

Village Updates December 2010



Coming Full Circle - From Miracle to Miracle

Electricity had not yet made it to Linaca the first time I laid eyes on the little girl in the center of the picture above. Her name is Marisol. It was June of 2000. There were two phones in the entire town. Very few had bicycles. One person in the town had a putt-putt motor scooter and two families had old beaten up pickups. Americans were a complete curiosity. Kids shouting GRINGO rang out from every other house we passed.

Our bus, bearing a whole load of Gringos, stopped in the middle of town so that we could spend some time with the children of the village. Some brought Polaroid cameras and handed out pictures to the transfixed children. Others had balloons. Some brought candy. All had a magical time playing and entertaining the children for several hours. At that time any work with children, or a facility to serve them in Linaca, was a dream in our hearts - much like the dream we now have for the land purchased in Jamastran.

After our time with the little ones we made our way to a home where a fragrant lunch was on the stove for the hungry travelers. Relaxing on the terrace, it was not long before we spotted a parade of curious children hesitantly wandering up the path to the home where we were being hosted. Stopping short of the house, they stood silently, some chewing on their fingers, others wiggling back and forth, some digging into the dirt with their bare feet. All staring with unbroken gaze at the group of strange Gringos assembled on the porch.

It was well past noon, breakfast was a distant memory, and the long day of travel seemed to whet everyone's appetite for comfort food. But nothing curbs the appetite as fast as a ragtag band of half-starved, barefooted children standing silently, with mouths agape observing every move you make. Lunch, planned for thirty or so adults, was promptly doled out to thirty or more wee waifs, who ate so much we were afraid their stomachs would rebel. That little change of plan provided us the opportunity to observe our first of many miracles in Linaca.

Pictured above with Marisol are Kevin and

Yalixa, the other two little ones that I had the privilege to feed that day. Reminding me of baby birds, they each stood with their heads tipped back waiting for every morsel to be dropped into their mouths. At a point where I would have been long past full, these tiny creatures clamored for more. And so did all the others. It was extraordinary to witness every child eat more than we thought humanly possible - and yet plenty of food remained to feed our entire group.

Since the "Miracle of Tortillas and Meat" as I call it, we have seen several such marvels in the multiplication of food that was not nearly enough to feed all those who drifted onto our path. Every time we scratch our heads, amazed that we witnessed yet another wonder.

Flash forward ten years. In November a young girl at the center caught my eye. Her face was so familiar. I knew her, and yet could not place her. All of a sudden it dawned on me. It was Marisol, I had only seen her a handful of times since June of 2000. She and her siblings had attended the center early on, but all dropped out. Recently her older brother Nestor returned and joined the teen leadership team. He enjoys tutoring the younger children. It was his example that brought Marisol back to us. (Nestor is the tallest boy in the center photo above, taken on the same day in 2000.)

The picture of those three innocent children remains one of my very favorites. Today, more than ever, it is a reminder of God's provision for not only the least of these, but for even the fortunate like me. The faces, that now grace my business card, are a constant reminder that miracles are not myth, but reality. Holding the card above right, Marisol remembered the day that picture was taken.

In ten years since I first set foot in Linaca, we have witnessed so many extraordinary events there is not room to recount them all. At our annual Christmas party this year the tradition of miracles was repeated.

Due to financial and space limitations, only invited guests are supposed to come to the end

of the school year/Christmas fiesta. Each child who faithfully attends the center is invited to bring a guest. This year admission tickets were handed out to 600 children.

As usual, our frugal staff carefully planned every aspect of the party - purchasing just the amount of food they deemed necessary to feed 600 people. They also decided each child should have a shiny red apple, a huge treat for the children. There are no apples in the village. To get an apple you must travel to Danli's fruit market - something rarely, if ever, done.

Since our budget for the party was quite limited the staff searched long and hard to find apples they could afford. They were about to give up on the task, finding all the apples too expensive. Finally, they happened on an old woman and told her who the apples were for. In a much unexpected turn, she lowered the price of her apples significantly, meaning they had just enough money in their food budget to purchase 600 shiny red apples.

Bearing in mind that the children rarely have meat of any kind, the staff prepared another treat - a big lunch complete with beef, rice, tortillas, and beans. But when the fiesta day rolled around far more than 600 children, teens, and parents showed up.

When it was time for lunch the staff and teen leaders organized the children in groups starting with the youngest first. While it would have been easy to give the little ones less food, they piled as much on the tiny ones plates as they did anyone else's. The little girl pictured on the top of the next page must have been practicing the 5-Second-Rule, as she quickly stabbed a piece of meat off the floor. All manner of etiquette flew out the window. Licking plates clean was the order of the day.

The teens patiently served every meal, not knowing if there would be anything left for them. Once the 600 plates purchased were used up there was still food left over. The staff went into the storage room and found another 150 plates. At the end of the lunch, not one plate was left



and not one person missed the meal!

Later in the day came the apple give away. The staff knew the party attendance was growing by the hour - no one was leaving. The facts were 750 meals had been served and they had only 600 apples. The apples were counted twice - once when purchased and once after they were washed.

