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SEPTEMBER 2017 Newsletter



REFUGIO MAZÁTLAN UPDATE

Refugio Mazatlán seeks to assist disadvantaged adolescent boys so that they can eventually achieve economic independence, and become happy, well-adjusted, successful community members who are socially responsible and altruistic.

The third quarter of 2017 was another successful one for Refugio Mazatlán. Thank you to the staff, donors and volunteers who are changing the lives of these young men.



A larger family at the start of the new school year

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

The boys were on school holidays during part of June and all of July. Several went to spend time with their families. Others spent the bulk of their time at Refugio while some came and went from the home during that time.

Some of the boys continued to work part time over the summer at the Looney Bean and El Fish Market. We greatly appreciate these opportunities, which teach the boys responsibility and money management.

During the summer break the boys tried their luck at fishing. They visited several locations near the Centro area to practice their skills but alas did not fare as well as they would have hoped.

Summer fishing activities



Three of the boys (Jose, Kevin and Eduardo) were most fortunate to experience a deep sea fishing trip that was hosted by Bart Forsyth. They caught several dorado which were gutted and prepared by Bart and the boys for delicious meals at the home. Many thanks for your generosity Bart.

A great deep-sea fishing experience for Jose, Kevin and Eduardo with Bart



Five of the boys (Omar, Pedro, Emmanuel, William and Alonso) went on a trip to Guadalajara, San Miguel de Allende and Guanajuato.



Omar, Pedro, Emmanuel, Williams & Alonso in Guadalajara

In Guadalajara, amongst other things, the boys went on a cycling tour of the city. They got to learn a lot about Guadalajara and Mexican history.



Omar, Pedro, Emmanuel, Williams & Alonso in Guanajuato

In Guanajuato the boys “designed” and led a walking tour of the city. They also visited a nearby mine which they all thoroughly enjoyed. They also went to the Museum of Mummies and they partook in a fun filled night tour of the city by the local minstrels. The visit to San Miguel de Allende and Guanajuato was a first for all the boys.

A NEW SCHOOL YEAR

We had some additional young men join Refugio for the new school year and they attended an orientation week in early August.



Omar, Pedro, Emmanuel, Williams & Alonso in San Miguel

Although it rained a bit in San Miguel, the boys had enough good weather to go on a bus tour of the city which was most interesting. In addition, they did a lot of walking around, visiting various places of interest. They finished off their time in San Miguel with a trip to the local water park that was great fun.



Orientation week at the start of the new school year

Our staff organized several activities at the home for the boys during orientation. These included games and exercises where the boys got to learn how to live and work together. A fun time was had by all. The new boys also got the chance to get to know the staff and the rules and regulations of the home.



Pedro on a ride at the San Miguel water park



Fun orientation week activities at the home

The staff also organized trips outside of the home to escape the summer heat. One of these was a visit to Loma Linda, a local water park. The boys were able to cool down and at the same time enjoy the many slides that the facility has to offer.



A trip to Loma Linda water park

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG SKILLS

Our goal is to provide the young men of Refugio Mazatlán with sound educations so that they can subsequently learn a lifelong skill such as a university degree or a trade. In line with this, eight of the boys started attending a private high school (“colegio”) in August 2017. They are fitting in very well and have brought home outstanding grades so far. We are all very proud of these young men.

Thank you again, Gaspar and Instituto Pedagógico Hispanoamericano, (IHP), for your invaluable help and support in this endeavor. None of this would have been possible without enormous donor generosity. Thank you to the Tres Islas Orphanage Fund, Gaspar and Ana, Stewart and Renee, Ted and Lynnette, Jan and Jim, Fred, Bob B, Anonymous and Sally. If you would like to assist with the remaining school scholarships, please contact us.



Proud boys ready to start at IPH

The majority of the young men attend school in the mornings at five different locations. They therefore complete their homework in the afternoons. Our staff also provides additional lessons to supplement the classes of those in the public schools.



Some of the young men doing homework

A couple of the boys are taking English or computer classes. We are working on passports and visa applications for the two lucky boys who will go to Canada in January to learn more English as well as a new culture. We are most grateful to Rose, Jason and their family for hosting them.

BIRTHDAYS

Several of our boys celebrated their birthdays in the last quarter. Richard and Lawrence continue to bake creative and delicious cakes. Pablo still takes the birthday boy(s) out on an outing to purchase a birthday gift(s). The boys have come to anticipate these with much excitement.



Kevin's birthday cake

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Although the young men are quite busy with academic work, extra-curricular activities are also important. They all attend martial arts classes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Pablo sponsors the instructor and the boys really enjoy learning a new skill while getting exercise. Thank you, Pablo!

The boys have a choice between cooking classes and music lessons on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Tracy teaches the boys about nutrition and kitchen skills and their notebooks are now filled with delicious recipes. The highlight of the evening is when they get to taste their creations. Those boys attending music classes learn to play guitars or the keyboard and sing. We have some budding musicians in the group.

OUR CASA HOGAR

Our boys are very proud of their home and continue to decorate it to help inspire them as well as the staff.



Work of art by Williams

With the growing number of young men, (we now have 24!) we have had to increase the study area by adding more desks and computers. Our staff has also had to revise their rosters to cater to the school hours and the academic needs of the boys.



Additional desks and computers



More beds

The increased Refugio population has also resulted in us having to purchase more beds and lockers.

Additionally, we have hired a driver to transport the boys to and from school and other activities.

DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Many community members regularly donate food and other items: Lawrence, Richard, Greg, Pablo, Tracy, Michele and Barry – thank you all for your kindness. These people, as well as others also contribute their time and energy with undertakings such as cooking, teaching, playing sport and games, and organizing fundraisers.

Ana Belen continues to share her time and talent and the boys enjoy the Spanish Reading sessions – thank you.



Las Mañanitas & a gift for Ricardo's birthday

There are significant costs involved with caring for our teenagers, including staff salaries, education costs, utility bills, transportation costs, medical expenses and food. Refugio Mazatlán is most grateful to those who help us. We keep our list of "Current Needs" updated on our webpage. We would also welcome further sponsors for the education costs of the boys. Thank you from all of us at Refugio Mazatlán – your generosity is truly making a difference for these young men!