

## Drunk Horseman Disrupts Meeting

*By Esther & JK Martínez*

**T**he evangelistic campaign seemed to be destined for failure. Brother Mario Hernández, a dedicated, MPI-sponsored lay worker, felt discouraged. He was holding a 10-night campaign in a small town called San Jorge, in a hot, arid area of the Chiapas lowlands. He'd set up at the town's outdoor basketball court, located in a strategic part of the village, for the nightly meetings. He'd spent many days inviting all the residents to come and hear about Jesus. But during the first two nights, attendance was very poor. Mario reports, "There were no adult visitors. Only a small group of children listened to my messages."

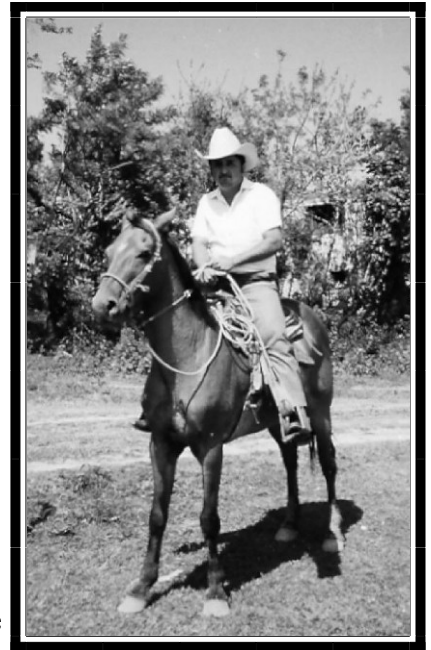
The Holy Spirit had not neglected His work, however. On the third night, a group of 10 adults, plus children, congregated on the open court for the meeting. Brother Mario was encouraged. Maybe his efforts would not be in vain. After warmly welcoming each one individually, he began a lively song service. The visitors joined in enthusiastically. As brother

Mario began to present his message for the evening, a horse and rider came galloping up to the basketball court, running right into the area where the listeners sat. Everyone scattered, leaving the court empty, and Mario standing alone in front of the drunken man on the horse. Obviously, the devil was not neglecting his work, either.

People in nearby houses saw what was happening. "Quick!" they called to each other. "Help the preacher! Let's try to control the drunk. We can't let anyone get hurt." And that is exactly what they did.

Thirty minutes later, there was again peace on the town's basketball court, and people were seated quietly, ready to listen to the sermon. Only this time, instead of 10 visitors, the group was much larger. By the end of the series, brother Mario called for decisions to study the Bible through the Voice of Hope study course, and 18 people signed up.

Our powerful God is always at work, and He wants us to work with Him, in spite of apparent obstacles and disruptions. His ways are not our ways, however, and He can even use a disruptive drunk riding a horse to bring His children home!



*A drunk man on a horse raced wildly into the crowd.*



*Layman Aarón Martínez (center, holding guitar) with group of new believers.*

*Esther & JK Martínez live in Roy, Utah where Esther teaches school and JK works as an O.R. Assistant.*

# Guest Editorial



**Melvin & Gladys Johnson**

Dear MPI Friends,

As I read the last MPI newsletter, it got me reminiscing about our trip to San Carlos Bay and all the things that took place during our Board meetings in Mexico. One thing that really stands out in my mind was the visit to the little church in Potam, Sonora. This church exists today because of the work of two dedicated laymen, David Pérez and Manuel Jiménez.

MPI's Layworker program has been very effective in carrying the Gospel into unentered areas during the past 13 years. Over and over we see how God keeps blessing this program with successful results.

Back in 1989 the program started with one Layworker family. Through the years we have watched it grow steadily, and today MPI sponsors 48 laymen in at least 8 states in Mexico as well as the countries of Belize and Guatemala. They have been responsible for more than 11,000 baptisms and 180 or more new congregations. This has all been done by mostly uneducated people, dedicated to the Lord and eager to spread the Gospel.

