

August 26-September 2007 trip to Puerto Peñasco, El Diamante & Desemboque

We got a late start to Peñasco because missionary Pat and Gerry came to Tucson the night before and loaded up their car with needs from Costco. We then loaded up his utility trailer with many donations. Items included: hot dog cart, kitchen appliances, 12 blankets, tools, buckets, 75 pair athletic shorts, 50 tee shirts, 5 bags of baseball gear (catchers equip, bats, balls, gloves and bases), 2 bags of children's clothes, 27 back packs, three cabinets, and one bag of women's clothing. Their trailer was full! Ten miles past Kit Peak Pat's trailer had a blow out. He pulled over without any problem and we got the tire changed in no time and were on our way. By the time we got to the border it was 116 degrees. We got the green light but Pat went off to the staging area where he declared what he had and paid the 17% import tax. It didn't not take too long because no one wanted to be out in that heat! It was so hot and humid by the time I got our trailer set up we did not feel like doing anything else so we just had a quiet evening at Playa Bonita RV park and got ready for the next day.



Thursday started off hot and humid. We went to Pat and Gerry's home to sort and fold over 200 uniform shirts for the school children. We purchased them from a local business that also makes tee shirts with logos on them. We try to use the local vendors when we can. While we sorted and packed, we had a great time of praising the Lord for His blessings and making

it possible for these kids to go to school. While there, a local woman stopped by for a visit. Her children did not have uniforms (and she did not have the money to purchase them) so we outfitted her with shirts and backpacks and some money to purchase shoes and pants. Later on that evening Pastor Lupe and Pastor Manuel stopped by for their allotment of uniforms and supplies. Pastor Manuel also received 1 bag of men's clothing, 1 bag of children's clothing and a bag of sheets and towels to distribute to the needy in his area.



Friday morning we awoke early to go to the Pastors weekly prayer meeting scheduled for 5am. When we got into the truck at 4:30 am it was 88 degrees and so humid I had to put on the wipers in order to be able to see to drive. We spent an hour praying, listening to others prayers and joining in praise and worship. After the meeting the remainder of the Pastors presented the number of uniforms and sizes they needed for the families in their church or neighborhood who needed uniforms for their children. We passed out the remainder of the 110 uniforms and money. After lunch Lucy accompanied a mom and her daughter when they went shopping for her NEW school shoes. How fun! Thank you to all who so generously donated money



and back packs to our school uniform drive. We outfitted over 110 children for school!

A handwritten thank you note written to Manos de Dios (translated from Spanish):

*Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Manos de Dios,*

*I give you many thanks for your help and I cry out to the Lord that He would bring great blessings to your ministry...that you would continue helping and this help will continue to help those who need it.*

*Graciously to you,*

*Artur Quiroz Morales. 8 years old.*

*I go to El Sembrador church*

The rest of the day was spent talking and praying with friends in the barrio. Today (August 31<sup>st</sup>) was Lucy and my 21<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary so we went to Las Fuentes for a special dinner to celebrate. It was romantic...just as we were finishing our dinner, God turned off the electrical power in the city and we finished our meal in the romantic glow of an emergency light!

Saturday morning Lucy went to see the women in prison. Lucy reports...this was the first time I went to the prison during the family visitation time. I entered the prison alone, along with a wife of one of the men prisoners. I was escorted to Denille and Josie's cell and spent three precious hours simply VISITING with them. ***Matthew 25: 36b 'I was in prison and you came to visit me.'*** It was difficult to hear about the mistreatment they experience daily. They asked the tough questions like, "How much longer will God allow me to be punished in this way?" We cried, read God's Word and prayed together. God's grace entered that cell and the women became encouraged. By the end of the visit they were laughing and discussing possible "plans God has for their lives." I cherished the time of simply listening and loving these women. I will be visiting them again during family visitation, again, in addition to the regular Bible Study time.

Later that day we discussed future mission plans with our partner missionaries, Pat and Gerry Rico, Amor Rico Ministry. These included the prison ministry and Christmas Posada as well as projects in El Diamante and Desemboque. We picked up two large rotating fans to deliver to Pastor Ruében in Desemboque and one for Pastor Alfonso in El Diamante from Pastor Ernesto at Grupo Unidad Cristianos church. Lucy and I made our regular trip to the bulk food store for supplies to take to El Diamante and Desemboque on Monday. It was so hot and humid we did little else. Saturday night Pat and Gerry had a birthday party for one of their daughters in their front yard. Heat and humidity did not stop the Mexican people from enjoying a party! There were about 40 people, delicious food and good fellowship. The children played in the dirt street.





After church services on Sunday, Pat introduced us to Fernando and his wife. Fernando is a public school teacher that has been appointed (volunteered) by the government to start four pre-schools in Peñasco. They will be for children from one to four years of age and there will be no charge for the childcare to parents with low or no income (looking for a job)! Fernando (a Christian) had heard about Manos de Dios and was wondering if we might be able to offer support in some small way and he wanted to

meet us. Fernando and his wife took us to one of the facilities where a pre-school was to be located. The good news is that the building is right next door to Pastor Ernesto's church. The bad news is that it is a large three-bedroom home that was owned by a drug dealer (now dead) and the house and large yard is TRASHED! Fernando said he is soliciting help with remodeling the house and getting rid of the broken-down cars in the yard. He asked if we could possibly provide him with small pads for babies to sleep on, toys and diapers. We advised him we would pray about it and talk it over with our mission group. There will be three other pre-schools located in other parts of the community. The rest of the day we rested and rejuvenated. The heat and humidity takes the energy right out of those of us not used to it!



