



Celebrating God's Provision

We have an operational water well at the SHIP El Salvador campus!

We're so grateful to the Rotary Club of Aggieldand, Rotary International, and the Rotary Club of Santa Tecla in El Salvador for their funding and invaluable assistance to make this need a reality.

Running water in our neighborhood is a rare thing, and running water that you can actually drink is even rarer – and we have both! With our water filtration system, we can drink the water that comes out of the tap in the learning center. And the orphanage building and our neighbors also have access to the water. God is so good!

On Saturday, July 13, SHIP, along with the Rotary Club of Santa Tecla, who oversaw the drilling of the well, held a dedicaton ceremony for the water well. We were joined



by our good friend, Tomas Minero, who is the mayor of Ciudad Delgado. It was a great time to celebrate God's provision through our friends with Rotary.

Now, that type of celebration is well and good for the adults, but a celebration of a water well for kids must include actual water! We asked two of our college-age SHIP trippers to be in charge of this event. As you can imagine, it was a lot of fun with a homemade slip 'n slide, water balloons, and water guns! The kids loved it. That was followed up by hot dogs and smores – another hit.

It was a wonderful afternoon of celebration and fun antics. You can never be sure of what will happen on a SHIP trip, but it is never boring!

Once again, thank you to the Rotary Club of Aggieldand, Rotary International, and the Rotary Club of Santa Tecla. May God richly bless each of you for your kindness and generosity.



In this Newsletter

Over the course of three weeks this summer, 36 people joined us at the SHIP El Salvador campus to work and minister to the children and families. The place was really hopping with activity from early morning until late in the evening! For this issue of the SHIP newsletter, we asked some of these SHIP trippers to tell you what happened there and how it affected them personally. Although it's impossible to talk about all aspects of the trip, they will share their hearts for SHIP's work in El Salvador. We think you'll be interested in what they have to say.

Experiencing Joy & Hope

by Dean & Sharla Endler



El Salvador – the country called “The Savior.” We believe God sent us there to share about the one true Savior and to give in any way He directed us. God’s plans are always amazing; we thought we went to give, but we walked away each time with much more than we gave. We experienced joy and hope from God, El Salvador style.

The joy of being with the people and experiencing their culture and lifestyle; the joy of being given the opportunity to serve; the joy of seeing gratefulness mixed with tears of excitement for the luxury of a humble bathroom added to their everyday lives; the joy of watching a neighborhood gather to be served with Christ’s love through a haircut; the joy in playing card games with the children, pushing them in a swing, or throwing a Frisbee; the joy of really communicating beyond the language barrier; the joy in sharing a meal together; the joy (or insanity that is the El Salvador norm) of squeezing 11 people in a vehicle made for 5 just to make sure the neighborhood ladies do not have to walk home in the dark; the joy of hearing the doorbell ring – the sound of joy as it brings opportunity to share – working together, playing together, learning language together, eating together, or studying the Bible together.



Hope is another big part of this experience. The hope for the peace of Jesus Christ when you are invited to attend church in the neighborhood, as this was one family’s way of showing gratitude. We walked into the church building as guests, visibly different from the rest, but immediately we were one family in Christ – seated on the front row, people translating when they were unsure, and people singing songs in English just to let us know we belonged. The unity did not end with the worship service. We were generously provided a meal along with the fellowship of other believers, both of us with a heart for the community. We were invited to attend the next service, and again given the same gracious treatment as before and told, “This is your church.” There is hope when people gather in a dirt driveway in the dark, holding an iguana, watching the dog chase chickens, and all God’s children encircled with small white plastic chairs to praise Him and hear His word.

Joy and hope are the best words we have to describe the indescribable – the awesome experience, the gift from God to serve with SHIP in El Salvador. It’s very humbling and hard to leave when the people gather to see you off with tears, but full of joy and hope in Jesus Christ. We thank God for our family in El Salvador; we pray for the people and programs there, and we look so forward to going again.



This was the second mission trip to El Salvador for the Endlers, and their two daughters joined them this time. They live in Texas.

Opportunities to Serve

East Texas Project

Can’t go to El Salvador but you’d love to help? We have a trip planned to Henderson, Texas, for the end of October to help a retired missionary to Japan with finishing up her home. Once the work is completed, she’ll use her home for a children’s ministry and also as a place where returning missionaries can come for retreats. We need carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and some who can keep the workers supplied with food. Let us know if you’d like to help. It will be a long weekend, and housing and food will be provided.

