

giving

Manos de Dios



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

April 2007 Newsletter

This newsletter includes a recap of the April 13-16 trip to Mexico with Pastor Tim Coop. Also look for info about the upcoming June Barrio Outreach Trip & our current Needs List



Family appreciates receiving donations of baby clothes & supplies.

ANIMO: Spanish word meaning to have courage or to be encouraged

This was a very different trip! Dennis developed a kidney stone the Tuesday before we were scheduled to go to Mexico. The focus of the trip was ANIMO...to take our Pastor Tim Coop from Pantano Christian Church to encourage our pastor friends in Puerto Peñasco, Desemboque and El Diamonte. Dennis was in too much pain to make the trip, but insisted we stick with the plan and go. "It's not about me. It is about God's plan. Our mission is to undergird the evangelical pastors in Mexico. We're not going to let this stop us. I feel sure something powerful is going to happen! Go!" So, we did. We have a wonderful team. Our leader was absent, but the rest of the team stepped up and we accomplished what we set out to do. Albert and Vicki Jurado, Eric Carlson, Tim and Sandi Coop and I (Lucy uno) set out at 7AM Friday morning (4-13-07) for Puerto Peñasco. (Allen and Lucy tambien and my Dad, John, came over at 6 AM to pray with us before we left. What a supportive team!) I opted not to set up our trailer at Playa Bonita RV park without Dennis so Vicki, Albert and I stayed in a casita Pastor Stan has available for short-term mission

team use. Eric camped and Sandi and Tim stayed in a condo provided by a church member. Friday afternoon we went to el cereso (the prison) to join the group who ministers to the prisoners. Pastor Tim Coop enjoyed seeing the response of the 60 men who attend the weekly Bible Study/Praise and Worship time. He took time to speak with some of the American prisoners. ANIMO! Vicki and I joined Delia in ministering to the women prisoners. For the first time we took in a small CD player and CD with Christian praise songs in Spanish. We sang and clapped loudly in that small concrete room. Tears flowed and voices lifted in praise to the God who is HERE with us, even in prison. Each woman was given a flower lei for her head. We affirmed that they are all daughters of the King of Kings... princesses! Delia shared the Word and gave them ANIMO. We left after distributing clothing, snacks and an additional Bible for the newest prisoner. We told them about the medical clinic scheduled for the prison May 19th. They gave



Team "Animo": Albert, Eric, and Pastor Tim Coop encourage Pastor Julio Meza (red shirt) of Vida Nueva church, Puerto Peñasco, MX

Needs...

Needed immediately to stock donated "office trailer" to be taken to El Diamonte to help a micro business:

Full sized mattress, Gas stove, 4 kitchen chairs

Items needed for

"Water Fun Day" in Invasion barrio

"no tears" shampoo

puppets

juice boxes

granola Bars

Christian coloring books

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

Peanut butter

Chocolate drink mix

Powdered laundry soap

(with bleach)

Mashed potato flakes

Coffee

Beef Stew

Meat ravioli

Vienna Sausage

Cooking oil

Canned tuna in oil

Macaroni and cheese

(the good stuff)

Laundry softener

Soup mixes

Juice boxes for kids

Canned corn

Canned ham

You may purchase these items or give cash donation to Manos de Dios for a specific need. For donation drop off or pick up GetInvolved@ManosdeDios.org 975-7356

For more information go to www.ManosdeDios.org

April Trip to Mexico to bring "Animo" (encouragement) to our Mexican pastor friends.....continued

us a list of their medical concerns including: back pain, pregnancy, heart problems and alcohol withdrawal. We prayed with them and promised to continue praying for each of the women in prison...**Josie, Rosalea** (2 months pregnant), **Lupita, Lucia, Chabeta, Isabella** and her son, **Brian** (6 months old) and **Denille** (American). Eric and I took a short walk on the beach late in the afternoon and the team all met for dinner. We planned our schedule for Saturday and covered it in prayer.

Saturday was a day filled with **ANIMO!** We met Pastor Julio Meza and his wife, Doctora Delia for breakfast. They shared the many things they are doing in their church, medical clinic and mission outreach. Later we went to view their church, Vida Nueva, buildings and Clinica Nova. They are having a combination basketball court/ rapid soccer court built in front of the church. The funds to build the court were supplied by el Presidente Municipal (the mayor of Peñasco) Renteria! We viewed a new multi purpose building at their church that will soon offer computer classes to the neighbors, and the new dental clinic at Clinica Nova. Pastor Tim commended them for all they were doing, but encouraged them to take time for vacation, also. They need time **away** to be healthy ministers!

