

O C T O B E R / N O V E M B E R 2 0 1 3

una

VOZ NUEVA

GIVING A NEW VOICE TO THE CHILDREN OF GUATEMALA IN ORDER
THAT THEY MAY "PROCLAIM WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE."
PSALM 118:17

Graduation: A time of reflection



This newsletter is a publication of Jennifer Gieseemann, Speech Pathologist and Missionary to the New Life School, Santa Maria de Jesus, Sacatepequez, Guatemala

Contact Information:

Email Address:

jenngiese82@gmail.com

Send your pledges and donations to:

Harpeth Hills Church of Christ

1949 Old Hickory Blvd.

Brentwood, TN 37027 Mark funds:

For Jennifer Gieseemann's Guatemala Mission Fund

October 18 was graduation day for our 6th graders and also, for the first time, our kindergarteners. This is my first year to complete a school year here at Nueva Vida, and it has been amazing to look back on the changes of so many of my kids this year. I'd like to share with you a few highlights of the 2013 school year:

1. Griselda and Joel are two children with Down Syndrome, ages 10 and 11. At the beginning of the school year, they both could say about 2 or 3 words. They now can say approximately 10-15 words. Griselda is so proud when she goes around greeting everyone with her new word "HOLA." This may not seem like a big accomplishment, but for children who have never been able to talk, this is a big deal!

2. Joseph said his first word ever this year at the age of 4. He continues to make progress, although slow, and his mother is

faithful in bringing him.

3. The deaf children at our school have made great gains in their sign language this year. All of the teachers, along with our sign language teachers, have made a concerted effort to help these children, and it really shows. I love watching them having conversations between each other and playing together at recess.

4. Laura received her "flipper" dental apparatus. It has given her more confidence, and she is making some rapid gains in speech therapy.

To God be the glory for all these successes. I am so thankful to be a part of His plan for each one of my children. Thank you for making these successes possible!!





New Experiences: Giving children a “Childhood”

For the end of the year, I decided to do a fun project with each of my kids. It is something that all children in the US have done, but for many of these children, it was their first time! We decorated cookies! The speech pathologist in me still found a way to incorporate my goals into the activity, but they still had so much fun. I loved seeing the excitement in their faces as they anticipated making the cookies and the curiosity in their eyes as they asked me what that jar of white stuff (aka icing) was. As I reflected on this experience I had with my kids, I realized that many of them have had very little of a childhood. They begin working (mainly in the fields) at a very young age. Many families are very large, so many do not have time to enjoy being a family. Our school gives them a place to feel like children. They make friends, enjoy recess playing with their classmates, participate in special days, and most of all feel loved by all their teachers. This is not to say that our children are not loved by their families, but sometimes, because of the hard life that they live, many children do not get to experience just being kids! Please enjoy these pictures of our cookie decorating day!

Thank you for a great year!!

This newsletter will be my last for 2013. I am leaving in three weeks to head back to the States for Thanksgiving and Christmas. This year has really flown by, and I am so excited about the year to come. I wanted to take this time to personally thank each one of you for your prayers, words of encouragement, donations, and support that you have given me throughout this year. God has been so good to me in providing everything I need and more. Thank you also for all of you who made purchases on the gift registry for my speech therapy supplies. These will be so helpful for the following school year. I hope to get to see many of you while I am in the States in November and December. Please keep my kids here in Santa Maria de Jesus in your prayers always. May God bless all of you, and have a wonderful holiday season!