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Cambiando Vidas

"Changing Lives"

December 2010 News Letter



Primary School Beautification Project

This is where it began ... where it still begins ... where it really matters. Our Primary School (Primer Escuela "Amado Nervo") of Chacala is "the" starting place. The fabulous Rotary Learning Center ("Biblioteca") and continuing Rotary support ... Computer Lab, After School Activities, Equipment, Books, Tools, Supplies and countless human hours ... has become our Communities most cherished treasure. For all those whose devotion to education has made this happen over many, many years, our humble appreciation goes out. Please see how we honor your great gifts of the past as we steward them into the promising future ... enjoy these pictures of tireless new devotion, cooperative beautification and sizable new private donations ... over and above the scholarship funds! We say, "THANK YOU" by caring for what you have given us! It is literally impossible to drive by today and not stop ... stop to admire and rejoice in the clean, freshly painted, freshly planted, freshly equipped grounds of our young students learning environment! A one-time Chacala visitor heard & saw the need expressed and answered from a big heart ... with a big donation! That inspired many more to follow suite and that inspired the whole community to pitch in ... in every way they could. A mountain of trash and debris was hauled away. Trees and plants arrived gratis from people's gardens and nearby nursery's. Then ... drainage and walls and planters, tables and benches, palapas and murals ... it's an amazing sight to see. Work party after work party brought new joy to the best sense of community. Then balls arrived and nets and coach's and ... play! And as if making it pretty & fun wasn't enough, more people than could now be named or counted have made it their commitment ... to keep it going, more games, more participation, more community, more events and ... more dedication to learning! It's a centerpiece and a testament to the collective hopes of this village. As our young eager minds learn & grow from this beautiful place ... we commit to supporting their needs, furthering their quest and finding the way.

Ways to Donate

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FEATURED STUDENT:

Fernando "LUIS" Del Villar Vasquez



"LUIS" embodies the true spirit of Cambiando Vidas; In the program since August 2008. Five-&-a-half days a week Luis can be found operating a back-hoe for a Marina Chacala project development called Malanali. He applied for this job four years ago (with no experience!) and against all odds, learned on-the-job! He had to ... he had just learned that glaucoma would take his mother's sight for life. He was forced to suspend his schooling and that included Cambiando Vidas. Two years later, he regained a minimal family stability and determined to resume his studies ... on Saturdays! He re-applied for his CV scholarship and for the past 18 months has been no less than a perfect role model. He works on his Physical Education degree at a University in Las Varas. He also coaches basketball & volleyball at our Primary Schoolyard on weekends. His life is very busy ... but that does not stop him from attending every EBACH meeting and every ad hoc work party (where he sets the standard for hard work), meeting every scholarship requisite, and meeting with his sponsors regularly. Luis had to work when the Bus left to tour University of Guadalajara ... but mother Maria (aided by his aunt) wouldn't miss it. We know all this leaves very little time for Luis to have a personal life ... so please smile and nod your approving support & respects when you see him in and around our Chacala. He is grateful to us all!

Cambiando Vidas "Freedom Bus" Tours ...

University of Guadalajara / Puerto Vallarta Campus



Wow! What a surprisingly beautiful Campus ... it's hard to believe it's so close ... so expansive ... so within-the-academic-reach of our CV Students. Watching the 34 faces of our children and their mothers was a profound experience. The whole wide world of opportunity and possibilities opened before their very eyes; we saw it ... and could not hold back our tears of joy. The seeds of individual achievement have been planted. As a community we must take it upon ourselves personally to help each one grow!

We had no idea such a warm and deeply informative ... and generous presentation was in store for our "freedom bus". Chacala has a new partner in the destiny of our eager young minds, C.P.J. Humberto Famaña Ortega ... the Chief of the University's Outreach Program. The program he assembled was just for us. It toured many departments. As many as a dozen professors patiently explained their fields. It ended with an hour long presentation in the beautiful auditorium ... every opportunity carefully expressed.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to every member of the University of Guadalajara team that greeted us. The bus ride back was all "abuzz" with opened minds and elevated intentions! The next day around the village of Chacala, their many beautiful impressions were the "Talk of the Town". To the riders of this "Freedom Bus" there is now a real future ... filled with real possibilities ... and real reasons for everyone here to join the exciting journey. We look eagerly forward to future visits, both there ... to learn and see more ... and here in Chacala to welcome our dear friends from the University of Guadalajara.

The Vision of Cambiando Vidas

On the shoulders and vision of those who brought us so very far indeed ... it is time we shoot for the moon. We have come to recognize that no request for knowledge need be turned away. We are not just a tiny village with a small number of meritorious youth but we are also a very fortunate village with near endless resources to support the realistic dreams of every student. Our resources include a beach paradise and climate, many successful residents & frequent long stay visitors, vast practical experiences, wisdom & insights to draw upon, a social consciousness second to none, and the collective will to help every Chacala



resident reach for their own personal stars. We do not need to say no when grades slip or family troubles divert a student's progress. We can say yes to tutoring, yes to family counsel and yes to discerning & guiding individual aptitudes. We can say yes to support their desire for Trades Schools, professions and University Studies. We can make community service fun, educational,

diverse and constructive. We can find the cultural balance between community traditions and individual opportunity ... we really do have so much to offer one another. And we can Change All the Lives who choose to grow ... our students ... and in the doing ... our own.

Calendar of Coming Events:

Please submit all Cambiando Vidas related events (w/ time and place) and they will be announced in this Calendar of Event as they approach.

“Venta de Ropa de Segunda”

Here's the spirit! “Linda” (of Linda & Gerry Marshall) spent many hours during their Canadian half year ... gathering new & useable clothing for a ...

Primary School Supplies Fund Raising Sale.

“If we wait for the system to provide these things we will just grow old looking at sad little faces ”.

She didn't stop with her own closets ... she engaged many friends, and their closets ... who jumped on the chance to help ... and remarkably drove from Canada with car loads of clothing. Many volunteers arrived to help with the tables. To put it mildly, the sale was a total success. The prices were so low everyone could afford several things ... and still when it was over ... an astounding \$10, 631 pesos were counted (Over \$850 usd). A nice pot of cash will be turned over to our wonderful new school teacher for seriously needed supplies ... and everyone helping had a fun day. Thanks Linda A GREAT IDEA!





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