



MENNONITE *Air* MISSIONS

Guatemala, Central America

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" - Psalm 126:5

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Southeastern Conference Senior Class Trip



The senior group and their chaperones.

Lunch was ready and waiting, the tables and chairs were set up, the bedrooms were ready, and the crowd was due to arrive at any minute.

When we agreed to host a group of eighteen high school seniors with four chaperones, I knew it was going to be a lot of work. But I felt up to the challenge and had people on hand to help get ready. We had around eight totes of food, over one hundred gallons of drinking water, and lots of work projects ready when they started rolling in. It required two big vans and a pickup full of luggage to get them all here, but they came ready and willing to work!

The fellows' projects consisted of digging ditches for water and electric, building fence, and painting roofs. The girls were kept busy keeping the men properly hydrated and fed, doing laundry, washing dishes, and doing some painting. In the evenings there still seemed to be enough energy to play volleyball, which the local



We used an amazing amount of water.

youth were happy to join!

As the two vans and pickup full of suitcases pulled out Monday morning, we all breathed a sigh of relief that our hectic pace of the past four days was done, but we smiled as we reminisced on the fun memories, funny moments, and encouragement we received from this wonderful group of young people and the two chaperone couples who came with them. We would gladly do it all over again . . . in a year or so! *Lynnae Zimmerman*



Fixing a broken water line.



EDITORIAL

Keri Wenger

Fishing Lessons

It was a beautiful day, and the late afternoon sun shone as we wrapped up the various projects from the day. Suddenly, we remembered the plans we had made a few nights ago for this evening. Fishing! This is a common way of getting food here in Santa Rosita and a very good way to reach out to young fellows.

After loading the harpoons and the fishing rod onto the boat, we headed upriver, but just as the boat rounded the first turn, the motor sputtered and died. A normal thing when it lacks gasoline in its system. After we messed around with the hose, it fired right up.

With the engine finally running, we were back on our merry way upriver to our first spot. For one of the guys, this was his first time harpooning, so he watched as the rest readied their harpoons and launched themselves into the river. Not long after the divers disappeared into the river's depths, there was a quiet little "shwack" underwater. Sure enough, a resurfacing fisherman brought up a nice-sized fish impaled on his arrow.

After loading up from that spot, we headed farther up the river. Here, the newer fellow was going to give this task a try. Readying his harpoon gun, he balanced on the edge of the boat, preparing to jump and almost falling in sooner than he had intended. Once in the water, he looked at his surroundings and decided that he had better get back into the boat and let the rest have their fun.

Darkness was setting in, but the boatload of fishermen continued to plan for another spot to drop the rod into the water. They boated upriver past the first set of currents, where they cast the line and waited for a big one to lay its lips on that sharp hook. Fish tails slapped

the top of the water throughout the evening, which was very amusing and drove the fishermen to try all the harder. And just like that, there was a bite on the end of the line and in came a three-pound robalo. All rushed to see the new catch.

Darkness had come, and the fishermen decided they had caught enough fish for their evening supper. They fired up the motor and headed home.

There are some lessons we can learn from a few of these events. The sputtering motor reminds me of John 15:4-7, where it speaks of abiding in Christ and staying connected with Him like a branch attached to its vine. In the same way plants receive nutrients from their roots, we receive life-giving water from the Holy Spirit and food from God's Word. Just like the disconnected gas hose, apart from Jesus we lose our connection, and our efforts are unfruitful. Are we receiving and thriving from the nourishment offered by Jesus, the Vine?

Just as we were trying to see how many fish we could lure into a trap or onto a hook, so our enemy Satan likes to do in our spiritual lives. Job is a good example, consistently obeying and trusting God even though God allowed Satan to attack Job in an especially harsh manner. God calls us to stay faithful in the tests and trials and thus proclaim our faith to the world. At times it is easy for us to allow the devil to rule our lives. He loves to lure us into something we would really like to do but is not upbuilding at all for our Christian lives. We need to always be on the lookout for snares that the devil may bring our way and look to Jesus for help to escape the traps we face in life.

A Day in the Life of the Miller Family

Come along for a day in our life as a missionary family in the western highlands of Guatemala, in a small pueblo called San Bartolomé, Jocotenango. It is Thursday of Holy Week, a vacation week for the school children and some of the workforce as well. For us it means Conrad is not teaching his twice-weekly English classes and our six-year-old daughter Heidi is home from school every day.

