

WORLDWIDE HEART TO HEART MINISTRIES

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August 2006

Gifts From God - Our True Heroes Such a Great Rescue - Spotlight on Olga

by Amy Serrano



Olga with good friend Kellin



Olga with brothers Juan Carlos and Danilo



Olga, Kellin and Daniela, three beauties

We have now been working in Honduras for several years. Our mission is to provide a home and a place of refuge for the children of this country who find themselves in horrible circumstances. We have never thought of ourselves as activists. However, part of the motivation behind writing these reports that bring you up close with our residents, is to provide awareness to those in westernized countries about the plight of many young people in Honduras and all over the third world. For these children it is about more than a tear jerking report - it is their lives. Our prayer is that the Lord will touch your heart in such a way, that as you read, you will be able, in some small way, to identify with each of these children, and join us in the fight to bring more of them into a place of security.

This month we want to bring you up close and personal with a young woman named Olga. Olga is 13 years old and has been a resident at our Children's Village near Tegucigalpa since March of this year. She came to us with her brothers, Juan and Danilo. Olga is *her* name, but her tragic and heartbreaking story is very similar to that of many other young Honduran girls.

Olga was born in the very heart of the Honduran jungle. Ever since Marvin arrived from Los Flores, we have been working with this village high up in the Santa Barbara Mountains. Many of our children are from that village. It is miles away from anything called civilization. There is no power, sewer or running water, the closest hospital or clinic is nearly an hour's drive away on difficult mountain roads.

But where Olga and her brothers are from, is about a 30 minute hike *deeper* into the jungle. The Honduran rain forest is a beautiful place, but a very difficult one for a young girl to grow up in. Olga had never been to school. Her life was basically summed up in one word - *Survival*. Tragedy struck Olga's family about 5 years ago. Right in the middle of Sunday morning church, a man with a gun walked in and shot her father in front of everyone, including Olga and her brothers. Of course, no formal investigation was made and there were no arrests. We have heard that it was over an unpaid debt. Life in the mountains was already hard, but it quickly became worse. With no man in the home, their mother was forced to fend for herself and her young children. It's not that Olga had very little childhood, it's that Olga had no childhood.

Her life was basically getting up very early to harvest coffee, so that the family could eat. They would walk the long hike into the village each day, and their mother would go door to door looking for any cleaning, cooking or laundry that she and the kids could do for a little bit of rice and beans to eat. So, after working out in the fields doing hard farm labor, Olga would often have to go down to the river with her mother and wash loads of cloths for the village people in exchange for a small amount of food to survive on. Olga never had her birthday celebrated, never got a present and Christmas day was just like any other, down at the river washing clothes.

It was actually Olga's mother that came to us. She was so tired, and didn't think that she could go on. Trying to raise the children like this had taken its toll on her. She asked us to take her children and give them an education that she could not. We took them that day. Olga is now in the first grade and doing very well. One day last week she was reading to me out of the newspaper, an amazing feat considering that 6 months ago she could not even write her name. She has adjusted to life in the Children's Village, but is still in a recovery stage. There are many unanswered questions in her life. We are doing our best to help her sort out the issues, but we have learned only God can do the deep work of healing that she needs. There were also many other terrible things that happened to her, but out of respect for her privacy, I have left them out, as she did not want them published.

Olga's life is so blessed now, and you can see it. She is deeply thankful for the chance to be here, and we are deeply thankful for the chance to know her. She is a very hard worker, as you can image. She likes to cook and is having fun becoming a little girl. Olga never had any toys. She is learning to polish her nails and put clips in her hair. More than anything, she is learning that no matter what her past was, God loves her very much and has great plans for her life.

