

# WORLDWIDE HEART TO HEART MINISTRIES

P.O. BOX 372, CARSON, WA 98610, 509-427-8585, [maryf@wwh2h](mailto:maryf@wwh2h)

January 2007

## Gifts From God - Our True Heroes- Spotlight on Nora

By Amy Serrano



The time has come again to bring you up close and personal with another true hero. Unfortunately, this month I don't have a great amount of information to give, because the little girl in question is a child that none of us really know. I want to introduce you to a brave young girl named Nora. We think Nora is about 8 years old. She has never been to school. I promise THIS ONE WILL BREAK YOUR HEART! I know that it has mine.

Nora came to the Village in November. She was brought to us by IHNFA, the equivalent of CPS in the United States. Nora was the perfect image of the saddest child

one could ever meet. She spoke to no one, played with no one and got close to no one. When she arrived her hair was cut so short you could not tell if she was a boy or a girl. I never once saw Nora smile. The housemothers said she was at times completely unresponsive. When they would talk to her, she would continue on as if she had not hear them. She came to us with no birth certificate, no medical records, no school records, not even a last name! IHNFA gave us no information on her because they themselves had none. She was simply dropped off at their doorstep.

So, as with all the children who come, we welcomed her in, gave her a bed, toys, clothes and most of all, all the love we knew how to give. But Nora remained shut tight. When Christmas time came around, we found tons of beautiful gifts that had been sent in the container. I knew that Nora needed a special gift and I found the perfect one. It was a beautiful baby doll that came with different sets of clothes - she never took it out of the box. Being near to her, one could feel the sadness radiating off of her. We began to get on our knees and seek the Lord for her.

Then came the miracle that Nora needed. It came in the form of a youth group from the Immanuel Lutheran Church of Centralia, WA. I love bringing youth down to Honduras. They are so much fun. They never complain. In fact, they eat anything, sleep anywhere, do anything we ask and are thrilled about it! What I especially loved about this group was that they were so involved with the children. Youth are not always very skilled laborers, although they work hard with what they can do. But this group especially had a magic touch with the children. The one on one love and affection that the children received from each of the group members was so intense. This was something Nora could not escape. She shied away at first, but their love was insistent. I can remember Joanie Swedberg who, with her husband Al, were the group leaders, constantly telling her how beautiful she was. This made a profound positive impact on her.

Well, the group came, loved and left and you could see Nora's little heart was so sad to see them leave. But they left something behind. Not something that you can see, but something that is very real, especially to Nora. Nora felt loved and cared for, and maybe for the first time in her life, safe. Safe enough to finally let it all go.

One night Nora came to Zulema, one of the housemothers, crying, screaming and hurting. She confessed all that her father had done to her. She cried and cried about how much she hated him. He had abused her sexually for as long as she could remember. Zulema reported all this to

Oscar, who said that even though we have been working with this kind of tragedy for a long time, the abuse this little girl described was some of the sickest he had ever heard. Much of this release from Nora was possible due to the very mothering spirit of Zulema. She is a very strong source of positivism in the lives of these children, and really seems to know how to minister to them.

I'm no psychologist, but I do know that when we are able to speak about the hurtful events and abuses of our past, that is where healing begins. Nora's courage in breaking the silence also gave courage to another of our young girls, Daniela, who also came forward with her story of sexual abuse by her own father. The road to healing in front of Nora is long. These things don't disappear, it will take years of the Lord's gentle touch and healing. We just leave her in His hands knowing that "for such a time as this" the Lord brought the team down from Centralia, WA.

Now begins the long process of investigations to try to find out who she is and where she came from, a last name and birth date, if she even has one, as her birth may have been undocumented. I know the Lord has great plans for her life, and we are so glad to be a part of it. Please always remember Nora in your prayers, along with all the children here, as they all have years of shame and abuse from which to heal.

***Thank you to the Immanuel Lutheran Youth Group for loving these children so much. Thank you to all who supported them and helped them financially to make the trip down here. Thank you for every supporter and prayer partner in this ministry. If you ever wonder where your support goes and who is benefiting from it, I wish you could all meet Nora.***

## **LIFE AT THE VILLAGE – January 2007**

*By Amy Serrano*

Time here seems to fly by so quickly. Another month has come and gone and it's been an exciting one. I guess when you have 30 children, the month of December is always exciting. As you know, we finally received the container. Members from the **new Worldwide Heart to Heart Church in Puerto Cortes** that was planted last October came to help unload, organize and sort. It was a massive endeavor!!

