



OCCASIONAL REPORT

May 2010

Hello All. Brother Jeff and I are just back from Escuela San Miguel (ESM) and want to keep you up to date.

Our first and most pressing need was to restore water to the school. Due to the extremely dry summer our big well had gone dry. Luckily a few years ago we were fortunate to receive funds from a donor to dig another well out back for the garden, our fruit & lumber tree grove, and for our neighbors without water. This well was a little deeper and so we had water, raised with a hand-crank pump into buckets. However it was soon to go dry also. And so with Felipe our PFP man in Nicaragua and some hired men we worked

10 days straight and got deep enough to reattach the pump and supply water back to the school and the teacher/volunteer house. The process is slow, and requires a worker at the bottom of the well. Working in little light this person picks and shovels muck and bails water into a bucket that is raised by rope & pulley where others empty and wheelbarrow it out.

Then after deepening for two meters there is the need to add to the well cylinder itself and literally cause the cylinder to fall to the new depth. So two days were then spent at the top adding two meters of bricks and mortar to the cylinder. One more day to allow for sufficient drying time and the cylinder was undermined and caused to slump down to the new added depth. Another day to let the silts settle out, and with the addition of a sanitizing bottle of bleach we had running water.

A glorious day indeed! No more carrying water to flush, shower, dishes, cooking, cleaning. Water at the tap! Ah, it was a great 1st running water shower since our arrival. We had at one point filled the old pickup with buckets of lake water, and also we were prepared when a few rains came to fill everything we had by detaching the gutter downspouts.

Anyway all is well now. We would liked to have gone deeper for more insurance against future droughts, but the need for immediate water was too great, and anyway we are now easily prepared with the cylinder extended, to deepen further without so much difficulty should the need arise. This was a great reminder for us to never forget how wonderful our water systems are to a comfortable lifestyle. Year round here many carry water daily from streams, community wells or the lake for all of there water needs.

Following this we had some time to undertake a few trips to our satellite "schools" in the countryside. At the village of Rio Mena we have installed a small generator and are teaching computer science to 26 students daily. Jeff and I had a great visit and enjoyed lunch with them all. It was very gratifying. This is a money-saver for us as the cost of transporting students to ESM is so much greater. Our Nicaraguan teacher Xinia Espinoza has been a great sport, purchasing a small dirt motorcycle and makes the dirt road R/T, including four river/creek crossings daily, bringing the school to the people. It is well appreciated believe me. We have also established sewing classes with a local teacher further down the road in Los Angeles and two other satellite computer science classes in Sapoia.

We spent the usual few days with the school board and director and teachers over finances and budgets and where to cut/find ways to make ends meet. And we delivered the 2nd installment of PfP donation including an added \$1,000 dollars to make up for shortfalls. The mayor's office has promised \$3,500 dollars but as yet ESM has not received. So with a prayer and a bow to the Creator we are hopeful for fiscal solvency through school year end in December.

In the end we convinced Felipe to take a long overdue vacation (he would not go until sure we had the well back on-line) during the last week of our stay, so Jeff and I ended up doing clean-up, paint-up, fix-up in the daily routine of maintenance folks. A couple toilets needed repairs and one of the sewer lines got plugged. We also did some gate repair and refurbishing and trimmed trees. A good stay with the three major missions accomplished; delivery of your donations to keep the school running, a vacation for Felipe, and the well deepened and back on-line.

Blessings To All,
Dean & Jeff

For photos from the past few months, click on the pdf version of this report below.



Cholito “finishing” the well cylinder



Jeff y Agua del Cielo



Rio Mena Students at Work



Rio Mena students and Professor Xinia Espinoza (on motorcycle)



Faculty & Staff: Front row Veronica (w/ baby), Mauro, Nelson & Florina. Back row Jacobo, Miguel, Fabrique, Xinia, Darly (W/ daughter) & Karina.