Monday Pat, Gerry, Lucy and I (along with two dogs) were off to Desemboque. Erika served us lunch consisting of chicken, rice and tortillas. The four of us ate lunch in their house (one room attached to the church) while Erika, Pastor Ruében, their two children and Lupita watched and visited. It was cramped but it was the only place with an air conditioner. We talked about the Pastors' Conference coming up November 30th, and Pastor Ruében said he would be there. After visiting we unloaded the food bank items and set up the two donated fans. They asked for continued prayers for their church and themselves before we left for El Diamante.



When we got to El Diamante Lucy and Gerry started cleaning out the inside of the “Silver Bullet” trailer we leave on the property, Camp Animo. Pat and I pulled out the awning and tried to get the generator running. It took a long time to get it running. Then, when we plugged the trailer into the generator and turned on the air-conditioner it immediately blew the fuse. Not enough power and the electrical current is not steady! We packed up and put everything back in the trailer and closed it up. No way we could spend the night in that aluminum trailer in that heat without an air conditioner! We spent the rest of the day with Pastor Alfonso finalizing plans for the Youth Concert and the Pastors’ Conference. Naturally, Alfonso’s wife Angelita fixed a delicious dinner for us. We had a great meal and a wonderful time of fellowshiping and then it was back to Peñasco that evening. We promised to return and STAY when it was a little cooler. Lucy has agreed to give Alfonso’s family English lessons.

Tuesday we went to visit a family that we have grown to love. Carlos and Claudia have two children attending school in the morning. Two more children attend school in the afternoon...one is in a special program including physical therapy for his handicapped condition. One more baby is not in school yet. Pat and I know Carlos from the Bible Study at the prison. He re-committed his life to Christ in prison. He was released about six months ago and now is home with his family. He is a NEW man in Christ. He has been working odd jobs and they have a small store out front of their home to bring in



some income. Now the entire family (all six of them) has contracted Hepatitis A. They spent what little money they had on treatments. After visiting and praying with them we told them to come outside. We had a gift to give them. Remember the hotdog cart that was donated to us last spring? A few guys in our group cleaned it up and we were able to take it to Peñasco (not without paying an import tax) and give it to them. You should have seen the look on Carlos’ face; it

was pure joy and appreciation. He kept thanking God for the gift and telling us how he was going to fix it up and earn money for his family. They were going to add freshly cooked hot dogs to their store offerings. What a blessing it is to be able to help those in need and see the joy in their faces! Even with all the illness, stress and obstructions this family has in their life, they still smile, praise the Lord and give thanks for the blessings they have. What a role model for us all! And Carlos has volunteered to assist us with the prison ministry to show the men how they can live better lives by serving the Lord. This blessing is coming around full circle!

We could not end our trip on a better note! The next morning we packed up our trailer and headed for Tucson.

Vaya con Dios,  
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Did something in our newsletter touch your heart? Would you like the opportunity to support this 'hands and feet' ministry in Sonora, Mexico? Please prayerfully consider making a monthly or one time financial donation to Manos de Dios. All donations are tax deductible. Donations can be made via US mail or your bank's online bill pay:

Manos de Dios, NFP  
2914 N Indian Ruins Road  
Tucson AZ 85715

Or on our website: [www.ManosdeDios.org/donations.html](http://www.ManosdeDios.org/donations.html)

Prayer requests/Praise reports:

- For safety and health as six volunteers go into the prison in Puerto Peñasco to provide a medical clinic on Saturday, September 29, 2007.
- For wisdom as Manos de Dios discusses ways to implement the new developmental techniques presented by the LifeWind, International conference we attended in Colorado September 10-15.
- Praise for Pastor Tim Coop and Pastor Ernesto Portugal's commitment to working together to develop system of accountability and leadership in Ernesto's church
- For the Amor Rocky Point House Building trip November 8-11, 2007.
- Praise for generous financial supporters of Manos de Dios.

#### Health Alert:

I have always said that I would advise the group if there was a safety concern or a health concern in Mexico. Last month I advised of the dangerous situation in the Cananea area (go to this website link: [www.ManosdeDios.org/travel.html](http://www.ManosdeDios.org/travel.html) ). Now, unfortunately, I need to give you some information on health concerns in the Sonora area. First, there are a few more cases of Hepatitis A showing up in the Peñasco community. It is contagious but can be avoided. Here are a few tips that will help you stay healthy.

- Do not drink water or other fluids from a community cup. Mexicans often have a community cup the drink out of and share with others.
- Avoid kissing people you don't know on the cheek. If you must kiss, put your cheek on theirs and make the kiss noise in the air.
- Wash your hands (and cheeks if kissing) thoroughly.

The Mexican people are kind, loving and considerate and would never pass on germs intentionally. During this time of uncertainty be sure and show respect to them while showing caution.

The US Department of Health and the Mexican department of health both agree that if you tested the people of Mexico for Tuberculosis (TB), approximately 60% of the people would show they had been "exposed." That does not mean they have TB, simply that they have been exposed to it. With that said, we have recently been told that about eight (8) men have been transferred out of the prison in Peñasco and sent to the prison in Hermosillo for treatment of TB. TB is contagious, but not too easily contracted. TB is mostly spread by someone that has TB and has a sever cough and does not cover their mouth. The germs are spread thru the air by coughing. Living in close quarters such as in hospitals and prisons present a high risk of contracting TB. Lucy and I spend time in the Peñasco prison and have been visiting prisoners for the past nine months, therefore we are going to be checked out by our doctors! We will let you know the results. Please use caution if you are around someone with a deep chest cough. More information and updates to follow.

Dennis