

DECEMBER, 2013

# Hands of Hope Int'l



“FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU DECLARES THE LORD, PLANS TO PROSPER YOU AND NOT TO HARM YOU, PLANS TO GIVE YOU A HOPE AND A FUTURE.”  
JEREMIAH 29: 1 1



GUATEMALA – a beautiful lush country named “The Land of Eternal Spring”

## In The News

Our website is officially up and running!

Check it out at [www.handsofhopeintl.org](http://www.handsofhopeintl.org)

## A Year in Review:

2013 has been an amazing year for our organization! God has revealed Himself and His plans in many different ways. He has opened our eyes and hearts in ways only our God can do. We have deepened our relationships with our partners in Guatemala, growing in understanding how each ministry operates, as well as learning how to support them, physically, emotionally and financially.

We are constantly amazed how God works in us, and in the hearts and minds of our partner ministry leaders. He is forming their ministries as well as opening new doors of opportunity for each of them. We are excited to

see God’s plan continue to unfold to all of us in 2014.

The following pages are just a glimpse of the work being done by our partner organizations. To learn more about these organizations, please visit our new website at [www.handsofhopeintl.org](http://www.handsofhopeintl.org). Thank you for your continued support of Hands of Hope Int’l. Your financial gifts and prayers have been much appreciated, and we look forward to an even better 2014.

Sincerely,

JP & Suzanne Koop  
Brett & Greta Huizenga



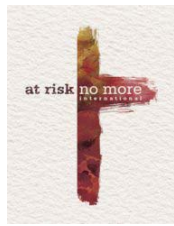
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# At Risk No More

## AMG Guatemala

At Risk No More is currently working in three aspects of the ministry. Below is a recap of what has been happening within those ministries.



**Foster Care:** Rachel, along with Guatemala's government foster care program directors, recently finished a training course on how to train families to become foster families. AMG signed an important partnership with the Guatemalan government on November 14, to work together on this

issue. The next steps are to set up the programs with the government for them to begin training their foster families by the beginning of 2014.

### Churches & Alliances:

Gary and other AMG staff met with the government of Guatemala City. They gave AMG a new school and preschool center that AMG will run with funding from the city government. This school is located in Zone 3 near the trash dump. After documents have been signed, the plans are for this school to begin operating in 2014 under AMG. This is a huge answer to prayers, since AMG will start focusing more on youth. This center has more than 150 youth from an area at risk near the dump. This would be AMG's 8th school in the capital city.



**Church Mobilization:** At Risk No More is working on creating partnerships with local churches around AMG projects so together they can help the community. The first project for the year is to help the church create awareness of the need to care for orphans, at risk children, and youth in the community. On November 3, 27 churches in the capital city and rural areas celebrated Orphan Sunday. AMG provided the materials needed to teach God's mandate of how to care for orphans, and help protect these children. At Risk No More is also part of a committee that together started the Christian Alliance for Orphans Guatemala. This alliance is to unite churches, the government, and orphanages, in caring for the orphans.

**Gary & Rachel de León**, part of the At Risk No More team, will be leaving the end of November for missionary training in Brazil. They will return to Guatemala in August as full time missionaries from a Brazilian Mission and AMG USA to serve at AMG Guatemala. Pray for them, as they need to raise support during those months and complete the missionary training.

# Treasures of Grace

## Tesoros De Gracia Canalitos and La Limonada/Zone 1



The mission in Canalitos has two focuses, the Church and the Home Shelter. This year held significant changes in both. The church stopped renting the space it had been using, and started meeting at the Home Shelter. This has had a positive impact on both ministries. It has unified the people of the community and the church with the people of the Home Shelter. The relationship building has led to job opportunities and income for those living in the Home Shelter. Church attendance has increased to approximately 100 people each Sunday.

Last February, Pastor Erwin Luna, a.k.a. Shorty, passed the leadership of the Home Shelter and Church on to Pastor Juan Carlos Alvarez. The community has accepted the leadership of Pastor Juan Carlos Alvarez in a short period time. He has plans to develop projects that allow a better economic sustainability of the Home Shelter and reinsertion possibilities for its residents.

Pastor Erwin Luna has moved on to projects in La Limonada and Zone 1. His main focus has been to help youth that use drugs – bringing them food, shelter and periodic support visits. Shorty holds four church services per week in La Limonada, and two per week in Zone One. His mission is to give spiritual and economic



support to people, in both places, that are at risk or have low income. Among the projects underway, is the plan to provide financial support, interest free loans to six families. To offer these individual families the opportunity to start a business and become self-sustaining is the goal. Shorty is also seeking the possibility of bringing spiritual and Biblical formation to the school in La Limonada.

Finally, Shorty will be seeking to start "walking", trying to break down the barriers, between the communities Limon and Mandarina, both in La Limonada. These are communities are in perpetual struggle and violence. This situation is one of the main causes of death, because the gang members and drug dealers compete for the territory and are continuously "crossing" from one side to the other searching for conflict and revenge.