Please continue to pray for Olga. She and all of the children in the village need your prayers and support. The devil is determined not to give these little ones up. He has a lot of investment in them. We want to raise the banner of victory in their lives and declare that their lives are in Christ Jesus. Each time you join with us as partners in prayer and support, one more child is taken off the streets, and the devil has lost a major battle. I have always believed that if only one person in the world needed salvation, the Lord still would have come down and given His life for that one person. After having done all we have, here in Honduras, after all the money that has been sent for support and building, after all the prayers, if only ever one child receives the Lord in their heart, goes on to finish high school and college and becomes a loving mother or father, I am convinced it has all been worth it. One would be worth it all. *But I see the Lord doing a work of grace and mercy in the lives of all 23 children. It is a tremendous blessing to be part of such a great rescue!*

Children's Village News - August, 2006

By Amy Serrano



Sarah, Nelson and Juan Carlos celebrate their birthdays

A notable thing about this month is how things have quieted down after two months of activity with several volunteer groups from the United States. The kids have finally returned to school after the month long teachers strike. While the strike was on, we home schooled everyone. All the children are doing well, with such an enthusiasm for learning.

Two new children joined us this month; Eight-year-old Dennis Villanueva and his six year old brother, Francisco. We received a call from Family Court that they were found on the streets asking for money, where they had apparently been living for sometime. The younger one, Francisco, has been fighting a battle with one of the worst cases of stomach parasites I have ever seen. But I think we finally have it under control. They are both now doing well in the first grade.

The six girls at the village had a special weekend this month, coming over to our house and enjoying a slumber party with our two girls, Sarah and Rachel. We stayed up late at night and watched movies, ate lots of junk food, had pillow fights, and made cookies. When their lives had only been responsibilities, work, and survival, just being able to be little girls was so much fun for them! .

Our older boys are still taking music classes every weekend. They are excited about having new instruments coming in the container. They play in the worship team at church. Another church comes to the village Monday

and Wednesday's to teach our children Bible classes. All the children are attending English classes with *Valerie Rosentreter*, our volunteer from the U.S. She reports they are teaching her Spanish, and she is teaching them English, so everybody is learning.

This month the school and a few other classmates chose Jose, to go to the regional science fair. They will present their projects there and compete to go on to the nationals in the capital, Tegucigalpa. He is their speaker, as public speaking is one of his talents.

We are also happy to announce that we have once again established the local WWH2H board here in Honduras. Elections were held on the twenty-third of August. We have some old faces from our board in the past and some new faces, as well. We will be having several intense meetings within the next months. So much to plan! Kids day will be celebrated on September tenth. A small private school in Puerto Cortes would like to come and have a party for the children. We have a container coming. We have four from our U.S. board of directors coming in October, who, with us, will attend the International Humanitarian Relief Conference in Copan. We have a youth group from the U.S. coming in December to build a soccer and baseball field, and we have a ton of legal issues to push through. We are really excited about working with this new board of directors.

So, this month has been a time of new residents and blessings. Thank you so much for your continued prayers and support, if it were not for you, there would be no WWH2H.



CHRISTMAS IS COMING, THE GOOSE IS GETTING

FAT; PLEASE PUT A PENNY IN THE OLD MAN'S HAT.

Nelson, Daniel, Adonis, Elan, Juan Carlos share rides in the wheelbarrow

We are hoping to raise funds to send to Honduras for Christmas to buy clothing and at least one toy for each child in our Village. Please read on to see the plan that our 23 children, living at the Village, are working on for Christmas.

(From Amy and Oscar) "A few days ago, the children asked if they could have one of the big 5-gallon water bottles. They decided they wanted to start collecting money for Christmas. We said, "Well, that is a great idea! Do you want to buy something for yourselves?" "No, " they said, "we want to get something for the 'poor' kids." Their plan is to save their allowances and wages they get for doing extra jobs at the Village and then find some children less fortunate than they, and bless them with food and toys for Christmas. I guess all that teaching them to be thankful and to be givers really works!! OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES... If you are able to help us bless our kids, please indicate on your donation that it is for the Christmas Fund. Thank you for your generous support and prayers for "His Kids"!"



