


	<p><i>A refuge where children reach their full potential</i></p>	 Website: <a href="http://www.refugiomazatlan.org">www.refugiomazatlan.org</a>
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## DECEMBER 2018 Newsletter

### A SPECIAL PLEA

Unfortunately, Refugio Mazatlán needs a new vehicle to transport the boys to and from school and other activities. Our goal is to raise \$260,000 MX (USD13,000) for this purchase. If you would like to contribute, we would be very grateful for whatever donations you can provide. Please copy and paste this link to donate online:

<https://www.refugiomazatlan.org/paypal>



Alternatively, donations can be made via our website ([www.refugiomazatlan.org](http://www.refugiomazatlan.org)) or in cash directly to us here in Mazatlán.

Thank you for your support.

## REFUGIO MAZÁTLAN UPDATE



Refugio Mazatlán seeks to assist disadvantaged adolescent boys so that they can eventually achieve economic independence, and become happy, well-adjusted, successful community members who are socially responsible and altruistic.

The fourth quarter of 2018 came to a close with 25 energetic boys at Refugio Mazatlán. Thank you to our staff, donors and volunteers. You are changing the lives of these young men.

### EDUCATION AND LIFELONG SKILLS

Our goal is to provide the boys of Refugio Mazatlán with sound educations so that they can subsequently learn lifelong skills such as university degrees or trades.

Nine high school (Preparatorio) boys presently attend Instituto Pedagógico Hispanoamericano (IHP). They have all done well academically with an average grade in excess of 9 for their last round of examinations for 2018. We are very proud of each one of them.

Ismael, who attends ITESUS university studying Graphic Design, went on a field trip to Guadalajara. He enjoyed his first time in the city while learning a great deal at the various museums and institutes.



Our staff does a nice job of including the boys in activities that involve keeping the home clean and in good order.

The boys have cleaning and dishwashing chores and take turns with the laundry. They also assist with small projects such as making book shelves or minor maintenance activities. This teaches them to be respectful of their surroundings and the home.



Our aim is to create a sense of family at Refugio and an environment in which the boys live harmoniously and help each other.

### BIRTHDAYS

Seven of our boys (Jose, Ismael, Eduardo, Javier, Luis David, Williams and Emmanuel) celebrated their birthdays in the fourth quarter with delicious cakes, once again, from Richard and Lawrence.

Lawrence also celebrated his birthday in December and kindly invited all the boys to celebrate with him at La Mona's restaurant with some delicious pizzas and drinks.



### EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We keep the boys busy with many extra-curricular activities for their physical and mental health. They participate in these both at school and as organized by the home.

In October the boys were invited to visit the seminary in the north of Mazatlán and had a great time utilizing the grounds and the facilities.

In addition, they spent a weekend participating in a spiritual retreat in November that was organized by the staff and delivered by some professionals.





**Some boys playing volleyball at the seminary & the spiritual weekend retreat**

The Red Cross visited Refugio in October and taught the boys First Aid. The lessons are useful for the boys as they learn how to deal with emergencies including CPR.



**Red Cross Training**

We are working on continuing to improve the English skills of the boys. