

giving

Manos de Dios

a hand up to families in the barrios of Sonora, MX

February 2007 Newsletter

February 15th thru 20th trip. The main focus of this trip was to build a house for Pastor Manuel, provide a barrio outreach, and deliver a vehicle to Pastor Rueben.

Logistically it was a difficult. Some of us went down on Thursday, the rest on Friday and Saturday. I took my big enclosed trailer full of T111, insulation, paint, doors, donations and lots of other stuff. I even had to recruit all the other drivers and get them to stuff building material and some donations into their vehicles. The Lord must have wanted the house built and donations distributed without any hassle because I got the green light and sailed right on thru the border. The last time I took this big trailer I got the green light and they still pulled me over and I had to pay taxes. Friday morning the first crew went right over to the building location and started to work.

Weather was great, the concrete had been poured and was solid, wood was delivered and the generator started right up. Then, the distractions started. I think they affected me the most. Next door to our work site was a small house trailer occupied by two young men. When we started working they came out (about 8:30am) and watched us, both were stoned out of their mind. One guy sat down in a plastic chair and immediately passed out. The other stared, shook his fist at us and uttered some words even our Mexican workers could not understand. He would even walk over and say things (including bad things about our mothers) to us and then walk away. This happened all day. During the times when they were awake, they would drive off in their vehicle and come back a

short time later. On one excursion they must have had an accident because when they got back the front end of their car was damaged and they tried to cover the damage with a sheet. Once one of the guys came over and showed us a fist full of American money and wanted to hire us to beat someone up for him! George escorted him off the property very quickly. This went on all day. We were Christian in our actions toward them and were on guard every time they got in their vehicle. This distracted me because I was in conflict between having a positive Christian attitude & not letting this interfere with our mission... and wanting to go over and hit him with a 2 by 4. I do not like drunks. My father was a drunk. As an adult, while I was a police officer, I did not have to put up with drunks. That day in Mexico I had to use restraint. It was difficult. So, if I made a few bad decisions, I offer my apologies...not excuses. Saturday was better. A neighbor told us that the two guys fled from Peñasco. We worked on the house all day Friday, Saturday and a few hours on Sunday. All went relatively well. No serious injuries, no problems we could not handle and we did not go hungry or thirsty. We finished the exterior (wall, roof, windows, doors and roof) of the house. Pastor Manuel and his friends will finish the interior. We also had a cousin and



Pastor Manuel praying with foreman, George Ortega



Building Pastor Manuel's house, Puerto Peñasco, February 2007



nephew, of Manuel's from Santa Ana, Sonora helping us and they stayed at the property during the night. They were hard workers and very talented. It was a blessing to have them with us. There were 30 people on this work trip so I won't thank you all individually but I will thank you, as a group, for all your support and assistance. We even had John, Cheri and Arden from the Rock of Sahuarita Church working with us that weekend. Thank you to the Rock!

Saturday night was fiesta night at our camp sight. Lucy picked up 16 pounds of shrimp to put on the BBO, we also had hamburgers and chicken. A cake from Candy Cakes (we must support the local small businesses) was also in order. We had worked hard, eaten well and were ready for worship service Sunday morning. What a blessed way to end a mission work project.

Needs...

Here is a partial list of the items we need for immediate relief efforts in the prison, Invasion barrio, an Indian camp and a church in a small pueblo

Multiple vitamins (adult and child)
Toilet Paper & Feminine Supplies
Desktop Canon Copier
Soccer balls and basketballs

School supplies: pencils & lined paper
Men's gym shoes & work boots: Size 7-10
Disposable diapers: size Jumbo/X-Large
Sunday School supplies: glue sticks, scissors

Manos de Dios is the sole support for two community/church food banks. Here are some of the much needed items:

Peanut butter
Coffee
Beef Stew
Juice boxes for kids
Meat ravioli
Canned corn
Vienna Sausage
Canned ham
Canned tuna in oil
Cooking oil
Chocolate drink mix
Soup mixes
Macaroni and cheese (the good stuff)
Mashed potato flakes
Powdered laundry soap with bleach
Laundry softener

You may purchase these items or give a donation to Manos de Dios for a specific need. Contact us for donation drop off or pick up. 975-7356

For more information go to www.ManosdeDios.org

trip recap continued on back...

Invasion Barrio is an area of about 200 families 'squating' on small lots on the outskirts of Puerto Peñasco. There is limited water and no electricity. Our group of 15, plus the Rico family (missionaries in Peñasco) shared Jesus' love with the children and moms of this neighborhood Saturday afternoon. Jump ropes, hoola hoops and soccer balls started the fun! We followed up with the singing of loud praise songs, complete with arm motions. The kids joined in enthusiastically. A short gospel story was shared via CD. Then, Pastor José assembled the moms under the only tree in the neighborhood and shared God's Hope for their lives. The children enjoyed making crafts including gospel message bead bracelets, airplanes, coloring and painting banners. The theme we had prayed for this



neighborhood is Exodus 17:15 **"The Lord is my banner or El Señor es mi estandarte"** The children each went home with their own banner reading **"Jesucristo te ama"** (Jesus loves you). Join us in continuing to pray for the families in this neighborhood.