Nelson cheers up Nohelia when she cut her finger

KIM SHARP SHARES HER ADVENTURES AT THE VILLAGE

By Kim Sharp, July 31, 2006



I was so excited to work as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner in the Children's Village for three weeks in July. Even though I worked hard, I enjoyed it very much. I was able to stay at the Village, which allowed me adequate time to get to know all the children and staff. And in living there, I was able to get a first-hand sense of how life there flows for each of the children. It is a wonderful place.

The first thing that I noticed was the natural beauty of the area. The Village is on a large piece of property that backs up to distant green layers of mountains. That vista is one that I never tired of. There is a very large mango tree beyond the cow stall and there are numerous other trees (orange, cashew, avocado) that have been recently planted among the green grasses. The air is clear and the sounds and smells are country fresh. It is a welcome oasis from the big concrete-filled noisy cities. The children are living in such a beautiful place. And it was fun to see them enjoy it so. They hike to the mango tree to harvest mangoes, they walk down the road to see the neighboring cows, they throw rocks up to the highest branches of the tall trees, they take turns riding the bikes around the yard, they play basketball and soccer on the cement court, they climb trees and posts, they pick flowers, they tend the young trees, they sit together in the front yard in the evening light and snack on mangoes while they talk and watch the younger kids rolling around in the grass. It is a simple life, but a good and peaceful one.

The children come from very different backgrounds, but this is not apparent when you see them interacting. They are definitely one big family. They look out for each other and they always share. Well, maybe always is a little stretch ☺, (they ARE kids) but they really do most of the time. They have responsibilities that would make a parent proud. Josue and Marvin share the duty of driving the first and second grade kids to school in the van. They also take Nelson and Elan to Kinder class on their bicycles. You should see Nelson in his blue pants, white shirt and red tie on the front bar of Marvin's bike! Most mornings, Zulema gives a few of the older children a few lempira to buy cookies for the others at school; the ones with the money make a mental note of whose they will buy. Daniel, Danilo and Juan regularly haul trash out to the dump in large wheelbarrows. Sometimes, one will carry a large bag on his head. Olga, Kellin, Ilsy and Daniela have regular dishwashing duty and do an excellent job. And believe me, there are lots of dirty dishes daily. Other girl chores include sweeping, mopping and washing clothes. It was not hard to learn to wash my clothes on the washboard out back! They have a washer, but the girls do their individual underclothes on the washboard. Josue's least favorite chore is tending the cow and milking her, but he does a great job. Marvin was regularly mowing and weed-eating during my stay. He also cuts wood for Freddy's custom doors.

A typical weekday begins with hopping in the shower at 6:00, breakfast at 6:15, off to school at 6:45, home for lunch at 12:15. Then homework under Zulema's supervision until 2:00. Then chores until dinner around

4:30 or 5:00. Then it's play or relaxation time - -usually outside. Then a shower and into bed by 9:00. For the teens, it's study time. It was not unusual to find Marvin, Marlon and Josue in the kitchen doing homework until 10:30 or later at night!

I was able to individually assess each child and create their medical charts. The children are in relatively good health; no major problems stand out. I cleaned out and reorganized the medication and supply room in the clinic. I restarted the kids on daily multivitamins and fluoride. I developed a first aid box and a med box (Tylenol, ibuprofen, etc) with dosage cards for Reyna and the other mothers to use. I took care of the health problems that came up during my stay and put some plans into place to take care of future needs. I think the most important thing I gave them was some TLC. I instituted nightly rounds, visiting the boys' room and the girls' room each night. A few had medications to take, but they ALL needed a Band-Aid. It was fun to watch some of the boys look around on their body for a place that needed one! The girls got into this, too. They really enjoyed my coming to see them at bedtime. It was also one of my favorite things.

