

NEWSLETTER

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Shining Light Children's Home

A Caregiver's Perspective by Rachel Hostetler

The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him (Nahum 1:7). All is quiet as the sun rises faithfully on the horizon behind the mountains. It is a time of reflecting on God's mercy, kindness, love, patience, and help. A new day is breaking. What will it hold? First of all, am I prepared to face the challenges? Not until I spend time with the Lord.

What all is involved in working at a place like this? Like life, it has its routine and yet it varies so much. It is so much more than cleaning rooms, washing clothes, and sewing dresses. It involves being strong when you'd rather cry...loving when not loving would be easier...accepting the person but not the behavior...realizing their childhood was not like mine, and that they do not know the love and security of a Christian home.

It involves receiving a smile and a hug asking for forgiveness for being disrespectful or disobedient...sensing the girls have accepted me as their caregiver and "Mama"...having a special time together for a birthday...listening to the concerns they have for their unsaved family members. For example, one nine-year-old girl prays that her mother could be a Christian and that God would forgive her mother for her sins. She also prays that she could help her mother to do what's right.



Breakfast is ready at 7:30. The girls need to be ready for school with rooms cleaned and beds made.

Victoria, a three-year-old, is learning to dress herself. She is so independent—almost too independent some times.

Laboring to instill things of eternal value in the children brings more challenges than the actual physical work of caring for them. They need so much love, direction, and security. Line upon line, precept upon precept—so we labor day by day. I am sure those of you who have worked with people or children know there are joys and sorrows involved.

My prayer is that I can be a vessel God can use to show the love He has for each of the children. I pray that they can learn to love and trust God as

their personal Savior. He is the Only One who can heal the pain they have experienced.

Please remember us in prayer as we work with these broken, bruised but yet blessed, children.

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, or a listening ear. An honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring has the potential to turn a life around" (Leo F. Buscaglia).

-Rachel Hostetler

Meet Guillermo



Hola! I am Guillermo. I'm ten years old and am in fifth grade. In the morning I get up really, really early and we milk four cows! In the afternoon we milk three cows. With the milk we make cheese and yogurt and sell it in Tecate!



The Christmas Play

The lights dim. In the front left corner stands an empty stable with a small fire burning in the fireplace, a few hay bales, and some cows and pigs. To our left sits regal King Herod, two servants fanning his face.

Soon we hear angels singing. Glancing to the front right corner, we see them standing in a doorway singing Christmas songs. As they sing, a light shines to the back right corner—here comes Joseph with Mary riding a donkey.

Joseph and Mary arrive at the hotel and knock on the door. The innkeeper asks what they need and how he can help. When Joseph asks for a place to stay, the innkeeper replies, “Sorry, we are full. We have no room.”

Joseph turns away. Mary asks timidly, “Well, Joseph, what shall we do? We can’t sleep out on the streets, because Jesus is going to be born tonight!”

Joseph replies, “I don’t know, but I know God will take care of us.”

So they keep walking, and knock

at the next door. The innkeeper asks despairingly, “What can I help you with?”

After hearing Joseph out, the innkeeper leads them to the only available spot—the stable. Soon we hear the angels singing songs of praise that the Saviour is born.

Through the front door of the living room, we see the shepherds come. They’re herding their sheep—several small children come out to the pasture and settle down for the night. Then the angel appears, frightening the shepherds. She delivers her important message, and a host of singing angels follows! The shepherds then head over to the stable to bless and welcome Baby Jesus. After a few minutes they leave.

Next we see the wise men coming from the back, following the Star of the East. The wise men stop by King



Herod, talk awhile, and then leave to see this miracle Baby. Giving their gifts, they kneel in adoration, then leave to go on home another way.

The actors finish out the play with a group Christmas song ringing through the room! The reality of our Saviour’s birth impresses everyone again as we celebrate His coming to earth!



Important Policy Updates

by Leland Ulrich

Gratefulness

Love is powerful! Imagine with me for just a moment how miserable a place this world would be without love.

There is a reason the Scripture says, "Above all these things put on charity." In the list in 2 Peter 1:5-7, the final quality to add is love. First Corinthians 13:13 ranks love above faith and hope—"but the greatest of these is charity." If we have love, the rest of the list will probably be in order, and if we don't have love, the rest of the list doesn't matter.

As I review 2015 at SLCH I am amazed at the amount of love we have been blessed with. From the love and prayers of each one of you to the smallest act of kindness by a staff member, thousands of acts of love take place here each year. We at SLCH do not take for granted this outpouring of love and thank each of you from the bottom of our hearts.

Time moves on and with time comes changes. I will list a few changes that affect SLCH and that will affect any of you who visit SLCH.

New Visitor Policy

Visitors can no longer stay overnight at the children's home unless SLCH has a criminal background check and a valid visa on file for that person. We have made other arrangements close by to accommodate our visitors and hope this does not deter visitors from staying overnight.

New Staff Policy

All staff (even if it's for only seven days) must have a criminal background check and a valid visa on file with SLCH.

New Health Policy

The government is now requiring every children's home in Mexico to have a doctor on staff. We have been able to arrange for a pediatrician to come once a week and to be on call 24/7. This seems to satisfy the new law, and may be a blessing, other than increased expense. The doctor maintains a file for each child at a secure place in the home with full documentation of any and all illness, treatments, and related health information.

Facility Permits

The government now requires all children's homes to fully comply with all state and federal laws regarding facilities for public use. (Children's homes come under the same law as hospitals, hospice care facilities, or any other type of public healthcare facilities). The seemingly endless list of permits and sign-offs we had to go through to get certified has finally been completed thanks to countless hours by Grevin Villalobos.

All this has added administrative cost and has taken the hassle of paperwork to an unprecedented level. It has been an organizational stretch for SLCH, but overall, it's been a good experience. Please join us as we pray that this level of micromanaging by the government does not infringe on our core values.

-Leland Ulrich, *Board Chairman*

Prayer Requests

- For the teenage boys and girls that are having struggles
- For the church building project
- For the new couple coming to take care of the older boys
- For Greivins (Administrator) and Antonios (House parents)

Previous Fund Balances

General Fund \$15,599.80
 Child Sponsorship \$14,277.00
Beginning Balance..... \$29,876.80

Income / Contributions

General Fund \$125,574.12
 Child Sponsorships \$72,725.00
 Interest \$3.67
Total General Income..... \$198,302.79

Other Income

Well Project/Vehicle Purchase...\$33,200.00
 Donor Advised.....\$1,180.00
Total Other Income.....\$34,380.00

Total Income..... \$232,682.79

General Expenses

Bank Fees..... \$1,535.70
 Transfer to Mexico \$146,600.00
 Professional Fees.....\$2,960.42
Total General Expenses \$52,568.46

Net General Income \$151,096.12

Other Expense

Loan Payment \$29,500.00
 Well project/Vehicle purchase..\$31,200.00
Total Other Expenses \$60,700.00

Net Other Income \$(26,320.00)

Total Net Income..... \$20,886.67

Fund Balances

General Fund \$26,781.47
 Child Sponsorship \$20,802.00
 Donor Advised.....\$1,180.00
 Building.....\$2,000.00
Ending Balance..... \$50,763.47

Loans

Loan 1# Previous Balance .. \$29,500.00
 Loan Payment \$29,500.00
 Loan 1# Balance..... \$ -

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Leland Ulrich - Chairman
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