These men all have families to support, so MPI provides them a stipend of \$190 every month. This makes it possible for them to take time to go to remote places where they distribute literature, give Bible studies, hold evangelistic meetings and help the new congregations get started. And this is all possible because of your generous contributions to MPI.

I believe it would be the thrill of a lifetime if you could travel south of the border next year with MPI as we go to our annual Board meeting. We will again

## **MPI Members**

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Jerry & Wendy Harris - (Moab, UT)  
Mel & Gladys Johnson - (Hamilton, MT)  
Elydia Walker - (Superior, AZ)

And we consider each person who supports us with your prayers and/or contributions to be a member of MPI as well!

Website: [www.tagnet.org/mpi](http://www.tagnet.org/mpi)

**MPI staff serve as volunteers from their homes across the country. Our overhead expenses are low, and covered from other sources.**

**This makes it possible for us to send 100% of your contributions to the MPI projects you designate.**

*visit some of the projects supported through MPI, taking medical, dental and construction teams to remote places where the real needs are. I just wish you could see the smiles of gratitude on their faces for the things that have been done for them through your gifts.*

Melvin Johnson

Melvin Johnson is a retired dentist who lives with his wife Gladys in Hamilton, Montana. They enjoy traveling, and often volunteer their services in Mexico & Belize.

## Hurricane Iris Devastates Southern Belize

*By Collet Montejo, LLL Chaplain & Evangelist*

**W**hen the evacuation warning was broadcast to inhabitants of southern Belize last Fall, many took it lightly. Those who survived would live to regret such a decision. At about 7:30 p.m. on October 8, Hurricane Iris with her tornado-like winds up to 160 miles per hour raged havoc on areas such as Placencia (a famous tourist destination), Independence (the banana capital of Belize) and surrounding villages. In a matter of two hours some 1,500 families found themselves without a single earthly possession, save the clothes on their backs and the rubble-littered land where their homes once stood. Tears, shock and unbelief was prevalent everywhere. People stood around like zombies, mesmerized.

La Loma Luz quickly made a \$500 contribution to bring immediate relief. Yovany Leonardo, one of our workers here at LLL was among the first to arrive with food items as the relief efforts began. Two days later we sent more aid in the form of additional food, clothing, construction materials and manpower.

Another phase of the relief effort consisted in rebuilding badly damaged churches in Crique Jute and Bella Vista, funded by \$1,500 from MPI.

As the people of the south rebuild their lives, we want to help them rebuild their homes, their churches and their hopes. We are truly grateful for the continued support of MPI for the overall development of outreach in Belize.



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## MPI-Sponsored Nurse Trained and at Work

*By Collet Montejo*

**W**hen 20 year old Esther Landero received the news that MPI would assist in realizing her lifelong dream of becoming a nurse, she saw this as a direct answer to prayer. Esther vividly remembers the excitement that accompanied every waiting moment prior to leaving her home and family in Belize. After a tiring 700 mile trip, she arrived in the mountains of Chiapas, Mexico where lies the gorgeous campus of Colegio Linda Vista.

From August of 1996 through August of 2001, she worked hard to ensure that the funds provided by friends of MPI were not invested in vain.

After graduating, Esther returned

to Belize as a registered nurse. She came back trained, prepared and ready to serve.

At present, her contribution to La Loma Luz is beyond estimation. Her meek, quiet demeanor tells nothing of the fervency with which she carries about her daily duties. When asked what message she wishes to convey to MPI, she smiles as she says, "Thanks, thanks and more thanks!"

And all of us here at La Loma Luz say thank you MPI for your assistance of our needy students. We, along with the patients here, will be forever grateful to MPI for your continued support to missions.



# San Lorenzo School

## Major Strides in the Mountain Jungles

By Fred Adams

**O**ur school at San Lorenzo enrolled more than 100 students during the 2001-2002 school year. Teachers and students held evangelistic campaigns in San Lorenzo and several nearby villages, resulting in 49 baptisms. Eight students were baptized as well.

