

# NEWSLETTER

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## Shining Light Children's Home

### GATE TALK

by Leland Ulrich

"Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate" (Psalms 127:3-5).

Sadly, many ungodly parents are missing out on this blessing by abandoning "the fruit of the womb" through selfish and wicked ways. Our quiver at Shining Light has been filled with blessings ungodly parents have missed. Truly these children are a blessing from the Lord.

It is so sad to see the brokenness of our society. A society that does not care for its children will bring upon itself a curse that will ultimately be its destruction.

As God's children, we have the resources and the only antidote that can counter this curse. Notice the last part of verses above: "Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate." The staff at SLCH have been experiencing this.

Let me share a story about one of the staff who spoke with enemies at the gate. Names have been changed to protect those involved. [Rachel: remove this note: Note to those formatting the newsletter: SLCH literally has a gate at the entrance to the home— Insert gate picture here]



the entrance gate at SLCH

"Good morning Joe, Maria the psychologist called and said she will be out again today for the scheduled session with the children."

Joe's heart sank. Maria, a private contractor for DIF (Mexican Social Service), had been conducting the required interviews with the children. These sessions included informing the children of their rights. Joe, an SLCH staff member, knew that the children would be difficult to work with following the sessions because they would use their "rights" as license for disobedience and getting their own way.

Several months later, Kendra, another contractor from DIF and also part of another organization, began coming with intentions of training the staff and assuring that the children are receiving the teaching they need. One day when Kendra showed up, Joe asked if he could "speak with her at the gate."

"Kendra," he asked, "do you really believe in what you are doing, teaching these children about their rights?"

Kendra was caught off guard. The expression on her face revealed that Joe had hit a sore spot. After all, she had been thoroughly trained that children needed to be informed of their rights to make it through life.

Kendra stood speechless. Finally she looked up and said, "I don't know."

"Are you a believer?" Joe asked.

After a pause, she replied, "No, I am not. God has been speaking to me, but I am not ready."

Joe went on. "Kendra, no one has rights. We only have blessings and

# SEWING CLASS

by Evelin Lopez Ruis, Estefania Jacobi,  
and Lesly Hernandez



Sewing is an important part of a Christian girl's life, especially if she wishes to make her own dresses and veils. During Christmas vacation, Kiara Beltran gave sewing classes to a few of us older girls. With scraps of material and sewing machines, we eagerly headed to school. The first day we practiced making pot holders. We learned how to operate the machines and put thread

through correctly.

It was the first time most of us had ever sewed a dress. Sewing was a challenge for us beginners. Many seams needed to be taken out and redone. Though this was frustrating, we were all happy to have new dresses that we had made by our own hands and hard labor. We all fully enjoyed the class and will use the knowledge we gained to make useful things for ourselves and others.



(cont'd from page 1)

privileges, but for every privilege there is first a responsibility and requirement. When we live by this biblical truth, everything works much better."

This was the start of "gate talk" between Joe and Kendra. Kendra noticed there was something very different at this home. She knew her sessions were somehow contrary to the truth these children were being taught. She also knew prisons are full of people who had "exercised their rights." Kendra secretly started looking forward to these "gate talks." They were starkly different from what she had been taught in her training as psychologist, but it felt like truth.

This story is not finished, you can have an impact how this story ends by praying for Joe. God knows his real name.

Kendra has agreed to certify Joe to do these required sessions for DIF compliance. Currently she is teaching him how to document each session and report it to DIF. Joe will speak to the children about responsibility that leads to blessings and privileges.

This story is still unfolding. The names have been changed and color added to make it a story, but the conversations between Joe and Kendra actually happened.



Hi, I'm Jose Roberto! I am almost three. I really like when Eizar and Ellie go to school because then I get Mama all to myself! I like to help Mama with cleaning and laundry. I like

to play with my trike and my sister's kitchen set. Every morning I have to do my "school work." I'm learning new words and how to color. I'm always busy growing, exploring, and learning new things.



Rhoda Helmuth and Kari Kuhns from Ohio were here for 6 weeks helping in the kitchen.

## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES AT SLCH

- Single fellow to serve as assistant caretaker for the older boys.
- Single girls to help with various positions of caregiver, kitchen and floater.
- Married couple to serve as “Dad and Mom” for the younger boys.

## SHINING LIGHT LIFE AT A GLANCE

*by Rhoda Helmuth and Kari Kuhns*

How does one describe life at Shining Light? Eventful, chaotic, joyful, stressed, and blessed, but in the midst of it we found joy in serving others. Life in the kitchen can be quite challenging. It can be a real brain stretcher to come up with meals day after day and adjust to a new way of cooking with rice and beans on the menu daily. “Go easy on the salt, not good for the brain!” said one young kitchen worker, bringing some humor into the kitchen. Sometimes we hit the panic button, such as when we found out Saturday evening that we didn’t have enough meat to feed around 80 people for Sunday lunch. Those times resulted in a few grey hairs, but it didn’t hurt us. Making do or doing without—we always came through one way or the other. Sometimes it seemed like an endless circle of spending two hours or more making a meal and having it devoured in no time at all. Yet it was a satisfied feeling to get yet another meal on the table. An all-time favorite was monster bars, which brought smiles to everyone’s faces. We made yogurt by the five-gallon bucketful. All in all we had a great time cooking and cleaning. Entertaining and taking care of the children was also a highlight—swing rides, glow sticks, playing tag, and much more. We also enjoyed spending time with the moms after the children were in bed—rejuvenating each other and encouraging each other to keep on keeping on. Snacking and breaking beds brought peals of laughter and made lots of great memories. Our time at SLCH was an adventure we will never regret. May each of the staff be blessed as they invest time and efforts in the lives of these precious children.

## BLESSINGS AND TRIALS

*by Lynette Friesen*

I have been blessed to be at Shining Light for a month. God has been teaching me a lot in the few weeks that I have been here. I was asked to come for a month and then find out what God’s will is for me after that. Living in God’s will is the best place to be. I want to share some blessings and trials of working at SLCH. It is a blessing to see how young people pour out their lives for these hurting children who need love and security. It is so rewarding to give love to these children whose hearts are crying for love. I cannot thank the Lord enough for the blessing of growing up in a Christian home with godly parents. Some of the trials God has led me through have been taking care of the children. It is challenging to give and give until you don’t have anything left—and then give some more. There were times I gave up, my strength and courage were gone. O the blessing when God steps in. Problems are resolved, and it is a blessing to see surrender in the children’s hearts. It was worth it all. “For when I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Corinthians 12:10).

Lynette Friesen from Nova Scotia, Canada was here for a month to help out wherever needed. We appreciated her willing service.



A friendly visit from the police department!

Christmas time brings groups from outside into the home. The children are blessed with lots of candy!



Spending time outside with the children during school vacation.



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Antonio, Alma Rosa, and Lesly serving chicken tacos.