



## FALL-WINTER 2011 NEWSLETTER

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hola Friends of Niños Adelante sponsors,

09.12.2011

I hope everyone has enjoyed a wonderful summer. I surely have enjoyed being able to spend quality time with my family and have taken advantage of the warmer, tropical Minnesota weather. Our children are back in school with Spanish immersion. They are very excited to learn more Spanish so they can communicate with all of their friends in Ixtapa/Zihua. We have set up our plans for the 2012 trip to Ixtapa/Zihua and are very excited to see many of you in February.

We had our last board meeting on September 8, 2011. We currently have 126 students in High School and 84 in College. Yes you read that correctly, 84 students attending College! This is incredible as we started to offer college sponsorship only a few years ago. Thank you, board members for all of your efforts to make this a great organization. Any sponsor interested in joining our board please contact me at [mn.crose@yahoo.com](mailto:mn.crose@yahoo.com). We are always looking for individuals to help us make a positive impact in the lives of our niños and their community.

If you are going to be in Ixtapa/Zihua in January or February 2012 please remember to sign up for the following events. (Applications are at the end of the newsletter and at [www.friendsofninosadelante.org](http://www.friendsofninosadelante.org))

**Breakfast with the Friends of Niño's Adelante students and their families.**

January 15<sup>th</sup> and February 12<sup>th</sup> @ the Fontan Hotel in Ixtapa

**Zihuatanejo benefit dinner**

February 16<sup>th</sup> @ the Suspiro Restaurant, Pacifica Grand

In the next couple of weeks you will receive a letter from our fundraising committee. Our mission is to always give 100% of the sponsor's beca donation dollars to their student. In order for us to do this, annual fundraising is needed. Your donations will help us finance all additional expenses we incur throughout the year. Please donate any dollar amount you are comfortable with and ask some of your friends, co-workers, etc. if they are interested in helping with the associated costs of running our organization. Please remember that Friends of Niño's Adelante is a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization and therefore donations are tax deductible.

Thanks to everyone, for all you do to ensure our students get the best opportunities to change the lives of themselves and their families.

Chris D. Rose  
President

**PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR SPONSOR BECA DONATIONS HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Several new board members are needed to fill vacancies created by retirees. There are the usual secretary, treasurer, and vice president positions. In addition we can use your talents with the newsletter, English classes, special events, scholarships etc. The task of board membership is far from pressing since there are better than a dozen of us to share the effort. We meet four times a year (one in-person meeting held in Ixtapa each February and three telephone conference meetings spaced throughout the year). Attendance at the Ixtapa meeting is helpful but not a necessity.

Please let us know if you have an interest in helping us guide this wonderful organization by joining our Board. You may contact Bob Albright [bobalb@comcast.net](mailto:bobalb@comcast.net) or Steve Leighton at [leightonconsult@earthlink.com](mailto:leightonconsult@earthlink.com)

Also please visit our website at [www.friendsofninosadelante.org](http://www.friendsofninosadelante.org) for more information.

## IN MEMORY

**One of our most ardent** and enthusiastic sponsors, Jim Nelson passed away at home in Vancouver, in his sleep, August 18 of natural causes.

Operating from his headquarters on La Ropa Beach, Jim preached the virtues of getting involved in helping the students of Zihuatanejo. He recruited many sponsors to the Niños program and other school construction programs in the area and kept tabs on a consistent supply of bright kids.

Jim will be missed. James Nelson - Born in Glasgow Scotland, July 29, 1932. He died in North Vancouver, Canada on August 18, 2011. Age 79.

The following is a message of condolence from one of his Niños students:

Estimada Familia Nelson

El dia de hoy me acabo de enterar de la fallecimiento del gran Señor James Nelson, Lamento mucho el momento por el que estan pasando, de todo corazon deceo que Dios les llene de fuerzas y de una pronta resignacion.

Nuestras mas sinceras condolencias ; en estos momentos, mi corazon esta con ustedes..

Descanse en paz James Nelson  
Keila Gabriel Vargas Montes & Familia

## **About Liz and John Cook.**

This is a loving memory about Liz Cook who has left us, but will never be forgotten and a testimonial about Dr. John Cook who is with us and those of us who know him want him never to leave our company.

Since this piece is inspired by the blessed memory of Liz, let us begin by reminiscing about her. We all met Liz about 10 years ago in Zihuatanejo and, at night, in Ixtapa. She was the Dental Assistant to her husband John. While the rest of us spent weekends of our multiple weeks in Mexico, savoring the temptations of the warm sun and cool ocean breezes, tempered by Margaritas and Michaladas, Liz suited up in her surgical garb to assist her husband with various dental surgical procedures that began early in the morning on Saturdays and lasted until late in the day on Sundays. In 10 years I never once heard Liz complain about the demands of this schedule. And Liz wasn't even performing duties for which she was professionally trained.