I could go on for many more pages, but then they will never let me write for the newsletter again! So, I will close by telling you about one local hero. For this trip, Steve Choate at Medical Arts Pharmacy, 901 Fifteenth Ave. in Longview (across the street from St. John Hospital), generously supplied Heart to Heart with medications valued at \$400 wholesale...so can you imagine the retail value?! The scabies cream, antibiotics and other items were indispensable. And we have a good supply for the upcoming months. Steve gave above and beyond the call for us and he is compassionate about our cause. Please visit his pharmacy and give him your business. He is part of our Heart to Heart family.

TENT MINISTRY, A SERIOUS NEED



Oscar and Amy Serrano, WWH2H Honduras National Directors

As with any Christian ministry, our purpose is to bring the love of Jesus to those in need. Primarily, we have been called to minister to the children in the streets of this country. However, as many of you know, we have also done medical and evangelical outreaches. Our work in Honduras is to help the needy, clothe, feed and shelter the poor, heal the sick. This sounds like a lot, however, we only go through the doors that the Lord leads us through. The reason I am writing now is because the Lord has put something on my heart that I would like to share with you

In Honduras we have observed that tent events are well attended and a good way to draw a crowd. If we had a tent we could use it if for medical groups in areas where a suitable building was not available. The idea of the tent being used to do crusades sounded great as well. So we began to ask around for anyone interested in helping to find the funds to begin this project. Pastor Carlos said that it would cost about \$5000 to purchase the tent. We then went to some churches that have supported our evangelical outreaches in the past. We published an article in the newsletter for many weeks. We never heard from anyone, and to be honest, I almost forgot about the whole thing.

That is, until one day a few weeks back, I was reading a secular informational book on Honduras. The author went state by state and described many facts about each region. The Mosquito Coast on the extreme eastern half of the country is one of the most unexplored parts of Honduras. It is the Honduras version of the Amazon, and is covered in mostly tropical rain forest. Mostly indigenous Indian and Garifuna peoples inhabit it. The book also stated that many of the indigenous people have never heard of Christianity and still practice the ancient religions of their ancestors. A fact that I know by experience is that the Santeria a Latino version of voodoo is widely practiced. Up in the mountains

of this country, Catholicism is the main religion, but not in the form that we know it or in the form that it is practiced in some of the larger cities, like San Pedro Sula. Up in some of these mountain villages it is not regulated and is a very oppressive iron fist that crushes the people. Poverty is also a reason that some seek the help of a bruja, or a witch, when they are sick. The bruja charges much less than the doctor.

This is when the vision of the tent ministry really hit me. My heart got a little glimpse of what could be done with something like this. I feel very deeply that if God were to provide for such a ministry, many souls would be saved. I have seen my pastor's heart as he is also a missionary in Honduras from Argentina, and believe that if he had this opportunity working together with WWH2H, there is no telling what great things would become of this. I have spoken to our board of directors in the U.S. and Honduras and both believe this is an important need in Honduras.

Then, a week ago something happened that really impressed my heart. I went to a woman's conference with my church. They focused a lot on evangelism, confirming what God has put on my heart many times in the last few weeks. I had another vision about this. I saw in my mind our older kids participating in the evangelical crusades. I saw them ministering through music and just being part of this whole thing. It brought tears to my eyes. I began to think to myself, "How can we raise \$5000. It is too hard to raise \$5000." I started to think of paths we could go down. I started to think of the article that has run in the newsletter for some months now. I began to think of why no one had responded, doesn't anyone care about evangelism anymore? *Then I felt God speak to my heart. "Amy, you are thinking foolishly. Do you think that it's really an issue of money? Thousands of souls could be saved with this kind of ministry. The devil is not just going to let it happen with out a fight"*. Then it dawned on me that this was going to be one of those things that came about only through prayer and fasting.

