diglio



Hola Padriños

I am writing this on behalf of the English teachers who taught your students for 6 weeks this year. As their sponsors, we thought it was important that you see the effort they are making to improve themselves learning English. Most of them were very diligent with their attendance.

Our goal was to expose them to English using native speakers of the language. It is impossible to become fluent in 6 weeks but we hope that we could encourage them to continue with their study of English. Some of the students are already enrolled in English classes with Stella and Ana.

We look forward to working with the students next year. If you have any questions or are interested in the program, please contact me, Margaret Diglio at [margaretdiglio@comcast.net](mailto:margaretdiglio@comcast.net)

English teachers: Emily & Stan Karhoff, Mary McGlenn & Alan Axelrod, Margaret & Vinny Diglio



### Update - Emmanuel Moreno Pacheco

Hello, my name is Emmanuel Moreno Pacheco, I am 12 years old and I was born on May 11, 2004 here in the city and port of Zihuatanejo de Azueta. I live in the colonia Benito Juárez. My mother's name is Guadalupe Pacheco Gómez and my father's name is Mario Moreno Olea, I have 4 brothers and their names are Karla, 16 years, Christian 10 years, Isabel 6 years and Sebastian 2 years. I just finished my primary education in the Esc. Prim. Juan R. Escudero in the afternoon

Continued: Update - Emmanuel Moreno Pacheco

shift, this school is in the colony Infonavit la Noria, here in Zihuatanejo. I am going to enter to the Esc. Sec. No. 52 Caritino Maldonado that is in the Col. El Embalse of this city. My parents and I chose this school because there is an accounting workshop, and since I want to be an accountant when I grow up, I'm going to take that accounting workshop.

I like to play soccer futbol and I would like to play futbol in a team. Right now I only play in single games at school or on the court of my colonia. My favorite foods are chicken barbecue and the pork and enchiladas, and I like to go to the beach.

I like being sponsored by the Fundación Niños Adelante to help me continue studying to become an accountant when I grow up. My parents say that they will help me as much as they can so that I can be someone in life, but that I have to really want to do it. I love my parents.

Thank you for reading this letter.

Emmanuel Moreno Pacheco

## **English Class Update**

*By Tim Ellis*

We just returned home from Ixtapa after spending eight wonderful weeks there. For six of those weeks we were busy with the volunteer English classes held at the church at Plaza Kioto. The Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes from 3-5PM were attended by 30-35 students daily. The age range was from 11 to 22. We divided the kids into two classes-beginning and advanced and that arrangement worked out very well. Shelagh, Ross, and I worked with the advanced students while the beginners were taught by Stan, Emily, Vinny, Margaret, Alan, and Mary. From time to time we'd have visitors and they would help with the classes also. Sometimes teachers or visitors brought treats for the students. We had very good attendance and attention by the kids in the classes.

Vinny worked to teach all of the students a song - Let There Be Peace On Earth - and they then came to the large breakfast gathering and sang for all 300 or so people attending. In addition we had some speakers from the group who talked about their experiences with Niños. As always the breakfast was a great event, especially this year with the kids performing instead of having professional entertainers as in the past.

Our final class on 3/3 was the annual auction wherein each student was given a packet of play money and could then bid on some 50 donated items-backpacks, makeup, jewelry, snacks, along with other things that they could keep. This event is always big for the students - we do it in English to help them with learning our language. Following the "sale" we had pizza, soft drinks, and cookies for a bunch of hungry teenagers. We are already planning for next year with Margaret taking over organizing the classes as a new Niños board member.

Thanks to all the teachers for holding the 18 classes this year!

## Annual Board of Directors Meeting Ixtapa Feb 12, 2017

Friends of Niños Adelante held its annual board meeting on Sunday February 12th immediately following the Student Breakfast at the Fontan Hotel Ixtapa. Directors in attendance were Albright, Dehart, Ellis, Lindblom, Leighton, Moe, Neal, Romain, Shea and Tullos. Directors Culligan and Wenrich were unable to attend. Sponsors, Margaret and Vinny Diglio, Ruth Johnson and Janni Moe were also in attendance.

Financial reports reflected a sound balance sheet as of December 31st and an on target budget/forecast for the first three quarters of the fiscal year. A recap of the 2016 Fall Fund Drive revealed a total of \$18,000 was raised. The Fall Fund Drive along with our Benefit Dinner provide the funds needed to cover the Zihua office and computer expense, the end of school year student fiesta, formal English classes, special dental and medical needs, and a portion of the Irene Sheahen special scholarships. A huge thank you to all of the participants and contributors.

A review of our Special scholarships including the Irene Sheahen, Gallagher and Sanderson scholarships showed them to be functioning well. A list of possible candidates for this coming August indicates a good field of candidates.

### Update - Andrea Valdovinos Osorio



My name is Andrea Valdovinos Osorio, I am 17 years old and studying in my last year of high school. I'm about to graduate. My goals are to continue learning every day and not be stuck in the same place. I'm doing entrance exams, I will make one for biotechnology engineer, and one for business management, both careers are my dreams, because in each of them I can develop as a human being and also professionally.

My most important career goal is to help as many people as have helped me and many others.

I have 3 years and 9 months in the Niños Adelante and I can say that this is where I have found great friends and family of the soul because we're all going in search of a wish and have the inspiration to move forward by the many efforts of those who work here. The foundation has helped me to grow in all aspects, especially in education. I have mentored some very beautiful people and thanks to them I have met so many people who always look forward and never backward.

I have been able to give education which is the most valuable gift. They have taught me love and have given me joy.

Being in Niños not all about receiving a monthly stipend, it is to have knowledge that others too aspire. It serves to educate, define yourself and reason. Here I have learned to not only learn and see. You learn to smile when others do because it's a team and you are part of an important puzzle.

Andrea Valdovinos Osorio

## Update - Alejandra Aday Mancilla Ramirez



Hello my appreciable sponsors, I have not heard from you for a long time, I have sent you several emails that do not respond. I hope you are well and I want to thank you again for your support. I'm already through with more than half of my internship and I've learned a lot about nursing. I have been through many procedures that I had never been through and I took every moment to learn.

Look at one of the procedures that I have performed.... this is a machine to extract platelets so that compound of the blood can be donated to the patient who needs it, especially patients suffering from cancer and low platelets.

I really like my profession and every day I fall more in love with it. This is what I always dreamed to do and you have been a very important part for this dream to be fulfilled. Of course also Niños Adelante is the intermediary for this to be carried out and I also thank Mr. José Bustos because he has always given us the required

support and cares about the needs of the students. Ever since I was in high school he encouraged me to talk about the support and from that moment has never stopped being aware of everything that happens with you and us and that is appreciable by me.

Well changing the topic I want to say that on July 31 my internship will be completed. This event for me will be very important because I finish the degree. There is a chance that I may go on to a postgraduate study, which means this, There is the possibility of specializing in a specific area of nursing and I am thinking of studying NURSING CARE IN CARE OF THE PATIENT IN A CRITICAL STATE, which focuses on caring for patients who have life compromise and are very unstable. This area has caught my attention and after the degree I will look for the possibility of doing it in order to be a more prepared nurse. Here in Mexico City things are not the same as there in Guerrero. Here there is more technology and I had to learn many things that they did not teach me at UAGRO but every day I am learning new things and that is why I say that although it is difficult to live here, it has been worth a lot to be able to prepare better and be a good nurse.

Thank you for your support and I really hope to hear from you soon, I love you very much.

Alejandra Ramirez