



# THE VAMONOS NEWSLETTER

*Dear Friends and Family,*

We have been having a great time since we sent our last newsletter.



**Passover at the Watermans**

As we have told you, for the last couple of years, we have hosted a neighborhood Bible study in our home every Thursday evening. We began with George leading a verse by verse study in the book of Acts, have completed it and are now 2/3 of the way through Genesis. We really have no idea as to how long will go, but, as long as people want to study God's word, George will be willing to teach. We took a break from the Genesis study in March to look at our celebration of Easter in detail. Then, on the 24th, Julie and Mark (our daughter and son-in-law) came to the house and lead the group in a Christian Passover Hagaddah, which us the Passover Seder meal with an emphasis on how Christ is present in the elements and rite that has been celebrated for thousands of years. All who attended were blessed by the time we spent together. We really enjoy our Thursdays, as we see this diverse group of people come together, eager to understand God's word and, more importantly, apply it's teachings to their lives.



**Grandson David with Logan and Gavin**

On April 20th, we left San Antonio to visit our grandson David, his wife Megan, and there two little boys. We had a wonderful time. Logan is 2 1/2 , Gavin is 1 1/2. They are very busy boys. Within a half an hour, Jan was jumping on the trampoline, pushing two boys on a swing and playing in the water table. The rest of the time was more fun then we can put in this letter. Megan and David took us to downtown Charlotte to celebrate our 50th Anniversary. They wanted to know what we would like to do. We said we wanted to do what the boys would like, so we went to a children's museum. We all had

so much fun! Really, when your in your 70's, you like the same things as your great grandsons. We then went to a very nice restaurant. The boys were so good. We had so many hugs and kisses that we could hardly leave.

We then went to Indiana to visit Jan's sister, her family and her mom. Jan's mom is 97 years old, and doesn't remember much. Sometimes we think she knows us, but then we think, maybe not. She is not in pain, and the home she is in is beautiful. She has her own room and they give her really good care. Jan's sister, Phyllis, is there to visit her 3 to 4 times a week. She also teaches a Bible study for the residents and knows everyone.



**Proud parents of our great grandsons,  
David and Megan**

Then we left Indiana and visited our son Jeff, and our daughter in law Kathy in Michigan. Their new home on the lake is almost finished. They only have the basement and yard to go. We had one of the upstairs bedrooms and woke up every morning to the sounds of ducks on the lake. It reminded us of a home on a lake we had in Highland many years ago. They have spent tons of hours building their home, and God has blessed them. They have Bible Studies, cook outs, boating, and bonfires

regularly. While we were there they were baking goodies for the annual Mother's Day chocolate buffet. Jeff and the chef Kevin have been providing these goodies for all the moms and everyone else for several years, and it gets bigger each year.



**The amazing Chocolate Buffet**

Their church, the Well Church, is in a new building. They now have rooms for children and youth as well as a great space for services. We praise God for what he has done through Jeff and his church family.

While we were there we got to see our newest great grand daughter. Her name is Charlotte but we all call her Charlie. She was 21/2 months old. Meghan and Josh are her parents. They live close to Jeff and Kathy so we were able to get to know her. Jan got to baby sit her while everyone went golfing one evening.

It was a beautiful day so when Charlie fussed a little, Jan took her for a walk and sang lots of Sunday school songs from the olden days. Charlotte didn't know they were old.

We also got to see downtown Detroit, where we used to spend time shopping and working. The downtown looks really good, as they are trying to bring it back the way it used to be. The day before

we left we went to the Henry Ford Museum. That brought back lots of memories! The first time we went there was in Grade school!

May 10th it was time to head south. We kissed everyone goodbye, tried not to cry and left to where God has called us over 20 years ago.

When we arrived home all was well, as we have the best neighbors in the world. Every thing was in tip top shape. Our daughter, her husband Mark and son Isaiah were happy we were home. Their Vizsla dog, Ellie, had 11 puppies. Jan was baby sitting them last week while Julie was gone. They are cute, but, unlike great



**Four generations of Moms. Great Grandma Jan, Grandma Kathy, Mama Meghan and Baby Charlie**

g r a n d daughter Charlie,

didn't care much about Sunday School songs.