This week, our days start later and are more relaxed. Conrad, though, is up early to milk our two Jersey cows and put the milk through the separator. Alex, our just-turned-four-year-old, and I wake up to the smell of freshly brewed coffee. Heidi may sleep as late as she wants this week, a real treat for her! I get us some breakfast and head to the front porch with mine, along with coffee and my Bible, and settle down in the easy chair that we have inherited from Harold Kaufman. Though very old and broken in various places, it is still probably one of the most comfortable chairs in town!

The view from our porch is also probably one of the best, facing a ridge of mountains to the northwest, with the grand Cuchumatanes towering in the background. This morning the view is obscured by low-hanging clouds, but I don't mind. I am thanking God for the fresh, cool air. The past few days the view has been obscured by dust and smoke from dozens of agricultural fires, some gone horribly wrong. The dust and smoke, combined with temperatures in the 90s every day, was terribly oppressive, and we were grateful for the early thunderstorm that came our way last night. The dust is settled, the air is cleared, and the temperature has dropped almost 20 degrees.

I enjoy my porch time and watch as Conrad takes the cows and the bull out to a nearby cornfield for the day and then leaves with his moto to deliver the day's milk to Hermana Priscila's bakery. I do laundry and then start on the housecleaning. Usually I clean on Friday, but my once-a-week maid, Rachel, is coming tomorrow and I want her help with a few other

projects, such as canning pizza sauce, baking bread, and spraying insecticide around the house. We're trying to control the large amounts of spiders, bugs, and other creepy-crawlies that have been joining us in the house lately.

So today I houseclean, my water turning a rich brown from scarcely a week's accumulation of dust and dirt. Conrad returns and takes both children with him to haul some firewood for a brother in church. Then we heat some leftovers and make bean tostadas for a quick lunch. Conrad heads to our bedroom/study to work on preparing a sermon for Sunday, and Heidi starts on her English schoolwork. Alex has his own new book for four-year-olds, which he proudly works on. Then he goes off to play till naptime. I work on sorting through the many photos our winter visitors left us, a project that I can easily do while supervising Heidi.

After naptime, Conrad and the children do chores at the schoolhouse where the dry cow and heifer are tied. They stop at Hermano Santos' where a pig is being butchered and grilled in honor of son Abdiel's surprise visit from the Capital. Neighbor Martin comes to have his phone charged. Little Saira comes to play with the children. Two men tie up our next-door neighbor's pig and drag it through the front yard with many antics and terrible squealing. The next-door neighbor lady strolls around our yard where her turkeys freely roam, trying to keep them from wandering into our house and backyard or drowning in the cows' water troughs. We find out that Hermana Sabina, a former church member, died from an operation gone wrong. The burial will take place tomorrow.

Suppertime, one of our favorite parts of the day, is at 5:30. Then, rather surprisingly, we are all home for the whole evening. It's a good way to end the day. In a world of changing plans, disruptions, meetings to attend, places to go, and things to do, it was a delightfully boring day. If tomorrow is the opposite, we will strive to live it cheerfully too. "God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply." *Kathi Miller*

Remodel Project in Santa Rosita

With the new roof and remodel project of the “big house” in Santa Rosita finished last year, the “little house” (next to the chapel) became the next to have a makeover. The thatch roof was rapidly deteriorating, as were parts of the wood structure in the bedrooms. Water tended to flow into the house when downpours overwhelmed the drainage system.

Three groups of volunteers came to Santa Rosita from January to March to help with tearing down the old and building up the new. In addition to converting the thatch roof to a metal roof, they replaced the wooden part of the house with cement block and altered



The small house in Santa Rosita before remodeling.

the porch roof. Jonny and Sheryl Bear will stay nice and dry this rainy season! Thank you to all who contributed time, effort, and money to this project!



After a new roof was installed.

Prayer and Praise Items

- Pray for more workers to join the work in Guatemala.
 - Pray for godly marriages among the Guatemalan brethren, so that Christian homes might flourish.
 - Praise God for providing resources—both material and spiritual—for the work of MAM.
 - Praise God for the security we have in Christ, regardless of the turmoil in this world.
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