Again the children were arranged in groups according to age and stood in lines to receive their apples. As the supply was dwindling, Nidia told Hector to go and get the remaining box in the classroom. Hector informed her there were no more boxes - he was the one schlepping boxes and knew how many there were.

Nidia insisted there was one more box. Hector shrugged his shoulders, and waving his hands in surrender he walked to the classroom to prove her wrong. Yet there it was. Another whole box of apples. "It truly scared me when I saw it," Hector exclaimed, his eyes wide and his head shaking in disbelief, even days after the event.

Every child, every teen, every parent, and every stray villager who wandered in off the street got an apple. After all was said and done the staff each had 5 apples a piece to take home!

A skeptic might argue that the 750 full plates of food could be chalked up to a miscalculation of the amount of food there was to begin with. However, our staff plans events all the time and they buy food by the pound, carefully calculated to serve the masses they have to feed without wasting anything. But who can argue the Miracle of The Christmas Apples?

For ten years this work has existed on one miracle after another. When I went to Linaca with our first group of Gringos we did not have enough food to feed our guests much less the hungry children who showed up unexpectedly. Yet all of us ate our fill.

The day we had signups for the new work in Linaca our sponsor base was a mere 50. When 200 children showed up to enroll, we opened the gates, exclaiming, "Jesus has a problem..." As our children grew older and they recognized the benefits of education we had a need to scholarship teens to attend high school. All who wanted to go, were enrolled. Then came the abusive bus driver, the expensive trials, and the absolute need for our own school bus to transport the teens to high school.

Year after year, too many times to count, we wondered where we would get the resources to fill a need - yet somehow each need was met. The kids and the miracles just keep on coming...

The culture of Linaca has radically changed from the sleepy little hamlet we visited ten years ago. With the coming of electricity came the television in every home, with the television came the cable company. A home may not have running water or an indoor toilet, but it probably has cable...and with the cable comes the free porn that unsupervised children can watch any time of day. Yet ten years later not one of the girls in our center has gotten pregnant! Each year this statistic amazes us more.

Practically every household has a cell phone and all our kids have been offered marijuana, and

cheap. Motorcycles, scooters, and pickup trucks are no longer the rare sighting. No one yells Gringo at Jose or me anymore. We are part of the community.

Ten years later the little girl in the picture at the beginning of this newsletter has come full circle. The dream we had on the porch that day came to pass and we have the children's center that Marisol now attends regularly. Just as she was fed on Day One, ten years later she was fed with another "Miracle of Meat and Tortillas".

Ten years ago the little girl had no hope of going to high school. Now her brother, a part of our teen leadership team, is close to graduating. Above is a picture of Nestor today, tutoring in our center.

In February Nestor will be one of the teens commissioned by the Foreign Minister of Honduras and other dignitaries to work on their behalf in combating poverty and injustice. Together our kids will partner with their leaders to build a better nation. We hope that Marisol will be commissioned like her brother in the near future.

We have had no manuals in how to develop a village and pull children out of the jaws of despair and poverty. But step by step we have been miraculously guided in ways to lead these children to a better path in life. The fruit of this work has never been more plentiful, and the need for more miracles has never been more pressing.

We thank each of you who have sacrificed to get the children where they are today. With all of us working together the dream keeps expanding!

NEEDS AND CHALLENGES AND MATTERS FOR PRAYER

ANOTHER MATCHING GRANT FOR THE KIDS!

A generous partner has put up yet another \$5,000 matching grant for the children's center. We just matched the last one! Last year we helped over 500 children stay in school by assisting families with uniforms, shoes, and school supplies. Something as small as notebooks can come between a child and his education.

Teen scholarships cost us approximately \$50 per month per teen. This covers our bus service, uniforms, books, and matriculation fees. In return our teens give 10 hours of service a week, tutoring children in the center, working in the villages, and soon they will be assisting the Foreign Minister with whatever task the Chancellery asks them to do. They will also be assisting the Mayor of Danli and the International Rotary. The hard work and example of our teens will inspire young and old, rich and poor to come together for the benefit of all!

DESIGNATED GIVING GOES 100% WHERE SPECIFIED

World Resources Group is unique among non-profit organizations. Any specified donation to the children goes 100% to the fund designated and is 100% tax deductible. We take no percentages for administrative costs, which are raised separately from the children's work. All undesignated giving is used where the Board of Directors deems the need to be greatest.

HELP US KEEP THE MIRACLES GOING

While we have seen many miracles over the years, we have yet to pull any pieces of gold from the mouth of a fish. But with the little we have been given, the miracles have flowed. If you know of friends or corporate sponsors either in the U.S. or in Honduras that might help us reach our goals, please send this newsletter along! Our current need by year end is \$25,000

World Resources Group ♦ 509 Flamingo Drive ♦ West Palm Beach, Florida 33401
Phone 561.758.2198 ♦ Email: worldresources@bellsouth.net ♦ Web: www.wrgnews.com