Let's face it: dental surgery doesn't always bring out the best in human nature. Especially when the patient is 12 years old, has never visited a dentist, and has been treated to horrifying tales from an older, imaginative, brother. But Liz reported for work each and every Saturday during her multiple-week stay in Ixtapa. She would usually find time to join in with us at night, even though she had to get home early with John to be ready for a demanding schedule the following day.

Liz was sustained by more than her passion to be of help to children who could otherwise not afford dental services. She was guided by a strong faith that was with her daily. She was an inspirational figure and I, for one, am grateful for her presence during our stay in Mexico.

John Cook is, simply put, a piece of work. He could easily have chosen to spend his Mexican time free of the demands of a busy schedule in his dental office in Michigan. But he chose to donate his weekends providing free dental care to the children of Zihuatanejo. And that included bringing down to Mexico all kinds of equipment and dental paraphernalia, sometimes at great personal risk, dealing with curious customs inspectors at the Mexican airport.

I know that often as not, John was weary and tired at the end of a Saturday or Sunday. And I know he was often a little frustrated with the casual approach Mexican kids have to meeting appointments. But he stuck with it. Thanks, John, from all of your friends and the kids from Zihuatanejo.

--Tyrone Bujold

### A JOURNEY WITH ERIC

The journey began in early 2000 when John and Liz Cook acquainted Marjorie and me with an organization in Zihuatanejo called "Ninos Adelante." They told us how they and other friends who stayed at the same Zihuatanejo condo were contributing a set amount of money each year to help the children of Zihuatanejo with their education. Dr. Cook, a dentist, was also planning to help by contributing his professional expertise and his time to check the kids' dental needs.

The Cooks' comments about Ninos Adelante were all positive. They explained that the beca of \$300 a year through high school and \$500 for college would be used by the students to buy school supplies, gym shoes, and school uniforms. They talked about the selection process, working with schools in Zihuatanejo to identify the brightest of the economically disadvantaged students for the program. They talked about the sponsorship and how important it was to communicate with and meet the students and their families at the annual student breakfasts.

Marjorie and I were convinced that this program was a worthwhile endeavor. We applied for sponsorship of a student in 2000. Eric Daniel Salinas, a 7th grader at the ETA 52 school was identified for us in September of 2001.

In the early years, we had yet to meet Eric. We knew, though, that his scholarship was well deserved. Eric maintained a straight 10 grade point average [10 being the highest attainable] for his 7th, 8th, and 9th school years. He continued with GPA's of 9.9 and 10 throughout his high school years at Prepa 13.

Although we didn't meet Eric during our first six years of sponsorship, we felt proud of his achievements, and we longed to know him and his family. We felt that Eric must be a very special boy. Indeed, despite the miles that separated us and the lack of a face-to-face meeting, Eric had become special to us. Our journey over the first six years was travelled over paths thousands of miles apart.

I made a promise to Eric that we would travel to Mexico for a Ninos Adelante breakfast meeting in Ixtapa when he graduated from high school. I promised him, too, the gift of a computer when he graduated.

And so it was that in the spring of 2007, Marjorie and I trekked to a Ninos Adelante breakfast in Ixtapa to meet the Salinas family. As the time approached, we were filled with anticipation, excitement, and perhaps a little apprehension. What would Eric really be like? Would we be able to communicate with him? Would he be the Eric we had visualized all these years, the Eric we had come to think of as "our boy"? What would Eric think of us? Thoughts and questions spun in our heads, awaiting the moment that we would actually meet.

We were not disappointed. What a wonderful experience it was! These moments of meeting were emotional ones, and very happy ones for Marjorie and me.

Eric had made the decision to go on to college. We let him know that we fully supported that decision and that we were very proud of him.

Eric lives with his mother and three sisters. His father is in the U.S. Eric will be the first in his family to attend college.

We were to discover more about our bright young student when his mother invited us to their home for lunch. Imagine our surprise when we visited the family home and learned that Eric [while attending high school] had designed and mostly built the house by himself. He used local cement blocks and built the house up on a hill in a community of other small homes. Part of the house was open to the sky, and other parts, a kitchen and a bedroom, were enclosed.

Eric's mother, Maria, had prepared for us a delicious chicken meal. She had also invited along a friend who spoke English. How relieved I was to have an interpreter! We got to know the sisters and encouraged Lucera to work hard in school and we would try to get her into the Ninos Adelante program when she was eligible. [It did happen and we have been sponsoring Lucera for the past several years.]

