



# Misión México NEWSLETTER

January  
2013 -  
March  
2013

Once again we here at Misión México extend our greetings to you all. Our New Year celebration, now months back but only seems like yesterday, was as always, an enjoyable night for the children of Misión México. Song, dance, laughter, food, piñata and fireworks, worked together to put smiles on all the faces, and a fun night was had by all.

## 60 Years!!!

My 60<sup>th</sup> birthday was early in February and we were able to get 7 wonderful nights away in Oaxaca thanks to a wonderful sponsor. Actually, this was an anniversary gift for back in November, but due to the fact that we were so 'snowed-under' with responsibilities here, we were not able to take advantage of the offer until February.

While I was in Australia in November, our children organized a surprise early birthday party to celebrate my 60 years. Oh my goodness, can't believe I am 60!!

We had decided to go out with all the family to the local surf club, our old stomping ground, for a farewell dinner, so I was completely unaware and quite bewildered when I walked through the doors to the deck and everyone shouted "Surprise"! I turned around to see if there was someone behind me and then thought, "I've never had anyone fuss over me for leaving Australia before; why are they so happy that I am going back to Mexico this time"?

Our eldest daughter Rachel noticed the 'lost look' on my face and explained that they never have me in Australia for a birthday and this one being so special, and not too far in the future, had to be celebrated! What a wonderful family we have! Thank you so much for making me feel so special. It was such a great evening with music from the 60's / 70's, wonderful company, good food and an awesome birthday cake; our youngest daughter Hannah has quite a talent!!

The speeches really touched my heart, reminiscing about my childhood, things that I had forgotten, and also, from the memories of our children's younger years. I had never thought that anyone would remember anything about me as a child; I never thought I had had an impact on anyone's life; and it was just amazing and so uplifting what was remembered. Our children's memories were beautiful also and once again, you made me sound like quite the woman. My ordinary life was quite extraordinary! Thank you so much to each and every one of you, siblings, children, adopted son Moacir, in-laws, grandchildren, family and friends; You all made my day a very special memory; Gracias, muchas gracias! Unfortunately, our daughter Brooke and family couldn't attend due to living in Mexico but were there in spirit.



# At Home

We are all doing well over here, even with all the 'highs and lows' that we experience at Mision Mexico; life is good, and we continue to move forward regardless of all the hiccups. Dealing with all 'that-goes-on' with living here is exhausting to say the least. It's so hard to explain what makes up a day in a week of living in a refuge in Mexico!

There are always meetings to attend, either for school, welfare, immigration or other committee and building meetings; all necessary and all time consuming.

I was recently having one such meeting, though this one extremely important, with a lawyer from the welfare department, where we were discussing how we should go about trying to get two of our 11 year old 'runaway' boys, back home. The two had run away a week earlier, for no apparent reason, and after looking for them throughout the city, we had just about given up hope. We had no idea as to their whereabouts until a small and very frightened boy approached two volunteers telling them where they were.

We had to get the boys out of a house where they had been staying. We had no idea whether they were in danger or not. Why would someone take two 11 year old boys into their house and not report it? Was this a paedophile or a drug dealer who had our boys?

The call was placed to the Welfare Department Lawyer to ask for a meeting at the refuge.

The discussion concluded with the lawyer looking at it from a professional point of view, saying that she can't just go and take them, and then mentioning the paperwork that had to be done first etc. While we, on the other hand, were feeling the urgency of saving the boys from whatever they were being subjected to. The lawyer suggested that it was fine for us to 'grab' them if we see them outside; but what about the chances of there being a dangerous situation, as the area where the boys were supposed to be was known to have quite a bad drug problem? It was decided that we could 'hire' a policeman to go and rescue the boys.

I stood there in the office shaking my head and remarked; 'I can't believe that we are having this conversation'!!

While contacting people and trying to find a policeman who would help us, two of our older kids and a couple of younger ones did some investigations of their own and found one of the boys outside a house and managed to bring him home.

The young boy, who had been with us for many years, and whom we had never had a problem, said that he wanted to come home but was egged-on by the other 'newer' boy to, in the first instance, leave, and then influenced not to come back home after that.



After a good talk, and a few tears, the boy was reunited with his brother and the other children at the refuge. It appears that the boys were not subjected to any sinister act, praise God, which was a grave possibility. Tapachula does have a very dark side.

The other boy's whereabouts has been reported to the welfare department. We will not be accepting him back here as he has caused us too many problems during his short stay at the refuge, and with so many other children to care for, we can't give him the attention that he needs.

The people who housed the boys will be investigated by the welfare department.

All the other children are doing well here. All are growing and changing. It's true, it often appears too difficult dealing with all that goes on in a place like this, but as difficult as it seems, we **are** making a difference in the lives of every child who comes through our doors.

And, it's thanks to all our supporters that we are able to make an impact on the lives of these disadvantaged children. It is definitely an ongoing '**labor of love**', and in saying that, I need to emphasize the importance of your continued support. Without you, we would not be able to provide the children in our care with all that is necessary to give them a '**normal**' life. Only through your support is this possible. It is more than just putting 'food on the table', it is about formation; preparing these children for a better future and thus, 'break the cycle of poverty'.