The church had a special event planned for the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December. They raised \$600.00 to bless some of the very poorest families in Puerto Cortes. Each family of the church selected a family that was very poor, whose kids probably would not be getting a gift. We invited them that night to a dinner that was prepared by our WWH2H church family. Each family also received a basket with food, personal hygiene products, and of course, gifts for all the kids. **The best part of all is that Oscar preached a message of salvation, and that night 8 people received the Lord as their Savior!** It was a really beautiful time.



One of the best parts of unloading the container was selecting clothes and toys for Christmas. Several of the members of our church helped with this event. We first went through and selected a toy and stuffed animal for each child. Then we went through all the clothes and found new outfits for Christmas and New Years. I wish you could have all seen the children on Christmas

Eve for the Christmas party at the church. They were so beautiful. All of the girls had beautiful new dresses and all the boys had new pants and shirts. Wrapping all of those presents for so many was a very large task, but we had lots of help. On Christmas Eve we had a service at the WWH2H Church with a drama that many of the older kids participated in and all of the children from our Village went up front to sing a special song.

That night at midnight, as is the custom in Honduras, it was time to open the presents. We called each child up, one by one, and gave them their presents and a stocking full of goodies. We also handed out presents to the housemothers. We topped the night off with a wonderful traditional pork dinner. The older kids were still awake with Oscar and some of our other board members that spent the night at the Village, until 4:30 am playing soccer. I think it was the best Christmas I have had in 31 years.

The next day we went home and slept a little to prepare for the **Immanuel Lutheran Church Youth Group from Centralia, WA**. They arrived in Honduras on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December. There were 18 people, mostly members of the Youth Group and some Young Life members. Their main objective was to build a sports field for baseball and soccer. They also did various small jobs around the village. **But what they did best was loved on the children.** The kids will never forget them.

As many of you may have heard, Josue, one of our original five residents at the village who will be turning 18 in May, decided to leave. He was offered a farming job by a teacher at his school and took that job. We did our best to talk him out of this decision, but in the end we could only leave him in God's hands. I know that many of you received prayer requests for this. Well, I want to give you a praise report. Last week he came back. He said that he did not want to be a farmer all of his life and does want to go to college. So, he is home again, safe and sound. Thank you all so much for your prayers.

Another praise report we are thanking God for is a gift of two acres of land, donated to WWH2H by the city of Puerto Cortes. The former mayor promised us this land a few years ago, but he was unable to finish the process of giving it to us due to his run for the presidency. When the new mayor came into power, we approached him about this matter. To make a long story short, we are now the proud owners of 2 acres of land in the city of Puerto Cortes. We will build a **Receiving Center** there, where newly arrived children will reside while they go through an evaluation process before going to live at the Children's Village. We hope to include **WWH2H offices** and a **building for the new Worldwide Heart to Heart Church** that now meets in the Rotary Club building as well.

December was a productive month, as WWH2H had approved a plan to "beef up" the security at the Village. Our first step was to put a sufficient lighting system around the property. 12 new street lights have been installed all around the perimeter of the Village. All the children say they now feel much safer. They also like the fact that now they can go out and play soccer at night!

Please be praying about a 70 passenger bus for us. And as long as you are at it, ask God for one with air conditioning! With the small vehicles we have, it is becoming more and more challenging to transport our children and the rest of the crew to events, like recreational outings and church. We also need it to transport visiting mission teams from the U.S.

This month has been so blessed. I can't say it enough - thank you so much for your prayers and support. We can feel your prayers, and your love and what is more important, the children can feel **your prayers and your love. It is making a great positive difference in their lives.**

**Centralia  
Immanuel  
Lutheran Youth  
Group Returns**  
By Joannie Swedberg

On December 25, Al and Joanie Swedberg took a group of 11 teens and five other adults to the Children's Village. During our stay we were able to clean and seal the outside of the main house and some of the other



buildings, sand and seal some technical school doors, set up a lab with computers sent in the container, sort the "container" clothing, constructed and painted two soccer goals and baseball backstop, tilled and partially leveled the soccer field, and added swings, a slide and a trolley to the swing set. Believe it or not we still had plenty of time getting to know the wonderful children living there, had devotions every night (many of the village children joined us), attend the church where Oscar preached, go with the kids to a water park, and be house parents at the village for two nights! Needless to say our kids were exhausted, but were talking of their next trip down before they left. Every person in our group was touched by the work being done here in the lives of these children, and we thank the Lord for all that He has done and is doing.