Now that San Lorenzo has electricity, they're making plans to surge forward as never before! From somewhere they obtained two used computers and taught those Indian kids how to use them. It's hard to fathom computers being used in this remote jungle location among the Chamula Indians, but knowing how

bright those students are, many probably caught on right away!

Another move forward is the new Carpentry training program. Amistad International provided \$3,800 for carpentry equipment, hand tools, lumber and other needed materials.

Working from a corner of his house, San Lorenzo native Lucas Díaz has been teaching boys and girls how to create high quality Spanish cedar furniture. Sales in nearby towns, and displays at the Conference office bring an additional income to support the school. A permanent shop building is under construction at this time.

What's next? Now they want to finish six new classrooms, build a library/lab/computer complex, and offer Preparatory classes starting this Fall. Government officials have already approved the Prep program, but financing for additional qualified teachers is necessary. This year the first generation of 17 Secondary students will graduate. These San Lorenzo folks are real go-getters!

The Auditorium is finally nearing completion. After more than six years of standing as a bare, cement-block shell, donations arrived to fund the roof, windows, doors and plaster. They hope to pour the concrete floor



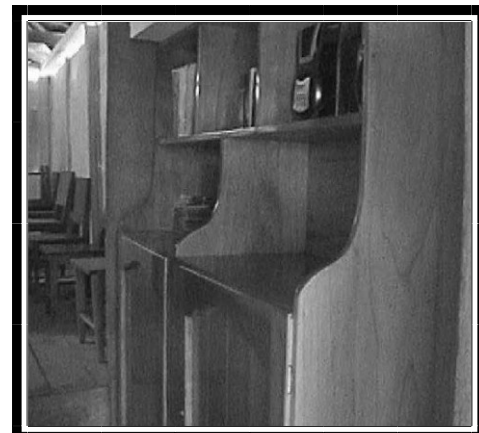
*Lucas Díaz teaches students using a genuine "table" saw—a saw blade sticking up through a wooden table!*



*Neatly uniformed San Lorenzo students.*



*Lumber for school shop is cut freehand by chainsaw.*



*Lovely furniture made by students.*

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# San Lorenzo School



*The San Lorenzo Auditorium finally has a roof!*

in the near future.

Mercury lights have been installed to illuminate the entire campus and the road to the church and town.

**Urgent needs at San Lorenzo school include:**

☐ Financial assistance to complete 6 new classrooms. Foundations are in place, but they need cement block walls & a flat concrete roof for a future second story.



*Building being prepared for shop classes.*

The total budget is \$23,000, of which \$16,100 is still needed.

☐ Musical instruments for the school band, including 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, 1 baritone, 1 French horn and 1 tuba, at a total cost of \$4,600. Or used ones from the U.S. if

they are high quality, without defects, and selected by an experienced musician.

A band would give the school greater prestige.

☐ Funding for a second heavy duty used pickup truck, which costs about \$5,000. The current one is insufficient to transport students & supplies.

MPI is fully committed to helping these innovative, progress-oriented folks who have sacrificed to see their young people receive a quality Christian education and serve their fellow men. We sincerely thank you for investing in this worthwhile project.