What an uplifting and enjoyable experience Marjorie and I had with Eric and his family! We have made no mistake in supporting him through the Ninos Adelante program

Eric's mother is a warm, generous, gracious woman. We were so impressed by her! She is loving, involved, and a strong family leader. Maria has been the key reason the four children are such terrific individuals. They have been taught the value of education and the need to work hard. They have been guided to be good citizens in the way they handle themselves and interact with the community. Maria has taught them to avoid situations that might jeopardize their goal of being the best they can be. Maria is the reason they strive to have a better future.

Eric's mother has been kind to us. Beyond the house visit, she has gifted us with much of her personal needlework crafts : dresses, pillow covers, shirts, towels ----- beautiful embroidery! We treasure her gifts.

My view of "sponsorship" is that one never knows when charities ask for donations how much actually gets to those in need. How much goes for administration? How much "drops through the cracks"? In Ninos Adelante we know who gets the money, how the money is used, and how the recipients are selected. We have the opportunity to shake their hands, to hug them, to communicate personally with them and to learn their aspirations. We share their joy when they succeed.

In addition, this is an investment in Mexico,[I always need to know the investment.] These students will be the ones to eventually run Mexico. Lacking our support, they would end up less valuable to themselves and to their country. Without Ninos, they could end up working in the coconut plantations

or serving as domestics. With our help they have the opportunity to reach their highest potential as teachers, engineers, doctors and business people.

Eric was accepted to the University of Morelia in September of 2007. After basic studies he entered a program that is a cross between pharmacy and medical research. He is involved in identifying new drugs to treat diseases. He identifies the disease, then researches potential natural and chemical products that might cure the disease. He tests the products chemically, and in animal tests, with the aim of identifying helpful new drugs.

I conversed from time to time with Eric via the internet ---- a very limited conversation due to my lack of proficiency in the Spanish language. I have little vocabulary beyond "hola" and "taco". Eric thought he had the answer to our communication problem with the use of an internet translation site. Here is a sample of one of his messages:

*DEAR Godfather:*

*I also have a Masters THOUGHT THE PURPOSE, AND IF POSSIBLE CAN MAKE A DOCTORATE. VOY A DEAL TO GET THE MAIL FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE COLLEGE THAT YOU CAN ASK FOR ALL YOUR DOUBTS.*

*BUT MY GOAL IS TO MAKE POWER IS mastery. I hope GOOD NEWS FOR YOU. WANT TO. ERIC DANIEL SALINAS*

I am sure my attempts were just as confusing to him. Bob Albright suggested that for casual messages the internet translator was okay but for anything beyond "hola" or "como estas?" Eric and I should write in our native language and pass the messages through Bob, who would have them translated by a Spanish speaker and send them on. Wow! Did that make a difference!

This year, 2011, Eric earned his college degree. What a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction I felt as I boarded a plane for Morelia to attend his graduation.

Arrangements had been made to have Jose Bustos drive Eric's mother and his three sisters to Morelia. We all, including Jose Bustos and his wife Ana, sat in the huge auditorium for the speeches and the student-by-student diploma awards. After taking a photo of Eric receiving his diploma I returned to my seat only to learn that Eric had a surprise for all of us!!

"Our boy" Eric was announced as Valedictorian for his entire class of 500 students. The family let out a cheer that had to be the loudest sound heard all day! I cannot begin to tell you how proud I was of Eric. He came to me later and said he was dedicating his number one ranking to Marjorie and me because of our support. Tears filled my eyes when he handed me the proclamation.

At home in Zihuatanejo, Eric's mother, Maria, had prepared a tasty lunch of shredded beef and chicken which she brought to Morelia. Along with our group, Eric's friends, neighbors, and his girlfriend Lilly attended the celebration party. It is a wonderful memory for me.

Over the next year, Eric plans to take a few advanced courses at the university. As well, he will study under a renowned doctor while sending out his resume. He may consider continuing toward his Master's degree [with my urging].

Eric's journey is not complete. He will continue to receive our sponsorship as he studies. We look forward to sponsoring his sister, Britseida, the next oldest, as she starts in Teachers' College in September. We are committed to this fine family, and delighted to be so. Our rewards are many.

*Written by Eric's sponsor Ewing Jones*

## A WORD FROM ENEREIDA

A brief thought on Ninos Adelante expressed by a former student (translated by Shelagh Yarnell) who was highlighted in our 2011 Spring-Summer newsletter. The article was titled Sponsorship Joy-Everlasting by Pat Hill

The Fundacion Ninos Adelante has been very important for me. Because of the means of my Padrinos I was able to complete my studies, not only the financial support, but also the motivation that they gave me. They always encouraged me to be a professional and the friendship that they gave me made me part of their family. That too made me want to finish my studies. We should always say that the Ninos Adelante students will be the professionals of the future.