### **LIFE AT THE VILLAGE - 2006**

**The following accomplishments occurred because of your faithful prayers, volunteering and giving. Thank you!**

**We grew from 11 children in Jan. to 30 children by Dec.**

**All our children did well in school.**

**Playground for children was completed**

**The Tech school floor was finished,**

**A drainage system was put in on the property,**

**All four homes were completed,**

**New triple bunk beds were built**

**A new storage building and septic system was completed,**

**A security system was installed,**

**5 teams went to help from the U.S.**

**A new church was started in Puerto Cortes with Pastor Oscar Serrano**

**Bible classes at the village twice a week were begun with the pastor and youth group from the church in Cuyamel.**

**Landscaping was continued**

**A 40 ft. container arrived from the U.S. with donated items**

**A football/soccer/baseball field was completed**

**Roof repairs were begun.**

**Sealer was applied to the exterior painted walls**

**Paperwork was completed to bring David to U.S. for surgery**

**Three Benefits were held for WWH2H in U.S.**

## **Upcoming Events**

**Kim Sharp** will go to the Village Feb 3rd-13<sup>th</sup>. She will update medical records and examine and make files for the new children.

**Washington Overseas Missions team arrives March 21<sup>st</sup>**. They will install a water Purification system at the Children's Village. Housing for the system will need to be built before the team arrives.

**Med Team** will conduct clinics in Honduras March 21-29

**Estacada construction team** will enclose the second triangle for use as a classroom, June 2007.

**Estacada Drama team and Senior Class** will conduct a Drama Camp- June 9-16, 2007 at the Children's Village.

**Serrano's on furlough to Washington State**- July 2007- Gary and Sylvia Thacker, Mission Coordinators for Mercy Ships, Int. and longtime friends of WWH2H, will take their place, living at the Village in their absence.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

1. **Medical Team – March 21-31 –**
  - a. **Contact person: Karen Kearcher: 503-728-4290**
2. **Estacada Christian Construction Team – June 2007**
  - a. **Contact person –Scott Closner– 503-753-2999**
3. **Damascus Christian School Drama Team Camp – June 2007**
  - a. **Contact person –Lisa Closner – 503-753-2999**
4. **Mercy Ships Inc. Construction Team – Summer 2007**  
**Contact person – Cat Sterling – 909-939-7136**

## **2007 To Do List**

-  
Fill the homes with children (room for 20 more)  
Plan and hold dedication of Children's Village  
Start, fund and staff our home schooling program  
Find a 70 passenger bus  
Purchase commercial stove  
Furnish our school room  
Furnish Library with furniture and books  
Find more monthly support  
Plan for building, furnishings and staff for a Receiving Center and  
Worldwide Heart to Heart Church in Puerto Cortes  
Parenting and first aide training for workers  
Furnish and staff Village Clinic so it can be open full time

## **Mission Team New Construction Projects**

Stone wall across front of property  
Finish Tech school interior and stucco in and out.  
Build Receiving Center/WWH2H Church/WWH2H offices in Puerto Cortes  
Enclose the school room triangle  
Enclose the library triangle

### Projected Budget Items for 2007

Estimated funds needed for 2007 for general management \$100,000

Estimated funds needed for repair and new construction

- Finish Tech school
- School room (triangle 2 - \$7000)
- Library ( triangle 3 - \$7000)
- Stone Wall
- Receiving Center/Church/Offices

**Worldwide Heart to Heart Ministries** is a 501c3 non-profit ministry organization. Every effort is made to use designated donations for that particular need.

- WWH2H provides tax-deductible receipts at the beginning of each year for the previous years contributions.
- WWH2H encourages donors to use electronic transfer for their monetary contributions. Please visit our website for details. ([www.wwh2h.org](http://www.wwh2h.org)) Visa and Mastercard are accepted.
- Many companies give matching funds. Please check with your employer.
- You can give by check or money order to WWH2H, Box 372, Carson, WA 98610

### 2006 Income Report

Total income for 2006 was \$117,490.48. Total Expense were \$113,820.32. Less than 1% of income was used for Public Relations and Fund Raising from funds donated for that purpose. The estimated value of donated goods and services was over \$100,000.

Brian and Sondi Ross, WWH2H Co-Treasurers.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. **PRAY** for our children and our leaders.
2. Become a Monthly Sponsor for WWH2H.
3. Encourage your friends and family to become Monthly Sponsors
4. Sign up for our monthly newsletter
5. Volunteer for a mission team
6. Organize and hold a fund raiser for WWH2H