



Noticias from Santa María

A Newsletter from the Santa María Foundation

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Participants pose in front of a U.S. flag in Laredo, TX upon their return from the Mission Trip to Santa María.

American Spirit Knows No Borders

The American spirit of generosity and goodwill shined through a team of 14 volunteers who traveled to Central Mexico just before July 4. Gathering from cities across the U.S., the group headed to the Santa María Mission the week of June 28 - July 6. There, they celebrated one of their own country's most important holidays by working to improve the lives of some of their less fortunate neighbors.

This generous group of volunteers included Marcella Martinez from Gallup, N.M.; Jenny Patterson from Covington, Ga.; and a San Antonio, Texas, contingent of Robert Gundling, Rick, Shirley and Daniel Jones, Anne-Catherine Mora, Dr. Patty Olivares, Koby Runge, Mark Runge, Alba Schuschereba, Jason Seibert, Mike Seibert, and Effie Williams.

For Robert Gundling and Daniel Jones, who spent much of their week at the mission's secondary school, the focus was on repairing and improving many of the computers that are so important to the children's education. Quietly they worked away, diagnosing the computers with ToolStar provided by Toolhouse USA, replacing needed parts, and running maintenance programs to make the machines more efficient.

The health of the mission's residents was on the minds of Dr. Olivares and Effie Williams. They examined the elderly and some of the children and stocked the clinic with needed medications.

The rest of the group spent the week doing maintenance work to improve the living conditions of the elderly residents. Before the team's visit, the homes had leaky roofs that had been in need of re-sealing for years, and because of unsealed cinder-



Mark & Koby Runge (father & son) show off their work of resealing the roofs of the homes of the elderly.



Anne-Catherine & Alba prepare paint for the homes of the elderly.

block walls, the residents' rooms were extremely dusty. During their stay, the volunteers removed the old sealant and resealed the roofs of the homes. Then they set about brushing, sealing, and painting the walls. The outcome was a cleaner, drier, healthier, and more pleasant place for the elderly to live.

In addition to their own service and cheer, the volunteers came bearing gifts made possible by the many generous donations of individuals back home. Those gifts included \$1200-worth of over-the-counter medications, adult diapers and elevated commode chairs for the elderly, sports balls for the children for their physical education, and running uniforms for the sports teams. These donations will help to make day-to-day life more comfortable for the children and the elderly alike.

Jason Seibert, a Boy Scout working on his Eagle Project, brought another incredible gift achieved through his own hard work and the contributions of others. With the help of Boy Scout Troop 343, Jason



Jason Seibert explains his Eagle Project to the students and supporters of Santa María.

managed to collect 152 packages of underwear and \$3,000 in donations for children's clothing. Mission Director Fr. Cliff Norman and the children were amazed at such a large donation collected by a 14-year-old boy.

At the end of the week, the mission group took part in a special celebration for the children, as Santa María held graduation ceremonies for the 6th and 9th graders of the two schools. The presentations and the food gave each of the trip participants a unique experience of the Mexican people and their culture.

By the time the week came to a close and the missionaries headed back to the U.S., smiles were on the faces - young and old - of the people they came to serve, but the greatest joy may have been found in their own hearts.

A Message from Fr. Cliff - "Padre Antonio"

On May 7, the Lord called Fr. John Henly to be with Him. Fr. John loved, and he shared this love with all those whom he served both in the United States and years with us here in Mexico. I could write a book of the joys and suffering that we both shared.

Our small crop of alfalfa and others, which we use for the animals (not the children), is flourishing, but the reservoir has dried up. Our students are working daily to clean out some of the silt that has built up over the past 100 years. Engineers had no easy solution, so this is a beginning. The students are doing a fantastic job, and are appreciative of what has to be done and are doing it.

We bought 53 female and 3 male lambs, we will buy 80 rabbits, and we have a cow and 3 calves; all for eating. God is good to us. Feeding hundreds of people three times a day is a bit challenging at times!

Stories from Santa Maria



Brenda's Story (a child at Santa Maria)

"My name is Brenda. I am 10 years old. My brother and I came to Santa Maria last year. My brother gets in trouble. We came here because my mother cannot take care of us and my grandmother doesn't want to be responsible for us. I like being here because they take care of me and love me. Without Santa Maria, I don't know where I would live or who would take care of me."

Josephina's Story (an elder at Santa Maria)

Josefina is a 86-year-old woman from Mexico City. She is from a large family but all her sisters and brothers are dead except for one brother who brought her to Santa Maria. She has mild retardation. She never married and lived alone. She could no longer care for herself and there was no one to help her. She has been in the Santa Maria about ten years. She never went to school. She cannot read nor write. Her brother visits her every two months.

A Message from Rick Jones

We are in the middle of Orientation for our three missionaries. They are an inspiring group who come to us with open hearts and a desire to serve. It is truly heart-warming to see the passion in their hearts to serve the mission.

Our mission trip was quite a success. The children and elderly at the mission were very appreciative of the work that was accomplished and the trip participants felt honored to be able to serve. It doesn't get any better than that! Our hope is to have an annual trip around the 4th of July week.

The Foundation continues to grow. Many of you responded generously after our first newsletter. Thank you! We are adding two new volunteers to our Board of Directors. We continue to look for opportunities to promote the mission and our work there. Contact us if you would like to help.

Charitable Giving

Whatever your personal goals, charitable giving can help you achieve them. In fact, charitable giving strategies often provide solutions unavailable through traditional estate planning techniques. There are many different methods of charitable giving, each with a specific set of benefits. Some of the most common benefits include the donor's ability to:

- Transform a liquid asset into an important source of future income;
- Restructure a non-diversified portfolio without paying current capital gains tax;
- Avoid current capital gains tax on the sale of a business; and
- Take an immediate tax deduction on a deferred gift.

The Santa Maria Foundation can serve as the recipient for the Santa Maria Mission in Mexico. If you have questions or would like to name the Foundation as a recipient of a charitable gift, contact us.

The Santa Maria Foundation is not engaged in giving legal/tax advice. Advice from legal/tax counsel should be sought when considering gifts.

Missionaries in Training

On August 1st, our first three missionaries from the Foundation arrived in San Antonio to prepare for serving a year at Santa Maria. They are Colleen Conway, Sarah Kolacz, and Thomas Clouqueur. They attended a retreat on the first weekend of August, and are in the middle of a weeklong orientation to prepare them for the cross-cultural experience and working at the Mission. In our next newsletter, we will share their backgrounds and how they are serving Santa Maria.



Group picture of the young residents and caretakers of the Santa Maria Mission.