Enereida Pascacio Valdovinos

## ENGLISH CLASSES

Two members of our Ninos Board, Shelagh Yarnell and Leif Lindblom have again volunteered to teach English classes to Ninos Adelante students. The 2012 classes are at no cost to the students and are offered 3 days a week. We would encourage sponsors to have their students take advantage of this program if they are able. Some have a conflict with work schedules or caring for siblings. Shelagh's classes start on January 23rd and run for 6 weeks. Leif's classes start on February 6 and run 3 weeks. Some books and printed materials are provided. Money is available if needed for bus fare home after the lessons.

Shelagh has been teaching classes to Ninos Adelante students for 10 years. Her husband Ross has been a dedicated assistant. She says "The classes this year (2011) were the best in several years." They brought constant joy to her. She teaches both morning and afternoon. Shelagh has invested countless days and hours in both teaching and preparation for classes. She and Ross have enjoyed a close relationship with many of their students.

Leif teaches afternoon classes. He has been enjoying his students for nine years. He hopes to spark an interest in the ninos to have the desire to continue on their own to learn and speak English. Leif was a teacher for 40 years and the English classes give him the opportunity to continue his love of teaching and working with children.

Tim Ellis helped in the afternoon classes and also conducted an auction for both AM and PM classes. This was a highlight for both groups. He is also a member of the board.

Len Draving has been very supportive of the English Classes. He and Ross have worked with small groups and individual students and helped in any way possible.

Thanks also to Janie Robins for making Valentine's Day special for all classes. She has done this for many years. Her treats and those big red hearts bring a smile to everyone. Janie is also our board secretary.

All of these dedicated sponsors, and many others who have helped over the years, are to be commended for their dedication and willingness to donate their time and talents to better the lives of many niños. A big thank you to all of them.

Following is a note, one of many received from a happy student.

Hola Shelagh, I want to thank you for the English Classes and the special breakfast you made for us. I enjoy the classes very much and want you to know how much I appreciate you doing this for all of us. It is a special time for me. I especially like all the friendships you create with us and your friends in the classes.

Your student, Alejandra

## JOSE LUIS' ROAD TO SUCCESS

Jose Luis was a student in our English Classes in 2003 and 2004. He was hesitant to participate but with much encouragement from his mother he decided to give it a try. He studied hard in classes for 2 years and then continued to study the materials given him.

In 2010 a friend told Jose that Banamex, a Mexican Bank, was hiring. He encouraged Jose to apply for the position. Unfortunately, Jose didn't have the proper clothing or shoes for an interview. His friend knew that Jose knew some English and how to present himself well. He borrowed the necessary clothes and shoes and again prompted Jose to apply for the job.

Jose walked into the interview and there were about 30 other applicants- almost enough to discourage him from staying. To everyone's surprise, the bank manager entered the room and started speaking in English. Still speaking in English he asked if anyone spoke English. Jose quickly raised his hand and responded "I do sir" and they continued the conversation for a few minutes. The manager then turned to the other applicants and said "The position has been filled". Jose's opportunity to attend school with the help of a Ninos Adelante sponsor and his own hard work had reaped great benefits.

Today Jose is in a management training program provided by the bank. He has moved from his humble dwelling in the hills to an apartment that he shares with his wife and beautiful baby daughter.

## COLLEGE INFORMATION

**A number of your students** are hoping to move on to college next year. Before being admitted, the students must take and pass a test by the government at a cost of \$100US. Any amount that you would be willing to contribute to this required fee would be greatly appreciated. PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO Friends of Niños Adelante PO Box 1624 Sonoma CA 95486

**The following are some numbers** and information about colleges in the Zihuatanejo area plus some of the colleges and universities attended by current and past Niños students.

Keep in mind, the costs shown below consist of tuition only. For the colleges, all of the books, materials and tools are the responsibility of the students.

In addition, for cases of students attending school away from home an approximate cost is 4000 pesos per month for the food and lodging expenses.

