

SNAP-SHOTS

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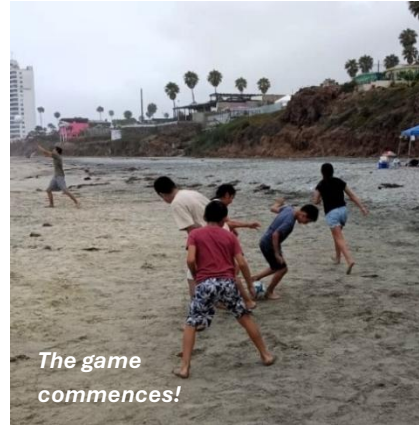
It's always a joy to see kids having fun! Each year, summer break allows us time and opportunity to provide special experiences and outings for kids who rarely get the chance to venture out of their neighborhoods. A trip to a park, beach or the movies is often a first. Being able to just play and be kids away from some of the challenges they face offers a therapeutic break for many of the kids we work with. This month with school out and dedicated funds available, we once again had the privilege to take some special and well deserving kids out on a few fun day trips.



Digging holes to bury themselves!



Time for soccer!



The game commences!



First time wading in the sea.

A trip to the beach for these kids was a real treat and despite the cloudy day, they had so much fun! Beyond the benefit of fun, research supports that spending time by the sea can reduce stress, lower anxiety/depression, promote exercise, encourage social interaction and even improve sleep! From the responses we saw from these kids, this was certainly ringing true! *How many are your works LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is vast sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number, living things both large and small. Psalm 104:24-25*

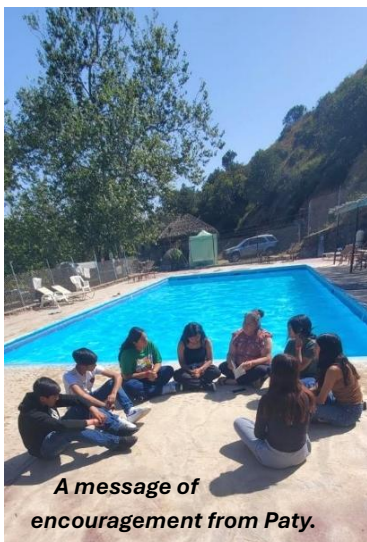


First time seeing a live crab!



GRACIAS!

Left: So good to see smiles from David & Juan, (featured in last month's newsletter).



A message of encouragement from Paty.



THANK YOU!



Lunch time.

These teens earned and enjoyed a refreshing day out at the pools. Some we've known since they were little kids. Some have lost parents under tragic circumstances. Each one ended their school year well, working hard throughout to finish with good grades.



And another MUCHISIMAS GRACIAS! from the kids and staff at SIMNSA Children's Home who thoroughly enjoyed a movie and pizza day out with Scott, Adriana and Cesar, (who invited Juan and David along as well), to see Toy Story 5. The kids at this home have been growing up before our eyes since we first became involved with them almost 9 years ago! Most of the teens and staff have come to faith since then, which has been a great encouragement. This last year six new younger kids arrived at the home. We hope to continue to be around to see them flourish and grow into their teens as well! We're thankful for their director Laura, (back row, far right in both photos). She's always been very supportive of our visits. We're also thankful to all of you who've partnered with us to make a real difference in these special kids' lives.

BACKPACKS & SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR THE KIDS AT EJIDO...

As well as celebrating the end of this school year, we also began helping kids prepare for the start of the new one. This month the kids at Ejido received backpacks and school supplies after a lesson and fun activity, based on the Ten Commandments.



The kids were excited and the parents most grateful for this important help. **GRACIAS!** once again.

"Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done". Prov. 19:17

A NEW CHAPTER

As this will be the last official SS newsletter under the VON & ON Ministries name, we wanted to take the opportunity to briefly share about the beginnings and some of the plans ahead for the ministry.

Our (Philip & Joyce's), involvement with Pastor Von's ministries began almost 20 years ago when we came across a book written by Luis Alberto Urrea who worked alongside Pastor Von as his translator, in the early days of his ministry across the border during the 70s and 80s. Motivated by what we read, we began supporting the ministry after discovering it was still very much alive and well, and so was Pastor Von!

