

# HOGAR INFANTIL

NOVEMBER 2004

## CHRISTMAS IS COMING! *BY Leslie Guinn*

Doesn't Christmas have a way of sneaking up on you, even though it is no great surprise that it comes the same time each year? Here in Texas, I blame it on the warm weather. Anyhow, in a few short weeks, Santa's sleigh will be heading South to Chiapas. This year the Christmas party will be on December 11, which means Santa's estimated departure will be December 9.

If you are planning on sending a gift, please plan on mailing it to Santa's workshop address: **6405 Secretariat Ct., Granbury, TX 76049** by that date. Remember: think small, think light, think Spanish, think older children. Everyone loves to buy cute toys

for the little ones, but please keep in mind that the majority of our children are young teen-agers and decidedly more difficult to shop for.

Santa is limited to what he can carry in his small plane (sorry, sleigh) and get through customs (please do not wrap gifts). Cash always works, and Mrs. Claus can do some shopping for you. Cash donations should be sent through the usual channels to P.O. Box 7049, Salem, OR 97303-0031. Santa and Mrs. Claus have made an executive decision against radio control cars, as they are very expensive, don't handle the rough treatment they get, use up lots of batteries, and in general seem to bring tears after the initial happiness.



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**P.O. Box 7049**

**Salem, OR**

**97303—0031**

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**www.hogarinfantil.org**

**“A PLACE OF SHARING”**

## RANCH NEWS *By Carlos Macias*

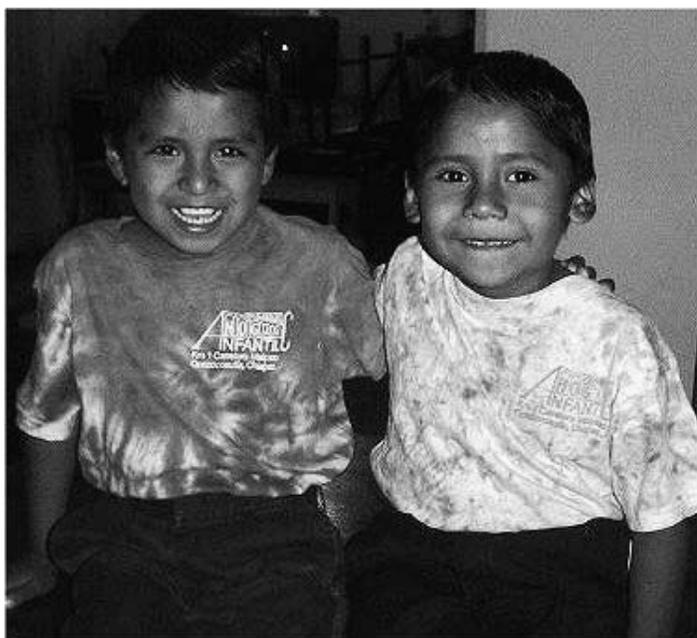
This fall we completed a project with the help of a government grant to install our very own *tortilleria* or tortilla factory. Here, the tortilla is the staff of life and we consume tons of them annually. Now we produce our own from raising the corn and grinding it to producing the final product. Under the direction of one of the house parents, the children operate this little factory. Since we can produce more than we consume, some of the extra production goes to the poor around us at our cost. We will have more on this with pictures in the next newsletter.

For many years the ranch has needed a small pickup truck to do the light hauling like taking off the garbage, bringing in the corn, and running errands. In September Capitan David and his son, Quintin, made a dream come true. They arranged for the importation into Mexico of a very nice Mazda. Two drivers from Hogar flew in Capitan's small plane with Quintin and "Capi" to the border and drove the pickup to its new home in Chiapas. The truck is so useful and we are very proud.

The new little ones who came to us this year have really settled into life at Hogar Infantil. Eduardo who speaks his native Tzocsil dialect has become a very good student in the local primary school. He is all smiles. Yordy, who came to us named Margarito after his mother who died of cancer, is a little Dennis the Menace like lots of kids. However, he shows much respect to his teachers and the staff at the ranch. He is in the fifth grade and hopes someday to be a teacher. There is hope.