October Trip to El Salvador

A heavy-duty work trip to El Salvador is planned for October 1-8 (we started to say “men-only trip,” but the women on our trips are amazing workers, too). We will be repairing a fence at the orphanage that has been damaged during the heavy rains and building platforms for the merchandise we are sending to El Salvador in large shipping containers. Cost of the trip is \$500 plus airfare (\$673 as of August 18). This is a no-frills, no beach trip or to the market trip. And the food offerings may leave something to be desired. It’s strictly a work-intensive trip. Of course, you’ll get to hug some of our precious kids while you’re there!

Winter Trip to El Salvador

A winter trip to El Salvador is scheduled for December 28, 2013, through January 4, 2014. The cost is \$650 plus airfare, which is currently \$858 (it’s always more expensive around Christmas). The deadline for your application and the \$250 non-refundable deposit is October 15, 2013. We need a minimum of 8 people to have this trip. If you’re interested in going, let us know as soon as possible!



A Summer to Remember

by Marc Almond

As we mark the end of summer, it's a good time to stop and reflect. The summer of 2013 will be one that is relentlessly burned into my memory.



I've taught math or science for over 17 years, so my summers are free to rest, work, travel, or do just about whatever I want to do. As I Christian, I'm always looking for ways to serve His Kingdom. During a very difficult period of my life (February to May), I was prompted by the Holy Spirit to go to El Salvador this summer. My wife, Cindy, and I were actually separated at the time, and my prayer was that it would give her a chance to consider moving back home if I were out of country.

With only what I call a miracle of God, we were reconciled in May of this year, and Cindy felt led to go with me to El Salvador. Much of the trip was planned and finalized in May and June. We arrived in country on July 12.

My brother, Ed, works at the American Embassy in San Salvador, and my sister-in-law, Regina, was born in El Salvador. Our trip was a combination of visiting family and working with two local orphanages, as well as a visit with our sponsor child. Although it seemed all planned out, we were disappointed that the contact person for one of our orphanages had to return to the U.S., and we wouldn't be able to work at that center. As I was telling Regina about it, she mentioned another orphanage called SHIP and provided Ann Horton's contact information. As

it turned out, two teams from the States were at the SHIP orphanage at the exact time we were in country. Was this a coincidence??? I don't think so.



Ann invited us to come and visit the orphanage. By the end of the first week, we had worked out the details and met up with the team at Mr. Donut, our suitcases in hand, on Sunday. This gave us an opportunity to work with the second team of SHIP trippers until late Wednesday night. Although it was only four days and three nights, it might as well have been a month. God opened our eyes to so much in such a short time that we now know that discovering SHIP was a divine appointment orchestrated by the Lord.

Cindy and I both loved everyone we met and worked with at the orphanage. We felt we were a part of something bigger than us and lasting longer than only a few days. This trip opened our eyes to what is "true poverty" and what are "real needs."

It was not just the orphans who stole our hearts, it was the entire neighborhood around the orphanage. As well, we were greatly honored to work with such a wonderful team from Texas. Although we were late arrivals and guests, we felt such a part of this team. Those four days will be indelibly burned into our memories and hearts forever.

I guess the next question for Cindy and me is not if we will be able to go back, but when we will be going back. The Lord used this trip to renew our commitment to what is "eternal" and lasting. We attend Antioch Community Church in Waco, Texas, and have a desire to one day be full-time missionaries. We feel that short-term trips are a wonderful way to prepare for full-time mission work. As well, short-term trips have a way of acclimating you to what is eternal and lasting. It's our desire that Jesus will break our hearts for what breaks His.



Marc and Cindy were such a wonderful addition to our team. They're the best thing we ever picked up at Mr. Donut, and they didn't stick to our hips!



Listening for the Call

by Brennan Oliver



At the start of my senior year in college, three years ago, the Lord laid on my heart to go on a spring break mission trip instead of a stereotypical college student spring break in

Panama City, Florida. In response to that calling, I began to pray regularly about it to seek His direction and guidance. Meanwhile, I got actively involved with the college student ministry at Central Baptist Church in Bryan where I was introduced to Josh Wesley, who began telling me about an orphanage he was involved with. Our conversations about his experiences there piqued my interest to the point of telling him, "Put me in your suitcase because I'm going with you!" By the end of the fall semester, it was a done deal. I was going to El Salvador. I knew that this was the opportunity I had been praying for.

Two and a half years later, I realized how much of an impact that week-long mission trip had on my life. At that time, I felt the Lord calling me back. I felt a similar need to go back just as I did my senior year of college, and I registered to attend the

second trip in July 2013. I don't think you fully understand the amount of excitement that I was feeling. I pretty much felt like the little girl from the movie *Despicable Me* screaming, "It's so fluffy!" just to give you an idea. Yup, I was that excited.