In January 2012 we moved to San Diego (from the San Francisco Bay Area), to become more hands-on involved with the work. One thing led to another and in Oct 2015 together with Pastor Von and Hortencia, we formed VON & ON INC. Since then and particularly after Pastor Von's departure to Heaven (Nov. 2016), we've been continually amazed at God's faithful provision to the legacy that he left behind through this ministry. To you, our partners and supporters throughout this time we say THANK YOU once again, for your major part in this! We understand and appreciate that the changes ahead may bring about a crossroad for some of you as life situations change and require re-evaluations of commitments etc., In advance, we thank you so much for all of your past support!

For those of you who are continuing with us into this new chapter, "Welcome!" May God's blessing be on us all!



At Pastor Von's place. Pastor Von and Philip discussing the formation of VON & ON Ministries.

HORTENCIA

Hortencia's involvement with Pastor Von's ministries stretches back to when she was a young mother raising 4 small boys on her own, in barrio Laguna. In need of help one day, she was encouraged by a friend to attend one of Pastor Von's Community Days (with Spectrum Ministries), where she met Pastor Von and his team. On discovering that Hortencia was bilingual and soon noticing her compassion for others in need, Pastor Von offered her a small position within the ministry. From there and over time, her part in it grew. With many connections in the community, she became his eyes and ears in the barrios and colonias opening doors for ministering to the needs of many disadvantaged children, families, sick, elderly, disabled, homeless and marginalized people. Hortencia has continued this work with passion to this day. It was for this reason that Pastor Von created a fund for her to continue it, at least for a time, after he was gone. However, in between times, VON & ON was formed allowing the funds to remain untouched. A year or so later, it was agreed by the V&O Board



Pastor Von & Hortencia in the mid-90s.



Above: Hortencia receiving hugs on her birthday with families in Ejido.

to put the funds into an investment account until such time as they would be needed. That time has now come! Going forward, Hortencia will continue working independently with the help of those funds, her assistant Paty and several supporters she's had close ties with over the years. If you'd like to know more about the work she'll be continuing with and how to help, please contact her either by email, text, phone or Facebook. Please keep Hortencia in your prayers as she embarks on this new chapter in *her* life. **Thank you!**

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TIJUANA TRAILS

As we close out this last VON & ON newsletter, we remind ourselves that this ministry is not ending, but a new chapter is beginning! "Tijuana Trails Ministry" as it will be known from Aug 1st, will be directed and overseen by the leadership at Mission Trails Church in San Diego. Cesar Gonzales will become MTC's Ministry Coordinator in Tijuana. Cesar is Hortencia Bracken's son and was a "Pastor Von kid" knowing him since he was a little boy, until Pastor Von's passing in 2016. Cesar (40) has been a V&O Director for 6 years. Eighteen months ago, Cesar resigned from his secular job in Tijuana to work full time for V&O. Cesar is bilingual and has a visa to cross the border. He regularly attends MTC Church as well as his home church in Tijuana. We, Philip & Joyce, as well as Scott and Adriana Hasser, (who have been assisting us for the last 2 years), will be supporting Cesar in his new role. Truthfully, we have no idea where God will lead the ministry from here, but we do know and have experienced His faithful provision over the past 11 years, blessing so many and bringing us to this pivotal point we're at now. We're deeply grateful to the leadership at Mission Trails Church for their prayers, guidance, support, encouragement and willingness to take on this new endeavor. Please keep them, and all of us in your prayers as we make this transition over the coming months. Blessings to you all! *Philip & Joyce*



Cesar walks a trail (making a delivery to a family), in Leandro Valle, which was once the site of the Tijuana dump, where Pastor Von first began his ministry with the people living there back in the 70s.

*Right:
Cesar
having
fun with
kids from
Canyon
Leandro
Valle.*



Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. Proverbs 16:3

INFORMATION FOR GIVING TO TIJUANA TRAILS MINISTRY

For checks please write the check to **Mission Trails Church**, in the memo line write Tijuana Trails. Please do not put Tijuana Trails on the line where you write who the check goes to. Please send your check to: Mission Trails Church, Tijuana Trails, 4880 Zion Avenue, San Diego 92120

Online Donations can be made through Mission Trails Church Website: <https://missiontrailchurch.com/give>

You will need to fill out your information, PLEASE NOTE in the 'Fund' drop down list to select "Tijuana Trails Mexico Missions". You can also set up to donate recurring giving, if you so choose.