



## Asociación Hogar de Vida Para La Niñez

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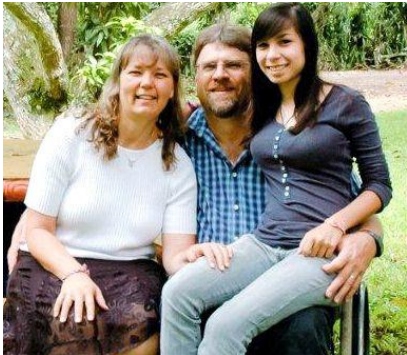
Financial Donations Administered by Partnering Ministry:  
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December 2011

### Reflections from Tim

Merry Christmas friends & family of Hogar de Vida!



May Jesus be near each and every one during this special family Christmas season. It is His birthday.

I want to challenge you to be bold for Jesus. Make this a

season of prayer with friends and family. If someone is hurting or struggling, stop and pray with them right there. Let's get proactive in our culture and not be ashamed to take a chance and be bold to be a blessing to others!

I am so thankful that He saved me and called me to missions. We get to love the abandoned and abused. Just today Maria and I helped a hyper active 5 yr. old who urinates on the walls of his room and kicks holes in the drywall when he gets angry. We simply got him an old toothbrush and some disinfectant and got him cleaning up his mess. In 5 minutes he was tired and wanted to quit. But 45 minutes later having followed up the toothbrush work with a rag, he was convinced that it was not to his advantage to pee in his room anymore. Later I brought him a snack and we talked. I asked him who he needed to apologize to. He quickly replied "The Tias in House 3," and he won't be making that mess again! The coolest thing was him giving me a hug after it was all said and done.

Nowhere does it say that what we do is going to be easy and fun. It takes these hard times and kids pushing buttons, for us adults to find a way to overlook, forgive, discipline in love and get back to unity and harmony. Relationships take time. We do our best to keep the peace, lift up weary arms, shine a light of love and pray that Jesus is lifted up.



This year has been awesome. The Lord touched hearts in Costa Rica and the US to help us get out of our financial troubles. We had

4 interns come to serve as "Tias" for a month. Six teams came to Costa Rica and two to Guatemala. In Guatemala, we were able to finish the playground. In Costa Rica, we got the maintenance building up, constructed 325 feet of security wall along the front of the property, painted the steel railings on Houses 1 & 2 and put in cement seating all the way around the rancho. A favorite of the Tias was the construction of clear roofing over the

clothes lines to protect drying clothes from afternoon showers.

The Stromstads are anxiously awaiting the arrival of Ben and Josh on Dec. 19th for a month! We are proud of them as they are 1/2 way through their sophomore year at Pensacola Christian College and are doing well. Maria just finished her sophomore HS year here in Costa Rica. She exempted 4 of her 6 classes because of her great grade point average. Costa Rica has 5 high school years so Maria will be in her last year of high school in 2012. I can't believe my little baby is just a year away from college. Our deepest thanks to the teams and to ministry partners who send financial support to the missions through Children of Promise. We need you all. Please keep us in your hearts and prayers when we come to mind.



Happy birthday Jesus,

*Tim, Dena and Maria Stromstad*

**Gift of Giving** Christmas is a time for children and a time for giving. I hope that as you are giving that you'll consider the children of Hogar de Vida in Costa Rica and Guatemala. Perhaps you'd consider setting up or increasing a monthly contribution through our Sponsorship Program (see back of the Reply Slip). Perhaps you'd prefer to make a generous year-end gift.

Or perhaps you'd consider a **gift of giving**, that is, expressing your love to a family member with a Christmas gift of a donation or sponsorship of a child given in their honor. Just use the reply slip to tell us what you want to do, send a check to Children of Promise, and give your loved one a card telling how you've chosen to honor them. At the same time, send an email to [newsletter@homesoflife.org](mailto:newsletter@homesoflife.org) confirming the gift and who you want to honor. In January, we'll send a personalized letter to them with appropriate information about your gift and about Hogar de Vida.





## Julio's Story



Julio is our special needs boy. He's a day older than Maria and always a joy on campus. Julio came to us before his 2nd birthday with a bleak prognosis and barely able to hold his head up. Now 14 years old, Julio is an example of perseverance and

determination. His self-motivation is amazing. Even though it takes longer and he has to work harder to accomplish a simple task, Julio doesn't give up.

Julio is an inspiration to many and a very special young man. On Dec 17, Julio will graduate from elementary school, and next year he'll begin High School. Change is very hard for Julio, so little by little we are preparing him for next year.

We have chosen to keep him here until he is 18, when he will be eligible to join a different home that will be perfect for him.

## Dena's Reflections

Home of Life! That's exactly what we are . . . a BIG family where life happens.

Gratitude to a faithful God overwhelms us as we reflect on the "times" of 2011.

- A time to come and a time to go: 17 children have come into the Home of Life this year, while 4 went to adoptive homes and 15 returned to their families after they were approved by the government.
- A time of good health and a time of crisis. We recently had a respiratory crisis with 11 children in house #1 as a wave of chest colds swept Costa

Rica. We thank God for our trained staff and the nebulizer treatments they could administer.

- A time of financial belt-tightening followed by a time of sufficiency through the generosity of you our ministry partners and wise management.
- A time of tears with the pain of loss, as well as times of rejoicing and laughter.
- A time to work hard (everyday chores caring for 30 to 35 children) and a time to play (trips to the beach or nearby parks).
- A time to study (12 children in grade school - most with learning difficulties), and a time for vacation. (Costa Rica's school break is Dec. 16 until February.)
- A time of change (several staff resigning for different reasons), that brings new personalities and perspectives.
- A time for growth, always, and never a time to be stagnant.

A recurring theme throughout the year has been to return to our "true north." The busyness of daily responsibilities distracts us, but the Lord has reminded us time and time again to refocus on why we are here and what our purpose is. This was so clear when Christy, the preschool teacher, felt so moved to use the "wordless book" to present Jesus and the gift of salvation to all the children ages three and up. Jesus is the "NORTH"!

As we celebrate His birthday, we are reminded that He is the most precious gift we have the privilege of sharing with the children every day. Through all the "times" of 2011, we have chosen to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author & perfecter of our faith. Heb. 12:2



**Merry Christmas,**

*Dena*