The reason that I am writing to you is because I personally have felt called to a time of prayer and fasting about this issue. I don't know if the Lord will choose to work through H2H ministries to do this thing, or through some other means. *I am asking anyone who reads this to begin to lift it up in prayer.* We will wait on the Lord and see what He will do here; it may be something truly awesome. I have also envisioned youth groups and other ministry groups such as music ministries, coming down to Honduras and bringing the love of the Lord to these people. God only knows what this may be. As I have mentioned before, having such a tent would also open up what we are able to do with the medical groups, allowing us to go to more remote areas, where there are no facilities to house our clinics. Please join me in a time of prayer and fasting. I believe what Pastor Carlos had envisioned is devoting ourselves to prayer and every two to three months going to the places that God leads and setting up a crusade. Pastor Carlos and his wife, Annie, work for the Assembly of God's church and are regional coordinators and church planters, so they would also plant churches in the areas where we would minister.

At this time this is all about prayer and fasting. Please join me in lifting this up to the Lord, and we will see what a wonderful thing He does.

THIS AND THAT FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

By Mary Frenter



David with his brothers, Mauricio (standing) and Cesar

Update on David - Last Tuesday David was accepted as a patient at Portland Shriners for treatment of his clubfoot. Will keep you posted about when that begins. We have applied for a one-year extension of his visa. He is enrolled in school in Kelso and just had his first soccer practice on his Little League team. He is doing great!! Huge thank yous to the following people who have provide free services for David while he is here:

- *Arnie and Denise Bardal, Alyn and Joanie Swedberg - David's foster families.*
- *Dr. Keith Birchard -David's Orthopaedic Surgeon*

- *Dr. Jennifer Polley - David's Pediatrician*
- *Kori Rush - Good Samaritan who told us about Dr. Ponseti's casting method treatment for clubfoot*
- *Warren Hall, -Owner of Hall's Drug Stores in Centralia who is providing the needed medicines for David*
- *Centralia Hospital - They provided needed tests for David.*
- *Dr. King - David's Dentist*
- *Geraldo Ramirez and Wilfredo Almendarez who interpret for David at his appointments.*
- *Portland Shriner's Hospital - They have accepted and will provide the casting procedure for David's foot*

Container Report - Never having done a container before, I am muddling through getting this one ready to go. Thank you to everyone who has prayed, donated items and given funds to make this happen. I will give a more thorough story on this in the next newsletter. We still do not have a "float" date, but hopefully all will arrive in Honduras prior to the end of September.

The Ambulance Report - Recently, I received an email from a ministry in New York that provides used ambulances for ministries in Honduras. They repair them as needed, equip them thoroughly, fill them with meds and ship them to Puerto Cortes. They wanted to know if we needed one. We have wished we had one to use in conjunction with our clinic and med teams. He told me it costs up to \$4500 to repay his expenses to repair the ambulance and ship it. If anyone out there is so inclined to help with this, let me know.



Daniela, Martha, Kellin, Nohelia, Ilsi, and Olga with Mama Zulema

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The following teams are planned for the coming months:

October 11-25 - Copan Conference and work at Village - contact person is Mary Frenter, maryf@wwh2h 509-427-8585

Dec. 26- Jan. 2 - Youth Group from Immanuel Lutheran in Centralia - contact person is Youth Pastor Shane Wood hepcat20@hotmail.com. *This team is full.*

Jan. 27-Feb. 3 - Tentative plans for a Vacation Bible School from Castle Rock Christian Church - contact person is Tina Campbell tlducks@juno.com 360-274-8840 *We need several more volunteers for this team. Please pray to see if God would have you join.*

March 21- March 31 - Medical Team - contact person WWH2H Medical Team Coordinator, Karen Kearcher Joiner , karenkearcher@msn.com 503-728-4290 *Contact Karen if you plan to join this team in March*

PLEASE JOIN WORLDWIDE HEART TO HEART MINISTRIES IN PRAYER FOR...



Nelson asks the blessing

- **Good health and Holy Spirit wisdom for Serranos, our children and their caretakers**
- **VBS TEAM VOLUNTEERS**
- **Safe journey for our container**
- **God's wisdom for the board as decisions are made**
- **Monthly Support for our growing number of children at the Village.**