## Education

All the children are doing well at school. Some still need much more help in areas like Spanish, English and Maths.

Jennifer, 6 years old and came to us last year, is very behind in her studies. We have been home schooling her and she is doing well. The volunteers have been working with me to school her in the mornings when the house is quieter – most of the other children are at school then. We have a sponsor for her, an Australian who volunteered here last year, so we are hoping to get her into school in the new term in August.

Delmar has been waiting since he arrived in 2011 for his papers to enable him to complete his education. He had similar issues to Moacir – not being a native Mexican and not having identification papers made it impossible for him to sit exams and fully complete his education. We are delighted to say that his papers are almost ready and hopefully he will be able to finish his education.

Catherine is doing so well with her medical studies at University. She is getting top grades for her exams and loving every minute of it. Thanks to some lovely sponsors, we are able to purchase the books she needs for her studies.

As many of our children need additional help with their education we are looking for new tutors to work with them on a regular basis, particularly in the areas of Spanish, English and Maths. We are looking for sponsors to help us cover these costs which would be around \$65 (AUS ) or £45 per week.

If you can help please contact Deborah, [info@lovelifehope.com](mailto:info@lovelifehope.com). Muchas gracias.



# Projects

We have come a long way over the last twelve years, but believe there is still a lot to do and feel that 2013 is going to be a year that brings us to a new era, where we will see new beginnings in so many different areas of Misión México life.

One such area that we believe will develop considerably is the **Misión Surf Work Experience Project** at the beach, which will be the commencement of a new direction for our young adults. This project is aimed to help our youth in their formation, by providing them with the necessary skills needed to equip them for the wider world.

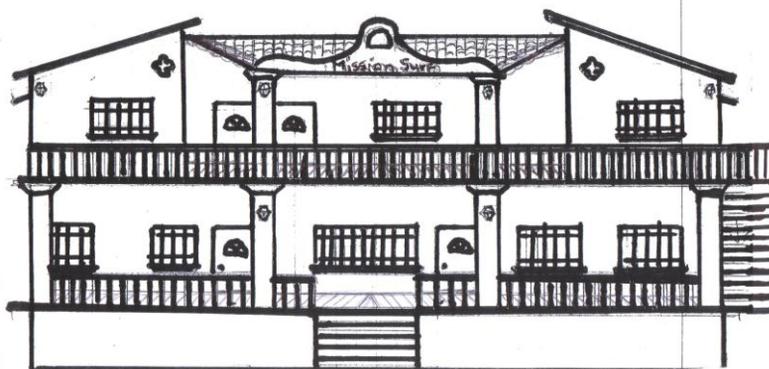


Over the years, we have felt that this has been one area that lacked advancement in the development of our young adults. We have focused a lot of energy on teaching them good values and morals, and even though these areas have been critical issues to learn, there has been a void in the area of workplace knowledge and etiquette, which needed to be addressed. With the learning of these skills, and of course, their character development, plus the added benefit of English, Misión México's youth will have an advantage to engage in quality work in the future.

The work experience program will be centered on tourism and the surf culture, as that is Misión Mexico's chosen sport. It is important to understand, that surfing is virtually unheard of here in our state of Chiapas, other than for those who have witnessed our children surfing, and a few local news articles written about them, so therefore, we are pioneering a new and dynamic activity in our local area and we are already beginning to see a great interest.



In the process of this project development, Misión México has benefited the local community by providing employment to locals and also by the purchase of supplies locally. The finished project will also provide safer and cleaner beaches for the local community. With the completion of the surf camp facility, tourists will visit the area, thus encouraging economic growth with the influx of people to the poor region.



*Misión Surf – construction at the beach to develop this structure to house a surf camp, surf shop, restaurant and surf school headquarters.*

Each step of the project construction has been quite stressful, and an exercise in patience, due to the frustrations of the local building techniques and workmanship, plus the fact that the financial support for this project has been coming in slowly, the whole process has been drawn-out, taking longer to complete than first visualized.

Central to this project have been our amazing sponsors: Guzman y Gomez (Australia), Compound Boardshop (Florida), John Mather (Phoenix, Arizona) and Kirk Lantz (California).

These sponsors, along with other volunteers and fundraisers, are continuing to help us fundraise to get the doors open in July 2014. Keep an eye on Guzman y Gomez's fundraising campaign starting this month with a roadshow by Steven Marks to all the GyG stores in Australia promoting our project! Compound Boardshop are hosting a series of fundraisers this month in Florida to raise funds – see Fundraising Section on Page XX for more details!

When possible, Misión Surf intends to invite local and international professionals and tradesmen to volunteer and share their knowledge and expertise with the refuge's young adults. The areas we will be needing support include retail, hospitality, landscaping and gardening, tourism, life guarding, surf training, photography, graphic design and environmental consulting.