Next, we went to El Sembrador Church to meet Pastor Lupe and his wife Rafaela. We got to see the bus we donated parked out front of their church, toured their church building and discussed their plans for children's programs this summer. Three young couples (Christ-followers) were staying at their church. They had just come in from Honduras. They had taken a train all the way to Peñasco and it took one month! Ask Pastor Tim about their story! We made plans with Rafaela to help with a **Noche Mexicana** fundraiser event at their church on June 30th. (Let us know if you want to participate...it will be fun!) Pastor Lupe and his youth group offered to help out with our Water Fun Day in Invasion Barrio, June 23rd. Partnership and **ANIMO!** We prayed in a circle on the dirt road in front of their home. Hearts were shared and new friendships in Christ were formed.



Pastor Tim Coop and Lucy Smith meet with Julio Meza, pastor of Vida Nueva, and his wife, Delia



Pastor Tim Coop with Ernesto Portugal, pastor of Grupo Unidad Cristianos and wife, Leticia



Pastor Tim Coop with Lupe Leija, pastor of El Sembrador, Rafael from Honduras and team Animo

We met Pastor Ernesto and his wife, Leticia for lunch at Pollo Lucas! Tim and Ernesto are good friends and Ernesto speaks English so I had a break from translating! Ernesto pastors a large church and was seeking input from Tim about some of the challenges that are faced in larger churches. Tim shared about our life group concept, the importance of taking a Sabbath day each week, and delegating responsibility within the church. **ANIMO!** Ernesto asked him to come back to work with him (and possibly some from his church) on leadership topics plus preach Sunday morning at Grupo Unidad Cristianos. We scheduled this next **ANIMO** trip for June 30th and July 1st, 2007. Yeah! The fourth pastor to visit that day was Pastor Manuel and his wife, Olga. After a stop at the Women's Rehab Center to drop off some donations and share some Animo with Maria, we went to the new home we built for Pastor Manuel and his family in February. Tim enjoyed getting the tour and hearing Pastor Manuel's plans for their home and future church. He has not finished the home yet, but he hopes to move his family in about a month from now. He is trusting God to provide (Jehovah Jireh!) one of the two adjacent lots for them to build a church building in the future. Tim and Manuel shared about their pasts, present situations and visions for the future. They exchanged favorite verses (read in both English and Spanish from Eric's side by side Spanish English Bible). We prayed in a circle and tears flowed as we praised God together.



Pastor Tim Coop with Manuel Lopez, pastor of Metodista Libre and wife, Olga

You can help!

Manos de Dios is making a difference in the lives of families, pastors and prisoners in Sonora. Please prayerfully consider making a monthly or one time financial contribution. Contact us for details (520-975-7356) or donate on line at www.ManosdeDios.org.

Thank you!

Dennis and Lucy Smith, Manos de Dios, Missionaries to Mexico

April Trip , continued

Whew! Four pastors in one day! What a day of **ANIMO**. Each Mexican Pastor so appreciated Pastor Tim Coop coming to Mexico to meet with them! It was apparent in their eyes. They were encouraged and uplifted. We were blessed by hearing their hearts. Thank you, Tim, for taking the time to travel to Mexico to pour yourself into these pastors and their wives' lives! ¡Muchas gracias y Dios te bendiga! (Thank you so much and God Bless you!) .

Pastor Tim Coop spread **ANIMO** to the entire congregation of Peñasco Christian Fellowship on Sunday morning. With translation by Gaby Lugo, Tim preached on transformation-changing Christ-followers from the inside out. He used the illustration of a caterpillar changing into a butterfly and referenced verses including Philipians 3:20-21, Romans 6:4 and II Corinthians 3:18. At the end of the message, Tim offered to pray for anyone that would like to commit to a transformation in his or her life. The entire congregation went forward immediately for prayer!

We lunched at a local taco stand that features **papas rellenas** (large potatoes smothered in cheese, green chili's and meat, if desired.). Delicious! Joined by missionaries, Pat and Gerry Rico and their 3 daughters; Lucy tambien and Allen Pirro; and Deb and Rick Turner we drove the two hours south to Desemboque. After delivering the food bank donations to the church, we went to check in at the (only) local hotel. We ALL enjoyed a late afternoon walk on the beach, before going to the church for worship at 7PM. The praise and worship, led by a band from El Diamonte, was fun and lively! To hear a sample go to this website link www.ManosdeDios.org/pastors.html.

Pastor Tim gave a brief word of encouragement and Pastor Rueben preached to a full house. I (Lucy uno) was asked to provide activities for 35 children outside under a palapa. Prayers for individuals followed the message. We were invited to stay for a late dinner and enjoyed chicken, beans and fresh tortillas. It was a wonderful evening of fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ! The next morning was beautiful for a walk on the beach. Albert and Vicki, and Tim and Sandi decided to leave early in the morning to get back to Tucson. The rest of us visited with Pastor Rueben and his wife Erika. We discussed their plans for **Estudio Verano** (Vacation Bible School) and other children's programs. Soon we left for El Diamonte, as Pastor Alfonso and his wife Angelita had invited us for lunch. We savored three delicious dishes made from the **napales** (a vegetable made from the young stem segments of prickly pear, carefully peeled to remove the spines). And, of course, dessert...homemade **el pay de queso** (cheesecake). We delivered the food bank donations, plus donated mattresses, paint, clothing and a laser printer/copier.