<b>Name of School</b> Nombre	<b>Carriers offered</b> Carreras	<b>Federal or Private</b>	<b>Tuition per yr</b> Matricula	<b>Distance from</b> <b>Zihua</b>
Tecnologico	Accounting Business management, Computer Science Electromecanic engineering Architecture	State technical college	2500 pesos per semester	In Zihuatanejo

Facultad	Hotel management Travel agency	State tourism college Bachelors degree in tourism	2200 pesos per semester	In Zihua On the road to la Mahahua
CEDVA	High Cuisine cooking	Private school Certificated by the state	2500 per month	In Zihuatanejo close to the bus station
Sor Juana	Law Tourism Business administration Accounting	Local private college certificated by the state	1200 pesos per month	In Zihuatanejo across the canal from la commercial Mexicana store
UT Petatlan	Industrial engineering Engineering electromecanic Tourism Business administration Computers programs	State college	2250 pesos per semester	40 km south from zihua on the way to Acapulco
Chilpancingo	Architecture Education Medicine Law Different Engineering	Federal state university This is Guerrero's major University.	1500 pesos Per semester	350 km 6hrs by bus from Zihuatanejo
Morelia	Architecture Education Medicine Law Different Engineering	Federal university Michoacán state	1200 pesos per semester	370 km 4 hours by bus from zihua
Morelia la Salle	Accounting Psychology Law Education science Marketing	National Private school	4000 pesos per month	370 km 4 hours by bus from Zihuatanejo
Politecnico DF	Medicine Law Different Engineering Architecture Psychology	Federal National University	400 pesos per semester Additional expençe's depending of the career	600 km 8 hours driving from zihua



Automa de Queretaro	Medicine Law Different Engineering Architecture Psychology	Federal National University	1300 pesos per semester	700 km 9 hours by bus from Zihuatanejo
Tecnologico Colima	Accounting Business management, Computer Science Electro mechanical engineering Architecture Similar to Zihua Tecnologico may be some others	State college	2000 pesos per semester	10 hours in bus from Zihuatanejo
Uag Acapulco	Medicine Law Different Engineering Architecture Psychology Education	State college	1200 pesos per semester	240 km south from Zihuatanejo 4 hours in bus

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Should any of you desire more sponsor information, it can be found at the web site [www.friendsofninosadelante.org](http://www.friendsofninosadelante.org) or contact Bob Neal at [RNeal65@gmail.com](mailto:RNeal65@gmail.com)

### STORIES

Our newsletter is always looking for articles about you and your student to share with others. If you have a story, please contact Leif or Lois Lindblom at [leif@lindblomfamily.com](mailto:leif@lindblomfamily.com) or at P.O. Box 677 Oscoda Mi 48750. We are grateful to Shelagh Yarnell for the interesting articles she has written for several newsletters. In this issue we are happy to publish Ewing Jones's story about his journey with their student Eric. Thanks also to Tyrone Bujold, Bob Albright, and all who have contributed articles and information over the years.

REGISTRATION FORMS

ANNUAL BENEFIT DINNER

REGISTRATION FORM

The annual benefit dinner will be held again at the beautiful Suspiro restaurant at Pacifica Grand overlooking Zihuatanejo bay on Thursday, February 16, 2012 at 6pm.

This February's event raised about \$2500 for our Special Needs and College Scholarship funds. It is a wonderful way to enjoy a fabulous meal, complete with refreshments, at a very special place and help a great cause at the same time. The owners and operators of the Pacifica Grand, through their extremely generous pricing policy, make this event the success it is and we are thankful for their support.

Please register early! The guest count is limited to 60 and this event fills up fast. Just complete this form and send it along with your check, payable to Friends of Niños Adelante to the address below.

Reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seat(s) at \$85 each. Amount enclosed for dinner \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Names of attendees \_\_\_\_\_

I am unable to attend the Benefit Dinner but enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you, Janie Robins

Please mail form and check to:

Friends of Niños Adelante

PO Box 1624

Sonoma, CA 95476

## **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 15, 2012** and at 9:30 A.M. on **Sunday February 12, 2012**.

Register now! Jose must notify your becado 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, 2011. By the same token we need to know your intentions relative to the February event by January 27, 2012.

As in the past, padrinos are responsible for the breakfasts of their becados and their families. Cost of breakfast is expected to be about \$12 per person (not including gratuity) to be paid at the breakfast.

(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 15 Breakfast

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places for me at the February 12 Breakfast

I/we will be staying at \_\_\_\_\_ in Ixtapa/Zihua  
from \_\_/\_\_/12 departing \_\_/\_\_/12. (this information helps Jose communicate  
with you if necessary).

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: If you wish to host the student of a friend who can not be at the Breakfast fill in below:**  
I would also like to host the student of the following Sponsor/s \_\_\_\_\_

**Please fill out the above form and return by email to [bobalb@comcast.net](mailto:bobalb@comcast.net) or mail to Friends of Niños Adelante PO Box 1624 Sonoma, CA 95476**