The end of July 2013 rolled around, and I was back in El Salvador, new orphanage and all. It was great to see how far the orphanage had come from three years prior. I've been fortunate enough to see both the building and the children grow. Words can't fully describe the joy I felt to be back on that hot and humid day in July. The wonderfully painted buildings were complete, just as I had envisioned them three years ago when the foundation was being built. I saw the children's baby faces that had evolved into more mature faces, and I wondered, "What have I missed out on?" It was simply a blessing to be back, and I couldn't wait for the Lord's plans to unravel as the week progressed.

Throughout that week, it was inspiring to see how God pieced us together like puzzle pieces by using each of our abilities to act as His hands and feet. Certain tasks needed to be completed, and God provided

the workforce to complete them. At the end of the day, it was the smiling faces of the children and their desire for affirmation that kept me going and gave me that extra boost of energy to keep working.

Furthermore, I never fully understood how a simple song, meal, hug, soccer game, water fight, handwritten note, four square game, or conversation with someone could impact a person the way it does until this trip. Despite the many other lessons learned from attending two trips, the big picture message spoken to me was to love as Christ loved. Day in and day out, we



are commanded to love just as it's described in Deuteronomy 6:5-9. American to American or SHIP tripper to orphan, it doesn't matter. Simply

love as Christ did. It is my prayer that we love one another daily and are encouraged by one another daily. I hope you're able to experience the joy from sharing Christ's love with someone else today just as I have on these trips. See you soon El Salvador!

Brennan, a Texan, currently lives in Oklahoma. Although he isn't a welder, he knew enough about it to be one in El Salvador! He was such a great asset to our work on this trip.



Impressions from the Mission Trip

by Madisen Walker

I had an amazing opportunity to serve the Lord in El Salvador this summer. I not only helped others but made many new, lifelong friends. The El Salvadorian people I met were very welcoming and always greeted me with big smiles and hugs.

I quickly and easily came to like El Salvador and the orphanage because it was filled with people who had the same desire as me – to serve Christ. Being in El Salvador and seeing the living conditions made me so grateful for the wonderful life the Lord provides me in the United States.

After returning from my trip, I realized I had another family in El Salvador – the people I met there and the SHIP team members with whom I served. This opportunity allowed me to serve the Lord in ways I hadn't experienced before, and I know that my relationship with Christ has grown through this life-changing experience. It was such a blessing!



by MaKayla Walker

I had a great opportunity to serve the Lord this summer. Not only did I get to make new friends and help others in need, I also accepted Christ into my heart while I was in El Salvador.

The people I met in El Salvador were very welcoming and friendly. Hearing some of their stories encouraged me to be a good role

model, giving, and thankful for what I have. It was a great feeling to know I was serving the Lord.

I'm blessed to have had the opportunity to go to El Salvador. Without this experience, I may not have asked the Lord into my life. I became close with the people who went on the trip, and hopefully, some will be lifelong friends. It was a great experience, and I hope others will have the same amazing opportunity to serve the Lord and have Him in their lives like me.

by Brent West

This summer, I had the opportunity to go back to El Salvador with the SHIP team for a second time. I've fallen in love with this place. I love the people and how big their hearts are, and I love how devoted they are to Christ, despite their conditions. I spent time each day with the neighborhood kids and kids from the orphanage who I met last year. I used my electrical skills to make some improvements to the learning center on the property. I also worked with a team to mix a lot of concrete for a retaining wall to keep a home in the neighborhood from sliding down the hill and made steps to a woman's house so she could safely get in and out of her home. Seeing their living conditions and also seeing how loving, happy, and caring they were in spite of their living conditions really opened my eyes to my own life. I can't wait to go back next year!

Brent has been to El Salvador twice. We're glad that he uses his skills as an electrician to keep us from electrocuting ourselves!



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James 1:27 *“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”*

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Save the Date!



We recently announced the winners of our “Win-a-Trip-to-the-U.S.” contest with the neighborhood children. Two young ladies, Ana, 16, and Jocelin, 13, will have a great time visiting and learning about the U.S. They were chosen based on their academic achievement, personal and spiritual

growth, an interview, and an essay. Both girls have done exceptionally well in the new Christian school that SHIP is sending them to, they’ve shown Godly character, and they’re excited to share about the role God and SHIP are playing in their lives. They will be accompanied by Astrid Zavaleta, the SHIP NGO President, and Susana Martinez, their tutor.

Ana and Jocelin will help us with our fundraiser in Bryan/College Station on November 7. Details will be announced soon, so please save the date and plan to come – it will be a special evening for us and these young ladies.

Do you “like” us?

Find us on Facebook (facebook.com/SHIPinternational) and “like” us by clicking on our “Like” button! It will allow you to easily see our updates and photos.

Would you like to receive weekly e-mail updates and prayer requests regarding the work in El Salvador? To be included, send your e-mail address to: bjsimmons00@hotmail.com.