



VBS in Granjas

### A Secret Request

September 2023

It was our last day of Vacation Bible School in the community of Granjas. The neighborhood is full of humble homes pieced together with scrap pieces of old wood. There are only three roads you can take to get in or out and all of them are bumpy and some of them are angled like a roller coaster. This community has seen more than its fair share of violence from criminal groups who fight over the turf. Poverty abounds. During the pandemic people ran down the hillsides to receive the food we brought in and delivered street by street. Now the community is past the

pandemic but the poor still struggle to make ends meet. Around 80 children showed up for VBS that day, and they were looking forward to a mix of games, songs, skits, snacks, and the gospel message. The day's special activity for the hot weather: water balloons! VBS is a lot of fun.



Having fun at VBS

At the beginning of the program a young girl who was about nine years old approached me. "Are you helping families with food today?" She told me of her single mother who was struggling to provide for her younger sister and her. I told her that we could figure something out. Our next outreach day in the community was still a few



Sharing songs, games, and the gospel during our outreach days

weeks away, and we didn't bring food other than the snacks for VBS, but there is a store not far away. Then she added, "Could you not let the other kids know that you are helping us?" She was a little embarrassed to ask. No problem. I asked Julian to do his best stealthy food purchasing operation and help the girl take some groceries home without letting others know. Sorry, no pictures of the little girl and her sister as they walked home carrying three bags and a tray of 30 eggs - this was a top-level secret operation! But maybe you can imagine along with me the look on their mom's face when they walked into their house with bags full of food.



Getting ready for food distribution in Pipila

The total Julian spent on that day was about 16 dollars - money well spent I think. When you are hurting, even a little can go a long way. Around 2,000 people attend our outreach activities each month. Being close to so many opens up many small opportunities to help. This week we are helping two families pay for operations. To be specific, we are helping them with the costs of renting the tools used in the surgery. Even the discount hospitals charge for renting the tools! Another family lost a loved one and needs help to pay for the burial. Many families in the community are related and are well known to us. Lily takes some money for assistance and spends time

mourning with the family. Sometimes the needs we meet are very human. Sometimes it is simply the desire for a decent burial.

Other special requests these last few weeks have been for school uniforms, school shoes, and other school-related costs. We help several girls each month with tuition, and one young mother graduates nursing school in a few more weeks. (I can share pictures of that so stay tuned!) Each and every one of these examples are opportunities to respond in love, and remind people that God cares. This opens doors to be able to share the gospel, and that is what it really is all about. Our greatest joy is seeing a family turn to Christ and seeing God transform lives!

I spoke with a family who was receiving a team who came to build them a home. I asked the mother if there was something she wanted to say to the people who made this possible. She broke down in tears and told me that her husband, when he heard that they were to receive a house, cried and said, "The God of Elijah still lives, because even in these days, when there is so much evil, there are people doing good things." They are a family of believers and are very grateful to God and all the people who make all the things we do possible.



A new home brings great joy

Thank you for supporting us. Thank you for praying for us. We send out a 3-4 page list of specific prayer requests each month by email. We are including the first two pages as an example this month along with this letter. If you would like to receive our detailed prayer list by email each month, please send us a message at [info@spectrumministries.org](mailto:info@spectrumministries.org). (If you don't have email, please call us at 619-276-1385 and we can mail this to you.) We appreciate your prayers!

For all of us at Spectrum Ministries,

Paul Alvarado  
Director

*1 Timothy 6:18-19 " They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life."*