Future projects:

Saturday, May 19, 2007 Medical Clinic in Peñasco Prison:

Medical personnel and translators needed. Contact Dennis ASAP: dennis@manosdedios.org, 975-7356

Saturday, June 23, 2007 Water Fun Day in Invasion

barrio in Puerto Peñasco. Families welcome! Needs:

'no tears' shampoo, volunteers to help, to have fun and to provide hair cuts. Camp or stay in a local motel. Come early for a beach day and/or stay for church on Sunday.

Saturday, June 30, 2007 Noche Mexicana (Mexico night street fair) at El Sembrador church. Help Pastor Lupe with this fundraiser event. Stay overnight to hear **Pastor Tim Coop preach** at Pastor Ernesto's church, Grupo Unidad Cristianos, **Sunday, July 1, 2007.**

Saturday, September 1, 2007 Youth Concert in El Diamonte in partnership with the Rock Church of Sahuarita. Spend labor day weekend camping with us and assisting in this outreach to the teens of small towns 100 miles south of Peñasco.

For more info and to sign up to join us on any of these short term missions trips ...contact Dennis and Lucy Smith, GetInvolved@ManosdeDios.org, 975-7356.

We discussed the planned September 1st youth concert event and their **Estudio Verano**. We visited our recently purchased property and made further plans for developing it into a missionary outpost. We decided to drive home through Caborca, Santa Ana, Magdalena and Nogales (instead of back through Puerto Peñasco). We won't do that again. It took 6 and half hours to get home! The roads had heavy truck traffic and some tolls. Plus, the wait at the border was much longer! Oh well! We now appreciate the quiet roads and small border crossing on our regular route.

We praise God for a weekend of **ANIMO!** We were encouraged by the faith, character and steadfastness of the indigenous pastors. The local pastors were encouraged by a pastor from the USA taking time to visit their church and share part of their "God story".

In service for our Lord, Lucy uno



Team Animo with Rueben (bottom right), pastor of Amistad Cristiana Iglesia, Desemboque, MX, and his wife Erika (to his left)

Please join us in praying For:

- The **medical clinic in the prison (May 19th)**. That we be effective in the medical care we offer to the prisoners and have opportunities to share and show Jesus' love to them. That the doctors, medical staff and translators will have safe travel to and from Peñasco as they volunteer their time to be a blessing to the prisoners.
- The **church in Desemboque**. That the families and pastors (Rueben and his wife, Erika) would be able to break any ties they have with other spirits and bind themselves solely to Jesus. This is a small, yet growing church. That Pastor Rueben be open to mentoring / input / accountability from another indigenous pastor.
- God to make it clear to Manos de Dios **how to reach the Mexican people in a way that is most sensitive to their culture**. We want to continue Pastor Tim Coop's theme of encouraging transformation from the inside out. We are asking ourselves how does this culture teach and learn the best? How do we incorporate their storytelling and music into any outreach that we do?
- Us to know how best to **come along side the pastors' wives as they plan summer Bible programs** for the children in their areas, in a way that would be most helpful to them. (Plans underway for summer programs in Invasion and Nuevo Peñasco barrios and El Sembrador church in Peñasco, and church in El Diamante, and church in Desemboque). Note: VBS in Mexico does not need to look like it does here!



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

April Trip "Animo" (encouragement) from Dennis

Isaiah 58:10 (NIV)

"and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday."

What started out as a typical Mission trip turned out to be anything but typical for me!

I won't go into the boring details but I will say that on Tuesday April 10th at about 3am I got up to visit the bathroom and found myself in a lot of back pain. Within a half hour I was in the truck and on my way to the hospital. I had a kidney stone that would not move! In some of the few lucid moments I had, I thought "I hope this can be fixed today. We plan to be in Peñasco on Thursday!" About nine hours later after a lot of drugs and x-rays I was told to go home and the stone should pass (easy for them to say)! Lucy waited to go to Peñasco till Friday in hopes I would be better. I encouraged the team ANIMO to go ahead without me and they did! Friday was a bad day with lots of pain. So, I was scheduled for outpatient surgery on Saturday to have the stone removed. All went well with lots of support and prayers.

Many told me that I was missed on the trip ...and that is a nice compliment. But the best compliment I received (and all involved should consider it a compliment) was the success and accomplishments of the group when one of it's members could not be there!

Our Mission, Manos de Dios, is a TEAM effort. Lucy and I are blessed to be the facilitators of this group of volunteer servants and even more blessed to have so many dedicated people supporting us in so many ways!

As we are blessed in our Mission! We give full credit to God for "animo"... encouraging us to continue in the direction we are going. He approves of what we are doing and continues to give us guidance and support. We pray that we can and will continue go in the direction He leads under any circumstances.

Que les vaya bien, Dennis