

Shoeshine Special

News from the
Working Boys' Center
Quito, Ecuador

Spring 2008

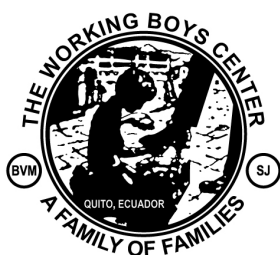
Dear Folks,

“Ordinary Time” has an extraordinary meaning for us in our Saturday and Sunday liturgies. It means we are not concentrating on one of the special events in God’s plan for salvation of all of us. Instead, we are conscious that God is always at work saving the whole human family from its off track wanderings.

Every day of every week throughout the year, we know that saving power is at work in all of you whose help keeps the Working Boys’ Center - A Family of Families moving smoothly toward prosperity for all its members. In the centerfold, the members of one of our bigger families are a beautiful example of that prosperity in the making.

Just below on this first page, Susi Yopez introduces a very winning Working Boys’ Center development office team. They are all volunteers with their hearts in the work - ordinary people with extraordinary generosity like yours.

John J. Halligan, S.J.



Ines Aguilar, Susi Yopez, Cristina Berg, Sandi Montufar, Laura Norritz and Cristobal Flores.

THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE TEAM

Pictured here are Susi Yopez, our Development Director, and her remarkable team of volunteers from the Dolorosa Parish in Quito.

The members of the group have been committed to voluntary service in their parish for over 20 years. In 2001, when they heard about the Working Boys’ Center, they decided to make it their total dedication. Since that time they have done everything from chamber ballet presentations to an evening of flamenco. They are always responsible for the expenses involved so all money raised can go to the children of the Center and their families. This year, in addition to all of their other activities, the group purchased a Christmas gift for each child in the Center’s daycare program and first grade. Next year they plan to cover the entire grammar school.

Each member of the team participates in all activities, but they have organized themselves with defined roles. Cristobal, the “boss” of the group, plans and organizes the activities. Sandi serves as the “treasurer” and also does administrative work for the Development Office. Laura is the “spiritual guide” and dedicated example for the team. Cristina keeps the group abreast of cultural promotional activities and even provides a meeting room in her business for the “Working Boys’ Center Helpers Group.” Ines and Susi put in 15 hour days writing projects, attending functions, meeting people, and, in general, promoting the Center.

We are always promising Susi that we will thank them in some way for the stupendous effort they are making on our behalf, but we can never get a time and a way that fits into everybody’s schedule. Finally, we came up with a luncheon in their honor. Now the trick will be to treat them to lunch and not have them pay for it!



The Bone family poses for a photo.

A FAMILY IN PROCESS

The Working Boys' Center has the tremendous fun of accompanying the Boné (pronounced "Bow-nay") family in its holy process of change from a bad life style to happiness here and hereafter. In the Old Testament, God insisted that despite the catastrophies that come from sin, Creation is intended to be full of life and happiness rather than suffering and death. Christ in His agents has been promoting that process of change to prosperity as the foundation of His kingdom here on earth. Like all of the families that opt for membership in Center, the Bonés are not simply a poor family. They are a poor family willing to brave the changes God wants in the creation of prosperity. They are achieving something wonderful they will be able to give to other poor families. It is a joy to tell their story as we know it in the Working Boys' Center, and it is a deep consolation for all of us that the Center is sharing in their lives through its total family development programs.

Until six years ago, the Boné family, parents Daniel and Maria, and all nine children, worked their



Four beautiful girls.



Nixon with his favorite client.

own fifteen acre farm down on the coastland near the port city of Esmeraldas. Year after year, even with all of their work, the family never earned even one hundred dollars a month for shoes, clothes, medicines, electricity, water and bus rides. It was a desperately poor way of living. The lack of any job preparation for the kids, and the possibility of being part of a cycle of ongoing misery, was the biggest suffering. Daniel prayed and came to Quito seeking any kind of paid work. Four months later Maria

came intending only to visit Daniel and encourage

him. While in Quito, she met Mrs. Rosa Bonbon, the mother of a family in the Working Boys' Center who told Maria about the Center's programs. Of course, Maria had to see the Center with her own eyes. She saw that the Center is as real as Rosa had described it: meals, nursery, all levels of basic education, medical and dental care, job preparation, spiritual formation and love all over the place. She and Daniel agreed that it would be worth any sacrifice to bring the family to Quito and near enough to the Center. So the changes God wants in their lives turned into a plan.

With empty pockets and hearts full of courage, they made travel plans. They were grateful for accommodations, not first class but suitable, in space available on a cargo truck coming to Quito. Rosa was waiting to give them space to sleep on the floor in the Bonbon family's shack. All five boys shined shoes and Maria and her daughter, Angelica, washed clothes; Daniel still had his new job as an unskilled factory hand. In the providence of God, the Working Boys' Center needed a new cook for its thousands of daily meals. Maria's credentials as cook for a big family made her a shoe-in for the job. The rest is the same as the history of family after family in the Center. We concentrate on becoming serious practitioners of ten special values: honest commitment to our community, mutual support in each family, personal responsibility for what we do and do not do, faithfulness to God's desire to be present in our lives, realistic education, honest work, budgeting earnings as a family, step-by-step achievement of decent housing, healthy recreation and reasonable care for our health. The Bonés are making it all happen as God wants.



Nixon at the work site.

FREE JOBS FOR ALL COMERS

Elizabeth Shaub is one of our college grad volunteers this year, doing a great job at teaching and counselling our grammar school kids. Her mother, Ann Shaub, came for a visit with plans to see the Center and tour as much of Ecuador as time allowed. She was here for a month; and left the other day with an assignment to pick up her husband and bring him back here to help her be a permanent volunteer.



Ann tries to get the lesson across.

What happened was that Ann started her visit by accompanying Elizabeth to her classes to help out a bit. Then she discovered other activities with the kids: baking class, sewing, arts and crafts and practice at selling their products to our big family of families. She was also introduced to a big group of our students who need special help. She could not help but notice that in our mission house we have a dishwasher for all twenty six of our staff and volunteers, but we do not have robots to fill or empty it and set the tables, etc. Ann very soon discovered we are very friendly and open to her doing all the work we can get out of her. We assured her that Ecuador is a small country and that, outside of the Center, there is not much important going on for tourists. We have a lot of work planned for Ann when she comes back!

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING MEMORABLE

Inside a classroom, a couple of young visitors, Adam Schumaker and Chelsey Brown, are into a solemn ceremony of friendship with the kids. One by one, the kids rush out, each with a personal treasure packet to show the world. For each and every child in our grammar school, the packet has a photograph, a portrait made from that photograph by a student artist somewhere in the U.S.A. and a letter of friendship from the artist. It takes a couple of days for the visitors to sort out and organize all the materials and ceremonies for the whole grammar school population.

The organizer of this “Memory Project”, as it is called, is Ben Schumaker, with some friends from Madison, Wisconsin. They visit poor kids around the world and take pictures which they bring to art students in the U.S. for transformation into portraits. The personal letters are added as bonds of new friendship between young artists and the kids. The personal deliveries simply emphasize the international dimension of each kid’s importance to the artist which helps the children’s self-esteem. There is nothing margined or underprivileged about having your own portrait watching to see if you are turning out to be the adult you dream of becoming.



Adam shares a portrait with Bryan Niza.

Tax deductible donations can be sent to:

Family Unity International, Inc.

Mrs. Patricia Parks, President

12750 Stephen Place

Elm Grove, WI 53122

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<http://www.workingboyscenter.org>

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