



RANCHO Santa Marta

Bethesda Teaching Ministry ♦ P.O. Box 20028 ♦ El Cajon, California ♦ 92021-0900 ♦ 619.258.1358 ♦ April 2024 ♦ Volume 52 #4



Rod & Tina's Corner

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Matthew 9: 36-38

We have written many times in our newsletters how we feel about our house parents. They are wonderful people who have dedicated their lives to raising up very difficult children. They are constantly on the guard, looking out for these young ones/teenagers/young adults to keep them out of trouble and on the path to being successful in their lives. A close relationship with God is so vital to the success of their work at the ranch with these children's lives. The work of the Holy Spirit and His fruit needs to be evident and demonstrated to them. Our house parents are heroes for choosing this type of ministry. We have a prayer request as we are faced with a vacant spot in our young girl's house. We are temporarily filling in for these girls, but we need to have a single lady who is willing to love, discipline and train these young girls and demonstrates a deep relationship with the Lord. Pray earnestly along with us as we wait patiently for the Lord to answer this call. The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Thank you, Rod & Tina

Preschool!

Our 4-year old's preschool classroom has opened. One of the outcomes of Tina's doctorate program in Special Education was to open a pre-school program at our Colegio Santa Marta. She believes it's important to have special needs three- and four-year-old's to be in a minimal day classroom setting with regular education students. This gives these young learners an understanding of what school entails. It also enables the teachers and professional staff to pinpoint the specific problems they have and begin to work with these children before they enter the kindergarten classroom. It's a win-win situation for both student/family and school/staff as plans are developed and implemented.



Tina hard at work



New Pre-School Classroom

The focus on reaching out to the special need students at an early age is a great idea but one that is presenting its challenges. Our preschool classroom has twelve students and out of those twelve children, five of them are diagnosed with a specific special need. Autism has been an increasing concern in schools as more children are being classified under the huge umbrella of the autism spectrum. Colegio Santa Marta is experiencing this increase mostly in our primary grades. Tina has become an advanced certified autism specialist that has encouraged and enabled her to design a program specifically targeting children with autism. She has converted the occupational therapy room into an autism laboratory where she is able to work one on one and/or small groups with these students. This is a very challenging task because even though each child is diagnosed as a child with autism, they display a wide variety of symptoms, and each one is so unique from the other. We believe this program will continue to grow and we will need more personnel who are trained or who are willing to be trained to be able to come alongside the child with autism and allow him/her to be successful in the classroom situation.

Welcome Gabriel

Gabriel is our new arrival to the family. He is an 8-year-old boy born with fetal alcohol syndrome. His mother was on drugs and did not want him, so he was given to a single mother who heard that baby Gabriel needed a home. At four years of age, this surrogate mother, who never adopted him, came to Santa Marta looking for a place where Gabriel could be "fixed" for a year or two. She was expecting to take him back once Gabriel was disciplined, toilet trained and accustomed to school. We politely said no to the request, and we had not heard from this lady until a year and a half ago. She contacted us again asking for help with Gabriel. We told her the only way we would take him if she went through the government social system and request that he reside at Santa Marta. She took the steps and now we have Gabriel as one of our members. He's a very polite young boy and is looking forward to going to school. He will stay with Sergio and Wendy and their family along with Esteban. We are excited for Gabriel and can see how the Lord's hand has been on his young life. Welcome Gabriel!!



Beauticians

We are offering a beautician classroom as an elective for our high school students. The classroom has been vacant for several years, but we have found a teacher within our own ranch staff. Gilda has been with us for over three years as a house parent helper who comes in daily from town to assist in the houses. Her name came up when we were in the process of looking for a beautician for the salon classroom. She was nervous at first but after several classes with the high school seniors she has settled into a routine and is enjoying teaching them the art of cutting, coloring, and curling hair! Wow. Thank you, Gilda, for stepping up with an added responsibility at the ranch. The Lord will bless.



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Cassandra House Update!

We are moving forward on the Cassandra house. We had two groups with us in February that gave us a huge boost with the project. Big Valley Grace Community Church of Modesto, CA and Williams Neighborhood Church of Williams, CA both contributed with muscle and will power to get the slab poured and a start on the metal frame walls. Big Valley also had an outreach team that presented a special activity for all of the grades in our school, Kindergarten through High School. That was a huge task, and they were well prepared for all the different ages at Colegio Santa Marta. Cabinets were made and electrical maintenance were also part of their week. Williams Neighborhood Church not only put up the outer Cassandra house walls but also made curtains for the counselors' rooms and for the younger girl's house. You all were a wonderful blessing to the home, and we appreciate how you spread Christ's love here to our Santa Marta family, both at the home and the school.