Two days after we got home we headed for Mexico. We attended the 15th birthday party of Michelle, Hugo and Sylvia's daughter. That is a big deal in Mexico. It can be bigger than a wedding. Becky and Dan, friends who bring their church down several times a year from Missouri, came down for the party, so, we all went together. It was extra special, as Becky has been very ill for a long time and it was good to see her healthy enough to make the trip. The party was beautiful and lots of fun. We love the whole Berman/Gonzalez



**Us, with friends Dan and Becky, celebrating Michelle's 15th**



**Jan receives the "Volunteer of the Year" award from Salinas Elementary**

families and praise God that they help us and care for the camp.

We came home in time for Jan to receive recognition for her volunteer work in a pre-school class near our home. She was the volunteer of the year! We got to have a great meal, sitting with the principal of the school, in a very nice place, and having her picture taken with honored volunteers from the entire school district. She loves kids and they love her. Many children come from homes where they don't get the help and attention they need. So she is it.

Our in home Bible study will continue through the summer. Jan is also in a study of Colossians with women at our church. We have five churches coming to the camp this summer, working on different churches and doing VBS for children. We Praise God for all he has enabled us to do, and we honor Him in all our ways.

We realize that this letter is getting a little more lengthy than usual, but, while on our trip, we were asked several times about the financial health of Vamonos, so, we thought we'd take this opportunity to let you all know where we stand. Up until about 4 years ago, we were able to be in fairly good shape, as we had a lot of American groups coming to the camp, and the larger groups provided some extra money after all expenses were paid out of their camp fees. However, with the fear of violence in Mexico, the number of Americans dropped off significantly, and we have had to run the ministry purely on monthly donations to the General Fund. Five years ago, we had 650 Americans in the camp. There following year, we had 40. So, you can see the significant drop in camp income that this change produced.

In general, we receive donations that are designated in 3 separate areas..... General Operations, our personal support and Feed My Sheep.

In the area of General Operations, our usual monthly receipts amount to \$1400. We do receive additional periodic donations (particularly at year-end) that raises the monthly average to \$2400. Our usual monthly expenses are just over \$1600, so we maintain a contingency fund to cover the lower giving months. The contingency fund is also there to cover unusual unseen needs. For example, last summer we had necessary repairs to our water filtration system that cost \$2500. As of this writing, our undesignated, available balance is just under \$20,000.

Our personal support is fine. None of our support comes from the general operating budget, but is only funded by donations from folks and churches who's giving is specifically designated for our support. Several years ago, when we turned the camp over to Hugo and Sylvia, we cut our personal support way back because our day to day involvement was reduced. We currently do all financial and administrative functions from San Antonio, and provide liaison to the churches coming down on trips. We also travel to Mexico at least once a month to meet with camp staff and visit pastors with whom we work, and we try to go to the camp when there are American church groups there. So, right now, the only support we receive is \$1300 per month in housing allowance, nothing for actual salary. The remainder of our income comes from social security and investment income. Current giving to our personal support is just over \$1500.

The third area is in the Feed My Sheep fund. As we shared with you previously, because the government has begun providing breakfast to children, the pastors no longer desire the program in their churches. Because we didn't want to be forced to terminate any services, we built up a substantial contingency fund to enable us to keep programs running. However, programs ceased and

people kept giving and the fund grew to nearly \$13,000. We felt that it is poor stewardship of God's money for this to be sitting in the bank, not being used. We have spent the last couple of months in discussions with our board as asking for feedback from you all. We did not hear from many folks, but we're able to talk to several people during our travels. As a result, our board has decided to move that money from the designated Feed My Sheep fund into Children's Ministry, to be used for children as needs present themselves. We already know that several churches have needs for Sunday School materials and materials for summer projects. As more funds are donated by folks who have been giving to Feed My Sheep, those funds will be placed in Children's Ministry as well. This will enable us to use these funds on an ongoing basis, but, insure that they will be used only for children, as intended when they were donated.

If anyone else has any questions or suggestions, we would be more that eager to talk to you.

Please keep us and the ministry in your prayers.

## *Thank you, Lord*

A great trip to the "North Country"

A great family, especially our great grandkids, Charlie, Gavin and Logan!

Continued financial giving from our faithful supporters

The dedication of the folks in our Thursday study

Our "family" that we love so much in Reynosa

## *Please Pray with us*

All of the groups that will be coming to the camp this summer.

Continued financial support

Guidance for God's direction in using the Feed My Sheep money

Someone to donate a low mileage SUV, as our Mountaineer is getting old

Our good friend, Yvette ,who still suffers with severe physical problems

# *Dios le bendiga*

*George and Jan*

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