*Foundation is ready for 6 new classrooms.*

## Important Notice!

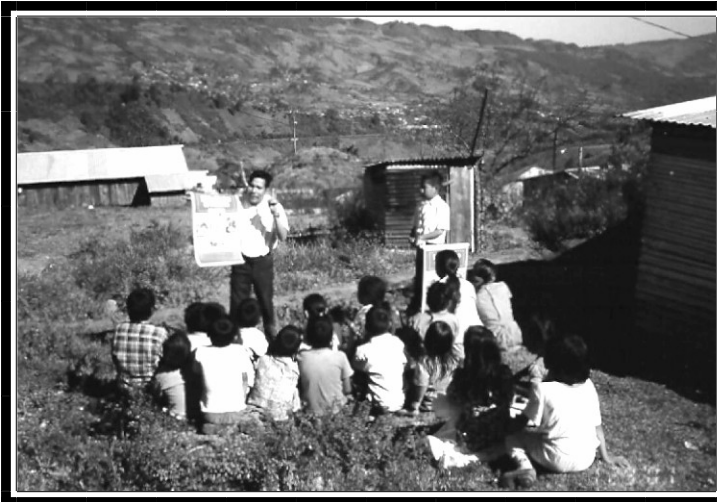
**Do you wish to continue receiving the MPI Newsletter?** *We are more than glad to keep you on our mailing list if you enjoy reading it. Our purpose is to provide you with a first-hand report of ongoing mission work, giving you the opportunity to pray for and support the projects of your choice. However, there may be some folks whose interests are elsewhere, and these newsletters just get thrown into the trash without being read. We want to be good stewards of the resources God has entrusted us with. Therefore, we will remove the names of those we have not heard from in the past two years. If you have not communicated with us recently, and still wish to continue receiving the MPI Newsletter, please let us know right away!*



## Persecution and Progress in Chiapas

By Anita Franklin

**Editor's note:** Anita Franklin recently returned from an 8,000 mile round trip to Chiapas, Mexico from her home near Grants Pass, Oregon. Much of her life has been spent at Yerba Buena Clinic, Hospital, and now a Lifestyle Center. Beyond retirement age, she bravely made the entire trip alone. Anita is still full of energy, enthusiasm and vision. Below is a portion of her report about a visit to Pinabeto. The hostile villagers strongly opposed our laymen for many years. But things are changing . . .



*Layman Andrecito using ASI picture roll to teach villagers about Jesus.*

**T**he families of Pinabeto are very poor, and the children do not have toys. I shared several large plastic bags filled with stuffed dolls and toys with the children. They were extremely excited and almost mobbed us to get the toys. Many had never seen a stuffed animal before, and exclaimed in delight as they squeezed and cuddled the soft fuzzy toys. Adults were pushing the children back so they could obtain a toy as well!

Prior to distributing the toys we had all the children gather for a Bible story, using a picture roll produced by ASI and donated through MPI. Layman Andrecito Ruiz has been studying and helping the families in Pinabeto. He visits Pinabeto each weekend, giving Bible and health lessons to the adults and stories for the children.

The political and economic situation in Mexico have not encountered any drastic changes during this past year.

The living conditions for the Indian people remains serious. Persecution of Protestant Christians continues. Their greatest hope is for their "Heavenly home," and Jesus' soon return.

A recent article explains the situation. "*The problems center on local customs and traditions, in particular the tequio, a community tax used for feast days and so on. All have to pay this tax, or they are jailed, exiled, or prevented from working. Protestant Christians object to paying this because often these festivals involve drinking and other activities they cannot support. . . . People are required to do mandatory service without pay. If they refuse, they are punished.*" (Adventist Review; March 28, 2002)

Many homes have been burned and families exiled from their villages. Most are uneducated, unskilled and even survival is difficult.

Thank you all for your prayers and support for the work in Mexico. I wish you could see the smiling faces of the children who received a simple toy and the gratitude of the parents for clothing, books and bedding; and for some, financial help.

So many events are happening in such rapid sequence. We believe Jesus will soon be returning to put an end to all suffering and strife. We look forward to a long visit with you when we all get to Heaven. Be faithful!



