

GOOD NEWS

A Newsletter for Friends of Nicaraguan Prison Ministry

Summer 2010

NPMI holds 501(c)(3) Non-profit Corporate status in Kentucky,
and NGO Status in Nicaragua, Central America.



GOD'S PLANS CAN BE COUNTED ON

Plans are made, changed, aborted, and implemented. We thank God that he never aborts his plan to transform lives of prisoners through REC. The lives of team members are always changed as well. Ruth Ann Martin has served on many teams, and this is what she reported after returning this summer: "It was obvious to me that

REC 2010

God was at work, and in his sovereignty, he was orchestrating things far beyond what we could see, and much of the time, in ways we were not even aware of. . . . This year I saw that the language of love needs no words, and has no cultural boundaries.

I also learned that we can never love someone too much, and that we should never withhold love from anyone, regardless of what they have done. If I were choosing a theme verse to sum up the REC trip this year, it would be I Peter 4:7-11."

Team Member, Tony Hale wrote: "I was excited seeing that this was the smallest ever N. American team to Nicaragua. I thought, 'This just gives Jesus a greater opportunity to be big.' Watching REC develop in Nicaragua is like watching children growing up -- We must raise them to leave us. God takes little and makes much. We arrived at the Managua airport, picked up our luggage and boarded a van that was to take us to our lodging place. Before we got there, a situation unfolded that set the tone for the entire week. God was suddenly all over that van and he remained with us throughout the entire week.

[An account of what happened in the van appears on the next page, as told by Anne Harr.] Tony also noted that, while the Nicaraguans are beginning to take control of the ministry, they still will need a lot of help with process and funding.



Closing Ceremony: Lay Director, Alfredo Moreno (l) and Spiritual Director, Pastor Efram (r) present a cross to participant.

NPMI'S PLANS POSTPONED

Two initiatives announced last spring, were put on hold. It became obvious that the time was not right to begin the International Advisory Committee, nor the Nicaraguan Oversight Committee that were intended to begin early this year. The latter would be made up of Nicaraguans only. We sincerely hope to reinstate both plans in the foreseeable future. We apologize for not having publicized this decision before now.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

BOARD OPENINGS

Please consider joining the NPMI Board of Directors. We are currently in need of at least two new members. The Board meets about ten times per year. If you are interested, please contact Chairperson, Wanda Goerz, by phone: 859-277-6863, or e-mail: wandagoerz@aol.com



The NPMI Board at work

Clockwise from bottom left: Jimmy Garcia, Amy Dougherty, Dorothy Martin, Anne Harr, Ruth Ann Martin, Theresa Tatum, Monte Bartel, and Wanda Goerz

PRISONER'S SPEAK AFTER THE REC

"I learned how the Word of God can transform us. I was a selfish person, and used bad words. Since the REC, God has been teaching me not to say bad words and to share with others. . ."

"My wife left me for another man. When I came to prison, I could not forgive her. I wanted to kill her, but thanks to God, during the REC I experienced something new. I asked God to help me forgive my wife, and for the glory of God, I did it. I forgave her."

"The advice of the REC Spiritual Directors motivated me a lot. I felt the advice they gave me didn't come from them, but it came from God. God used every key person to give each of us a special message."

"I encountered God during the REC, and I accepted him into my life. Now, I am sharing with other prisoners from other cells what I have learned.

"The most impressive thing for me about the REC was seeing many denominations praise God as one body. Now I understand that there is a great lack of knowledge in many churches.

Anne Harr, coordinator of this year's REC in Nicaragua, was accompanied by two other Americans: Tony Hale, and Ruth Ann Martin, all NPMI Directors. This was the smallest American team ever. Eight Costa Ricans also served and helped cover expenses far in excess of what they had contributed in the past. Our long-held goal has been to develop local leaders to carry out the REC on their own. This year was encouraging in that twenty-five Nicaraguans were team members, the most ever. Yet, we will continue to take small teams to support and maintain the integrity of the ministry. We are especially interested in introducing additional N. Americans to the work in Nicaragua. If you are interested in going on the team next summer, now is the time to begin planning.