Lucy one



For lots more info go to:

www.ManosdeDios.org

Partner with us to offer hope...

Manos de Dios is a 501-c-3 not-for-profit organization that partners with local pastors and missionaries in Sonora, Mexico to assist the poor with immediate relief efforts and long-term self-sustaining projects. Work projects are staffed with volunteers from the Mexico Missions Life Group of Pantano Christian Church plus other volunteers. Please prayerfully consider supporting our work to help the poor in Mexico. Go to our website for details: www.ManosdeDios.org

A gift of transportation!

Pictured here (from right to left) Pastor Rueben and family, and Eric Carlson ...in front of donated 1994 Ford Escort, Desomboque, MX.



February trip recap, continued....

While some of us were building the house on Friday and Saturday, Lucy and the rest of the crew kept busy. Four of our group visited the women in the prison. We participated in a Bible Study, prayed and delivered much needed personal supplies.

Sunday services were excellent as usual at Peñasco Christian Fellowship. The afternoon was spent finishing the house build & visiting friends. Sunday evening was a special event. Our friends Sarah, Rogelio and their son, Antonio came to our trailer for dinner. We (Serve and be Served men) had built a home for them in June of 2004 and we have been friends ever since. Sarah has wanted to cook something for us for a long time and now was her chance. She cooked tamales, some pork and some chicken wrapped in banana leaves. They were very tasty. We did have a small challenge though. It turned cold that evening and the wind picked up and was blowing pretty hard. We decided to move the dinner inside our trailer. We managed to get 12 people in our kitchen – living room area. The only problem was, ten of us had to sit down and not get up for anything. The other two people, Lucy, one and Deb, had to serve food to the rest of us. That was the only way we could pull this off. It was Lucy one's birthday so we even had a birthday cake for dessert.

Monday the usual group, Lucy tambien, Allen, Eric, Deb, Rick, Lucy one and I, loaded up the truck with food bank items and took them to our friends (pastors) in El Diamante and Desomboque. First stop was El Diamante and a visit with Pastor Alfonso and his family. After learning what is going on in each other's family and lives we talked about church growth and ways we can work together and serve our Lord. Did I mention that fellowship involves eating? It does, Pastor Alfonso's wife, Angelita, had made pastries for us and we were forced to eat them :)! She is a great cook. Then we had to get to work and unload the bulk food for their food bank.

Then it was on to Desomboque to visit pastor Rueben and family. In addition to the food for the food bank, we also had a special gift for Pastor Rueben and his family. Eric Carlson had just purchased a new pick up truck and wanted to donate his Ford Escort to a needy family. Pastor Rueben's car had broken down and he was unable to minister to a small group of people in a town about forty miles north, let alone drive to Caborca for supplies and Dr's appointments. After prayerful consideration it was decided, the vehicle should be donated to Pastor Rueben. You should have seen the family's eyes when Eric pulled in the driveway. Even the kids were excited; they jumped in and pretended to drive to Caborca! When the excitement settled

down we shared birthday cake (Lucy one's second cake. It was also Erika's birthday!) There are more children at Pastor Ruben's so we play and have more interaction with kids in Desomboque. When we leave (usually near dark) we are tired, dusty but thoroughly blessed and counting the days till we return. Our last evening in Peñasco is usually spent at our trailer going over all the interesting things that has happened, who was blessed, how we were blessed and discussing the next trip to our home away from home.

In addition to the food for the food banks in El Diamante and Desomboque we were able to donate the following items (partial list) to the three communities we serve. Two computers, 10 blankets, 9 large bags of adult clothing and 2 boxes of children's clothing, 2 large boxes of baby food and dry milk, 4 boxes of kitchen utensils – pots and pans, infant car seat, 4 large bags of dog food, 1 box of women's toiletries, 10 Spanish bibles, jackets and gloves, a copier to Peñasco Christian Fellowship and a TV and VCR for the youth, Sunday school supplies, 1 box of copier paper, a sign for the new free clinic "Clinica Nova", 25 shoe box gifts for the children, a trundle bed and mattress. We want to thank those who so generously donate items and offer financial assistance so we can purchase food for the local food banks. We could not serve as we do, if not for the support and prayers you offer to us on a regular basis. We are a family, and we thank you for being part of our family! Vaya con Dios....*Dennis Smith*