We have had a wonderful visit from our much loved Neto (Ernesto) Morgan Carrasco and his wife Katie and their infant son Eric. Neto grew up at Hogar and married Katie who is from Oregon and came down to help us a few years ago. Love happened and now Katie is the Secretary of Hogar's board in the U.S. We will have a report from them in the next newsletter.

The director, children, and staff at the ranch wish you all a Very Merry Christmas. May God be with you and yours.



## Child Psychologist Visits Hogar *By Ron Speck*

As you have read many times in previous newsletters, the children of Hogar come to us from difficult situations. Hogar provides these children with a place to re-establish themselves and overcome their challenging past situations. To help children move through the healing process a Child Psychologist from Colombia, Celina Oviedo, volunteered her time and talents for one month this Fall at Hogar Infantil.

While at the Ranch she completed a personal profile with each child, did small group work/discussions, helped children most in need that are suffering from past experiences, and trained the Hogar Infantil staff on how to support the social and emotional needs of the children. For example, the work of Celina led her to connecting one teen boy with his aging father who is turning blind and suffering from diabetes. In addition, she supported a 16-year-old girl who was dealing with the unknowns of her past and the mystery of why her mother abandoned her to an aunt. This abandonment then led to a childhood of abuse and selling items in a park as a 7-year-old where she ultimately ran away and miraculously landed at Hogar Infantil.

Both of these examples are long stories in themselves. However, they clearly show that the journey from abuse, homelessness, aging parents, no family at all, to becoming an independent adult is long and challenging. It is with your on-going support, prayers, and volunteers like Celina that change the lives of these children. Thanks to Celina and all of you that are able to support the children of Hogar Infantil.



Editor's footnote: After returning home to Colombia, Celina wrote some of the children that she had most helped. The following is an excerpt translated from that letter.

“My dearest Adrian, as Christmas comes, we need to give much thanks to God for this year. It has been very special for both of us. For you, being reunited with your beloved father and for me, getting to know you. In a few years we will see each other in another situation and be able to laugh together and believe that all our dreams can come true. Everything is in our mind. Remember, ‘You can do it.’ You have great talents and should continue to develop them. You are always in my prayers, and the God that I know and rely upon also has you in His Hands. He will carry you as He does me when you most need it.”

**LUZ** *translated by David Guinn*

Luz came to Hogar Infantil when she was six. The woman who brought her said that she was her sister. Actually, she was her mother. This deception was to hide the fact that Luz was the fruit of a rape. For some time this mother/sister visited her frequently, but the visits got further apart. Finally they were only about once a year.

This worried Hogar's director, who asked to speak with the mother on a visit.

The mother explained that she worked far from Hogar and the trip was difficult. After much urging, it was agreed that she would visit more frequently. The director was very happy. Every little girl needs to be close to her mother, if that is possible.



On occasion Luz's mother started taking her away from Hogar for weekend visits. Once they did not return to Hogar on Sunday afternoon as was their custom. The director worried but knew that they could have had trouble with the buses or weather. What a surprise when Luz showed up the next day in custody of the Child Protective Authorities.

The mother had been seen beating the child in the street and had tried to push her in front of a passing car. The mother was jailed and sentenced to three years for mistreating her child. Hogar Infantil now has full custody of Luz. When her mother is able to visit her it will only be at Hogar in the presence of a staff member. The abuse has stopped, but the hurt lingers on.

Luz is a bright and pretty young girl. Her "sisters" at Hogar give her lots of hugs. She deserves a brighter future.



**Baby Jesus**  
**So great, so small**  
**Born to be**  
**The King of all**

From all the children and staff at Hogar Infantil and from all the directors of the Mexican and U.S. boards of Directors and all the volunteers, our wishes for a most blessed and peaceful Christmas.

**Editor's note:** *If for any reason you do not get a receipt for your donation in a reasonable time (3-5 weeks), please let us know. You may call me at 817-279-7186 or email [Quinti@aol.com](mailto:Quinti@aol.com)*

*Some of the names of our children have been changed in this publication for their protection. The newsletter is inserted on our website ([www.hogarinfantil.org](http://www.hogarinfantil.org)) and we feel that it is best they have their privacy.*