Anne tells the team's favorite story: A Nicaraguan woman and her daughter were scheduled to assist the REC kitchen team. The first thing the U.S. team learned upon arrival was that the son and brother of the women had been killed earlier that day. (Burial takes place within a few hours after death there).

A van had been dispatched to the Managua airport to transport the American team and their luggage to La Quinta Primavera where they were to stay. Two NPMI workers accompanied the van driver, and greeted the team. They had just heard about the murder that afternoon. Wanting to comfort her friend and neighbor, NPMI worker, Gixel, asked the van driver to stop at the home of the victim's mother, since they were passing close by anyway. The mother and her daughter ran out, jumped into the van, and received condolences in the form of warm hugs and words of sympathy. They hugged the team back in grateful appreciation.

Amazingly, while still on the van, the mother told the team that she had a word from God that Satan was planning a major attack on the REC this year. Despite her son's tragic death, the mother insisted on remaining on the team to assist in the kitchen, but her main mission was to pray for the defeat of Satan's wily plans to destroy the REC. From that moment forward, the Holy Spirit was in charge of a life-changing retreat for over 50-men, and the entire team as well.



TONY HALE LEAVES NPMI BOARD

Having served on the NPMI Board for two and a half years, Tony Hale has resigned as Vice President and Director, effective August 21. Tony is a loyal servant, and his wisdom and humility will be sorely missed. He informed the Board that he feels God’s leading him to become more involved in the spiritual life of his community of Harlan, KY. He also believes that he needs to be more available to care for his aging mother and older sisters at this juncture in their lives. Tony assures us that he will continue to encourage others to become involved in Nicaragua, and he will continue supporting the ministry himself, in any way that he can. We will miss our dear brother. One doesn’t meet a Tony Hale every day.

A TESTIMONY FROM LA ESPERANZA WOMEN’S PRISON

Twenty-three-year-old, Nussy Alexandra Neza was 2009 Miss Venezuela. She graduated in Marketing and Publicity, specializing in International Trade. Her job brought her to Nicaragua to seek out young ladies who may wish to become models in their own country. She would provide the training. Nussy traveled with another young lady who was driving a new, red car which she had purchased four months earlier. Police stopped the young women and accused them of trafficking in jewels and narcotics. Nussy says, “This is not true.” Remember, in Nicaragua, one is considered guilty until proven innocent.

She said, “I have been hospitalized with depression, and my mother has terminal cancer. My family has spent twelve thousand dollars in tickets to visit me, and for lawyer fees, food, etc. The Minister of Government, and the head of the police have promised to study my case, but time runs on, and so does my depression.

I have decided to follow Jesus after hearing your message today. I am requesting your prayers. While I don’t know you personally, I know your good heart. You furnish hygiene products for me and the other ladies. Thank you NPMI.”

SPECIAL PRAYER REQUEST

Zelmira Samiego, a Panamanian resident, incarcerated at La Modelo, is epileptic, and currently is on a hunger strike. She is protesting a mistake that she believes was made by the prison when an injection (apparently during childbirth) caused paralysis in one of her legs. Pray for her and her baby.



“Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.”

Hebrews 13:3

GIFTS OF LOVE

Some of the women prisoners at La Esperanza are pictured below with personal hygiene products given to them by NPMI. The packets contain shampoo, toilet tissue, deodorant, feminine products, and bath soap. Not every prisoner receives these products. Only those who have been identified as having no friends or family to supply these needs are placed on the abandoned prisoner list marking them eligible. If you would like to sponsor one of the abandoned prisoners, please let us know. This program helps both men and women. Note the contemplative expressions here as the women listen to the message of Christ, the gift of all gifts.



HELP US EARN SUPPORT FOR NPMI BY OBTAINING A KROGER GIFT CARD

If you shop at Kroger, please obtain a \$5 gift card from us. Refill your card with cash, check or credit card in the amount that you intend to spend each shopping trip. Then use the card as you would a debit card. The card must come from us before we can receive 4% of the cost of your purchase. To get started, send us \$5, and we will send your card loaded with that amount. Call us at 859-277-6863, or e-mail: wandagoerz@aol.com