

SNAP-SHOTS

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A few months ago, Hortencia received a call from her friend Benita who has a produce stall at one of the local street markets. A young mom had been asking Benita if she could have some of the old, unsellable potatoes. She didn't look well and had two young children with her, so Benita was a little concerned and asked Hortencia if she could follow up on the situation. At the age of 14, and through no choice of her own, Ana became a mom. Three years ago, at the age of 19 she along with her two kids travelled to Tijuana from Southern MX to find work and escape the situation they were in with the kids' father, an older man. Then last year Ana began to have some serious health issues and unfortunately, it was discovered that she was already in the 4th stage of cervical cancer. By the grace of God, a kind doctor helped find free treatment for Ana at a clinic where she's been having chemo for the last 6 months. There is still hope. However, with no family around and now very little money coming in, Ana was struggling to put food on the table and pay for transport to her appointments. Although her kids are now the light of her life, Ana's story is particularly sad and parts of it are not uncommon among many of the young women, moms and grandmoms we encounter in the neighborhoods we work. Missed childhoods are sadly a common theme. The last year or so we've been facilitating monthly "paseos" (fun day trips), for disadvantaged kids. It offers a little "time out" for them from some of the difficult and sometimes dangerous situations they live in and gives them a chance to experience new places and activities they wouldn't otherwise. It also provides opportunities for us to share God's love with the kids in different and tangible ways. A few months back it was suggested by one of our team that maybe some of the moms and grandmoms, especially widows, who are raising kids alone under difficult circumstances, and often have missed childhoods themselves, could also benefit from a little time out too. The following is part of a brief report from Cesar, who along with Hortencia and Paty arranged to take a small group of surprised and very grateful women on their very own special paseo this past month...



Ana with her daughter 8, and son 6.

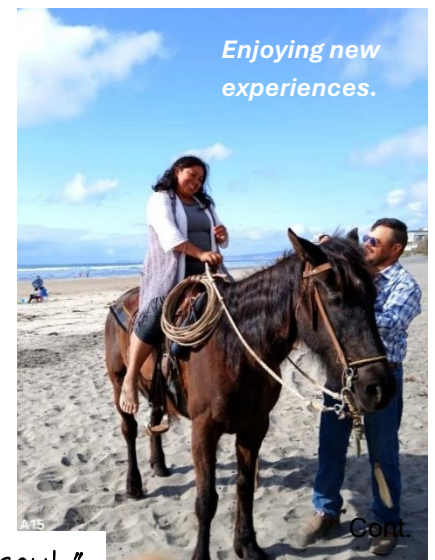
... I want to highlight some key moments from our week, particularly our trip to Playa la Misión near Ensenada. We had an incredible experience with a committed group of women, many of whom rarely get the chance to go out. One participant had never left Tijuana, never even visited Rosarito, so it was profoundly rewarding to witness their joy despite their ongoing challenges with health, finances, and aging.



At Playa la Misión.
The women shared their
stories, struggles and faith.



Having fun in the surf!



Enjoying new
experiences.

"Nature is a gift from God that refreshes the soul."



Smiles, hugs, laughter, thanks and tears of joy were evident proof of the gratitude each of these women felt at being able to enjoy this special day out. Knowing that there are people out there who care enough to make it a possibility for them, their children and grandchildren is so appreciated. MUCHISIMAS GRACIAS! on behalf of them ALL!

Left: Lety who has been battling cancer, gives Cesar (driver for the day), a hug.

Right: The following week... Hortencia, Paty and Kim Fleming (who was visiting from Montana), on another kids' paseo with Ana, her kids and 4 other special kids at Rosarito Beach.

Since meeting Ana, Hortencia and our team have been visiting regularly and praying with her. Our teen helpers play fun games with the kids and V&O has been able to provide food for the family and transportation money for Ana's appointments with the funds we receive from many of you. Ana has since accepted God's invitation to put her faith and trust in Him. She talks about Him often and believes she wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for the help He has sent her. Her future is still uncertain, chemo is a long shot at this stage, however we know that God has a plan and purpose for Ana's life and that with Him anything is possible! Please keep Ana and her children in your prayers. **Thanks so much!**



LEARNING TO SEW AT CASA HOGAR SIMNSA



Kudos to the kids at SIMNSA who have been learning the useful skill of sewing! Under the instruction of teachers Paty & Leslie, this month Oliver and Juan were the first to proudly finish their pajama pants.



OMAR (V&O Driver)

Many thanks to those who have been praying for Omar. He's still in hospital and the news is unfortunately not good. His condition has deteriorated (due to failing kidneys and other complications), and he is very weak now. However, his faith and trust in God remain strong and are an inspiration to us all. Please pray for relief from pain, comfort and peace for him and his wife Lorena. **Thank you.**

MAY GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS HELP TO THOSE IN NEED THIS MONTH!

On behalf of us all at V&O,
Joyce & Philip

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10