A refuge where children reach their full potential

REFUGIO MAZATLÁN
Tu futuro, nuestro proyecto

Monthly Newsletter

| Issue 10 | REFUGIO MAZATLÁN NEWSLETTER – March 2019

Announcement

We already have one student in university and in June this year four young men from Refugio Mazatlán will be graduating from high school. For some time we have dreamed about having a separate home for these kids to live in as they transition into adulthood. We are very pleased to announce that, together with The Gems of Mazatlán, we will be opening Mi Futuro in August 2019. Mi Futuro will be a unique, apartment-style residence for boys and girls from any of the Mazatlán Children's Homes who wish to attend university or trade school. Here they will enjoy more independence and greater responsibility while learning a lifelong skill. This will help them become self-sufficient and successful members of society and play a part in breaking the cycle that perpetuates poverty.

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Linda's quilting boys and Festival!

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See the boys' latest jobs and what the volunteers are up to

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Learn about the boys' activities and the latest support from our donors

MI FUTURO en mis manos

With the help of some very special donors, we are well on the way to securing a building for Mi Futuro. Sufficient funds to renovate and furnish the property have also been raised.

We have received sponsorships for four-year degrees for each of the five boys who will move into the home. Ismael is currently in his first year of university and he is studying Graphic Design at ITESUS university. Josue (Biochemical Engineering – ITMAZ)), Yael (Digital Marketing – ITESUS), Williams (Physical Therapy – UPSIN) and Emmanuel (Nutrition – UAdeO) will all start their first year of university next August. Huge thanks to those who are so generously providing these scholarships.

If you are interested in providing financial support towards the operating costs of the new home, we would love to hear from you.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"

Nelson Mandela

FUNDRAISING

In March we held two fundraising events in memory of O'Neil McGean. The first was organized by Tracy on St. Patrick's Day and drew about 120 supporters – thank you everybody! Thank you also to the businesses who donated appetizers: Topolo, Tracy, Gaia, and Gustavo's Kitchen.

The second event was a dinner hosted by Greg and Renee and was also a great success. Ismael was the recipient of the first scholarship and proudly received his plaque at the dinner event. Between the two evenings we raised enough to top off Ismael's scholarship, as well as cover a full four-year scholarship for one other boy. Thank you to all involved!

QUILTING

Linda, Mazatlán's "Quilt Lady", has been a big supporter of Refugio and Mi Futuro. She taught six of the Refugio boys to quilt and several of them have worked in her shop. Linda organized the first Mazatlán Quilt Festival and each of the boys created their own quilt with materials donated by Linda. They were exhibited at the festival along with 270 others in various categories. Many of our boys received awards.

After the Quilt Festival the boys were given the choice of keeping or selling their quilts. The boys will retain 30% of the proceeds and the remaining 70% will be added to their college savings account.

At Refugio we now have a savings program in place. Any boys who work are required to save a percentage of their earnings. They receive interest on the saved amount, and this helps them understand and manage money.

WORK

When the boys go to university/trade school they will be responsible for some of their personal expenses (transportation, materials etc.) so that they have some "skin in the game". We therefore encourage the older boys at Refugio to work to begin saving and to learn responsibility.

Several of the boys have jobs at restaurants including Looney Bean, Topolo, Totem, SushiSalad, Panama and Esinti. In addition, some of the boys continue to work at Linda's quilt shop while others wait at events.

As well as working at Looney Bean, Ismael is painting a school wall, that Peter and Cheryl are sponsoring.

VOLUNTEERS

We are most fortunate to have many volunteers who help our Refugio boys. Jerry improves Eduardo's English, fixes the Refugio bicycles with Juan Diego and, together with his friends, took some of the boys to the beach for a lovely BBQ.

Michael teaches Pedro and Luis David English. Tracy and his group of supporters run the conversational English sessions. Bill has taken the boys fishing. Patty and Karen continue steadily with their English classes, as do Laurie and John. Laurie and John provide invaluable help in many other ways as well.

Richard and Lawrence still maintain their steady food and birthday cake donations. They also cook scrumptious meals for the boys each month. Gustavo, Tracy, Michele, Erin, Hardy and Melinda also share their time and energy in the Refugio kitchen.

Courtney and Lucia keep the math grades up through their tutoring. Ana Belen has a loyal following of boys for Literature. Judith keeps the boys' bodies and minds in shape with her yoga classes. Janet has given art lessons. We thank you all.

Five boys are off to Canada this summer. Rose, Jason and family will host Kevin, Angel and Paul in Regina. Josue will spend another summer with Melody and Rick, and Javier is returning to Cynthia and Don's. Thank you everyone!

ACTIVITIES

"An idle mind is the devil's playground". Our staff spends a lot of time planning for and making sure that the boys take part in extracurricular activities.

The activities include Cross-fit and yoga. Often the boys go to the beach or to a public sports park to run around

and get rid of some energy. At other times the staff and boys will play volleyball on the court at Refugio.

Therapy is an important part of the boy's lives at Refugio bearing in mind that some of them have some heartbreaking backgrounds. They receive both group and individual therapy depending on individual needs.

Many of the extracurricular activities are academically oriented and they include English, math, literature and music lessons. The bulk of the tutors for these activities are volunteers – and we are most grateful to all of you for your generosity.

We aim for each of the boys to participate in about 30 activities per month and these are spread between work, physical and academic activities. They also include the boys being part of organizations such as ANSPAC and Cruz Roja.

Our goal is for the boys to do about 3 full day trips/excursions per month. These give them a chance to relax and spend time together. In February Chris and Kim sponsored an unforgettable weekend for the boys. Day One was spent on Stone Island and included lunch at a palapa restaurant which is a rare treat. On the second day the boys took a trip on a yacht around the bay of Mazatlán.

DONORS

Donors help us sustain the Refugio and we are blessed to have several to whom we are very grateful. Tres Islas continues to provide food and supplies weekly and their volunteers spent a morning painting the upper hall during their Spring Work Week.

Kim and Chris continue to support Refugio including their most recent trip. Some donors cover the cost of braces for the boys. Sr. Toledo, Chris and Simon of the Venados raised funds through their Booster Club and they also hosted the boys at a baseball game.

Tracy's pantry parties are amazing. There is a different host each month and we are so grateful to the hosts and to the generous people who attend the events.

Ralph bought us a new grill and broke it in with some fish that he caught. He also took Juan Diego, Martin and Jose Manuel out for a morning of fishing during which the boys caught a lot of fish that they took home to enjoy.

We are most grateful to our donors and supporters. To learn more about our current needs at the Refugio please visit our website at www.refugiomazatlan.org. Thank you in advance for your help!

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