*Everyone wanted a stuffed animal—including the grownups!*

# Breaking News



*Chiapas Governor Salazar exiting his helicopter at Linda Vista.*

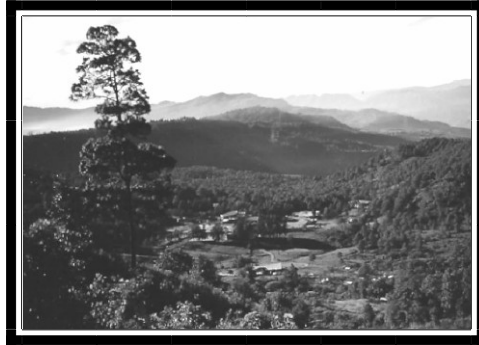
**New University** - Linda Vista College in Chiapas, Mexico was officially inaugurated as a University on May 30, 2002. Pablo Salazar, Governor of Chiapas, arrived by helicopter to officiate during the ceremonies. In his speech he praised Linda Vista for their high standards and quality Christian education. Five of the Governor's brothers attended Linda Vista during its early years. MPI helped sponsor 12 worthy needy students during the past school year, who studied Theology, Education, Accounting and Nursing.



*Linda Vista inauguration ceremony.*

**MPI Board Meeting 2003** - Linda Vista University is the location planned for our Annual MPI Board meetings, scheduled for March 16 to 18, 2003. Nestled in a small valley surrounded by pine forests and mountains, this is an ideal place to meet with our laymen and

see firsthand what they are doing. The Linda Vista staff are ready to welcome us with open arms as they did last year. More details will follow.



*Linda Vista campus view.*

**Mission Trip to Chiapas** - Dr. Linda Adams just returned from a whirlwind trip to Chiapas to lay the groundwork for MPI's Mission trip, scheduled for March 6 to 16, 2003. She met with church, government and medical officials in Pichucalco, who offered to make all needed resources available to our volunteers. Chiapas Governor Salazar is aware of our project and very supportive. We need medical and dental professionals of any specialty as well as translators. Some will work in remote villages, sending patients with serious needs



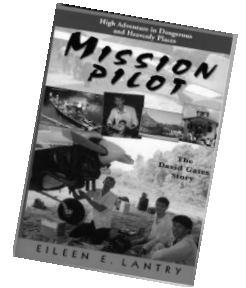
*Chiapas Governor Pablo Salazar (center) with Celian & Betty Adams and their daughters Lanita Medina & Dr. Linda Adams at Linda Vista.*

to the small hospital in Pichucalco for surgery by our volunteers. More details and photos will follow. We urge you to pray about joining us for an unforgettable, life-changing experience!

Construction volunteers will be needed at San Lorenzo school to put up six urgently needed classrooms, using cement blocks and concrete reinforcing columns.

## Exciting New Book!- *Mission Pilot*

by Eileen Lantry is full of thrilling stories about the work of David Gates. Back in the mid-1980's, David and his family worked for MPI as they served at Bella Vista Clinic in Chiapas, where David was Administrator, Pilot and nurse. Through a plane hijacking, prison, narrow escapes, angel encounters, and many other miracles, David and his family have learned the importance of total dependence on God as their faith ministry continues to expand throughout South America. Available through your



## est In Memory near

**Andregg, Leona**

*By Esther McCluskey*

**Crawford, Mae**

*By Ruth Weibold*

**McElmurry, Dr. N.K.**

*By Dr. & Mrs. Clifford Vixie*

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## What is MPI?

**Mission Projects, Incorporated** is a supporting organization of the Seventh-day Adventist church, dedicated to spreading the Gospel by way of medical, educational and evangelistic endeavors. M.P.I. works in complete harmony with local Conferences and Missions, and is a member of Adventist Laymen's Services and Industries (A.S.I.).

Please return this card with your tax-deductible donation to:



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*Indicate amount donated to each fund*

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\_\_\_\_\_ San Lorenzo Teacher Salaries  
\_\_\_\_\_ Worthy Student Fund  
\_\_\_\_\_ Bibles for Mexico

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Lay Workers  
\_\_\_\_\_ Lacandón Indian Project  
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*We encourage you to support your local church with your tithes & offerings also.*

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## Moving?

Please send us your new address 4 to 6 weeks in advance. That will save us the additional expense of forwarded or returned newsletters. Thanks!

May - June, 2002