If you would like to know more about this project please contact us



## House Parents

I would like to 'put it out there' that Misión México is looking for another couple to help with the running of the refuge. If we can become a team to share the workload, and the wonderful and challenging experiences, it will be half of what Alan and I have been doing by ourselves.

Sharing this responsibility will not only benefit the mission and the children, it will also provide you with a rewarding change of lifestyle that is so satisfying you'll wonder why you didn't do it sooner!!! Life has so much meaning with doing this work and even though you will be challenged, you will also reap so much for yourselves as individuals that your focus on life will have more direction than you thought would be possible.

Not only this, you will have a new culture and land to explore and language to master; there will be so many wonderful opportunities for a life changing experience that are just waiting for you to discover.

If you are a couple whose children have grown, and you would like to give something back to society, or you are teachers or youth leaders who maybe never had children but have had experience with children, or you work in the administrative side of things with great public relations, then this may be for you!!



We are looking for a couple who love life, are motivated, have patience with children and are strong in character (as these little darlings will give you a run for your money!!).

Trust me, it will be challenging at first but the workload will be shared and therefore you won't be alone. If you are interested to do a long term placement with the children of Mexico, please contact; [deborah@lovelifehope.com](mailto:deborah@lovelifehope.com)

## New Ninos at Misión México

I want to introduce to you our recent additions; Marli 3years, who came to us malnourished and who only fitted into clothes for an 18mth old; Jacqui 2 years who was abused and is the daughter of a young girl who was raped by her father; and Daniela 7 years and her brother Cesar 2 years, were neglected and also abused. Cesar was very malnourished and is in clothes for a 6mth old. He is now learning to crawl and walk but still doesn't speak. All four children are doing well and have changed remarkably. They are experiencing new things and are enjoying life at the refuge.

It has been a team effort looking after these new beautiful children, helping them to adjust to their new life. A very special 'thank you' to our wonderful volunteers who have been so dedicated in caring for these new ones, and all the children of that Misión México. A special thanks to Moacir, who tenderly cares and gets up to the babies throughout the night.

Moacir has been living in Australia and is currently back in Tapachula with us whilst he awaits his student visa. With the support of Steven Marks and Guzman y Gomez, Moacir will be continuing his business studies later this year in Queensland. It's a wonderful opportunity for him and although we all miss him when he is not here, he really is an example to the other children of what is possible if you dream big and work hard.

Moacir has continued to be an Ambassador for us whilst living in Australia, attending fundraising events and sharing the story of Mision Mexico.

## Keeping up-to-date with us vis Social Media

Look out for our latest surfing blogs <http://www.ttride.co.uk/blog> thanks to the awesome guys at Ticket to Ride.

Photos, stories, events, amigo of the month and birthdays are all posted on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/MisionMexicoChildren](http://www.facebook.com/MisionMexicoChildren) so if you've not liked us yet please do and share our stories with your online communities.

You can follow us on Twitter too now... [www.twitter.com/Mision\\_Mexico](http://www.twitter.com/Mision_Mexico) and of course our children, sponsors, volunteering and donation information are on our website [www.lovelifehope.com](http://www.lovelifehope.com).



# Fundraising

Our newest sponsor Joy Beans Coffee ran a Facebook campaign during March and raised over \$2000 for us – muchas gracias and congratulations to Patty and Ben Glennon, Founders of Joy Beans Coffee who had their first baby last month.

Several of our supporters are hosting events this month in the US to raise money for us. I'm heading to Florida, NY and Washington to attend them with Moacir. Deborah Grossman, from the UK, will also be joining us in NY to support us.

Many thanks to Jacob and Rachel Shields, of Compound Boardshop, Sarasota, Florida for organizing a jam packed week of events for us – looking forward to it! For details of events please visit our website and Facebook page and if you're local and would like to attend please get in touch!

Thanks to Mara and Jonno in New York for hosting a reception at the Australian Consulate General – a fun filled evening of music, film, food and drinks has been organised and tickets are on sale now – please contact [volunteer@lovelifehope.com](mailto:volunteer@lovelifehope.com) for tickets – see invite on our website and Facebook page.

Thanks to Ali and Anne for hosting an event in Washington on Saturday 27 April for us too – again tickets available through their Facebook event page [https://www.facebook.com/debsjgrossman?ref=tn\\_tnmn#!/events/573647735993769/](https://www.facebook.com/debsjgrossman?ref=tn_tnmn#!/events/573647735993769/)

An ongoing thanks to everyone who fundraises for us throughout the year; to name a few...Tango Embrace, Guzman y Gomez, Mission Mexico (Australia) Inc, Christian Surfers and the numerous volunteers around the world who get involved through events on Everyday Hero, My Donate and hosting events themselves.

If you would like to get involved with us we need people to help **us with** fundraising events in the UK, the ACT and VIC. Please contact [Deborah@lovelifehope.com](mailto:Deborah@lovelifehope.com) if you would like to join us and make a difference in our children's lives.

God bless you all, both here at Misión México and abroad; thank you for your amazing love and wonderful support.

**With love, Pam, Alan and all the children of Misión México.**



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