# Treasures of Grace

## Tesoros De Gracia - Sakerti



The mission of Tesoros de Gracia in Sakerti is lead by Pastor Jorge Hernández (Little Gee), and currently the work there is developing along three dimensions - The Church Congregation, the Day Care Center, and "The Next Generation" - job creation opportunities for young people.

### The Church Congregation

After three years of hard work, the new church was dedicated on July 19. God is good!



### The Day Care

Marlen, Little Gee's wife, currently runs the Christian day care, "Love and Laughter". This year, 20 children attended, with thankful hearts, this number will increase to 45 students in January.

Love and Laughter opens

its doors in the afternoons for tutoring and homework support. It helped twelve teens successfully complete their school year. The numbers of young teens attending is expected to increase starting in January.

### The Next Generation – Job creation opportunities for young people

Within the goals of job creation opportunities with youth and teens, Little Gee has developed a program called The Next Generation. It is very exciting to see the young people from the tough streets of Sakerti, learning to serve others from similar high-risk communities. These young people, connected to this initiative, are visiting and serving abandoned elderly residents living in Sakerti. They started bringing lunch to the residents there a couple times a week. They also helped with the cleaning and general maintenance of their rooms. God blessed the ministry with a generous donation, which has allowed them to begin serving lunch daily to the residents.



Since the end of September, The Next Generation teens have been bringing breakfast, two times a month to children from nearby slum communities. On Saturday nights, Pastor Gee and the youth group spend time at the local parks, building relationships of love and trust, with the homeless and drug addicts who call this place home. By doing so, they are praying that God will use them in a tangible way to be a witness of hope to the hurting.

# City of Refuge

## Iglesia Diudad De Refugio



Pastor Jorge Cerritos, his wife Anny, along with their four adult children, serve together in the ministry, City of Refuge. Below is a summary of some of what they have been doing the past several months.

Pastor Jorge Sr., is mentoring all the pastors of the churches that have been planted by City of Refuge in the surrounding area. Anny is running the Special Support Network, which is a support program for women and girls suffering from violence, abandonment and loneliness. Son, Pastor Jorge Jr. and his wife Shirley, are planting a new church in San Antonio. Daughter, Norma, continues to be in charge of finances. Son, Gerson, is leading a discipleship group and is the night emergencies driver. This busy family also has 14 children and six adults living with them. These children and adults are considered "family". Their prayer is that they can help them find a hope and a future and realize they are part of God's wonderful plan.

### Handicrafts

**Workshop.** In June, a Handicrafts Workshop was started for women with limited resources. The goal of the workshop was to give an increasing ability of self-sustainment. After three months of operations, they have been able to receive payment for their work and pay rent. This is great progress – we praise God for these results.



**Youth Camp-Firefly 2013.** With great joy, the first youth camp was held at the church. 52 youth attended. The theme was "Towards the Goal" with the following objectives:

- To develop a desire to succeed. This included spiritual, physical and mental activities that would inspire greater expectations for their lives.
- To develop better self-discipline and improve personal hygiene habits which would lead to better health and allow them to fulfill their goals.
- To develop a relationship with God, through prayer and reading His word, thus discovering new opportunities for their lives.

This was a big event that exceeded expectations in attendance and commitments - "Towards the Goal".



### Servants

**Celebration.** On September 26, they celebrated an activity that was a huge impact among the youth and children of the community of LaPaz. The celebration brought together 180 children and 40 adults. Time was spent playing games and sharing in group discussions.



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## Below is a current needs list from our ministries. Please prayerfully consider joining us in working with these truly gifted people on their journey to serve the Lord.

### AT RISK NO MORE

- Collecting money or Spanish books for the library at the school that is opening in January.
- New commercial grade sewing machines used by the newly established sewing program, which provides vocational training for at risk women. They are currently producing decorative fabric coffee bags for "La Barista", a large coffee distributor. \$300.00 each
- Food baskets for Christmas. \$15.00 each



### TREASURES OF GRACE - CANALITOS / LA LIMONADA

- Food baskets for Christmas - \$15.00 each
- Scholarships for 18 children so they can continue their education - \$625.00 per student for an entire school year.

### TREASURES OF GRACE - SAKERTI

- Seeking donations for the ongoing daily lunches for the nursing home - \$20.00 total, per day to feed the 10 elderly residents.
- Hoping to create a soccer team for the area youth. Would need 15 uniforms as well as soccer shoes and balls - \$80.00 for uniforms, \$200.00 for shoes \$20.00 for soccer balls, totaling \$300.00.
- Materials for the Day Care such as crayons, notebooks, paper sheets and snacks. We will have approximately 50 children attending our Vacation Bible School, which runs from November 11 through December 22 - \$250.00.

### CITY OF REFUGE

- Food baskets for Christmas - \$15.00.
- Coordinate a Strategic Planning Retreat directed to the current leaders and other potential leaders in order to integrate them to the long-range transformation process in our community and churches - \$1519.90.
- Set the water purification equipment in the house in front of Casa de Refugio. Expanding, if possible to having an ice factory, generating a source of self-sustainability - \$7500.00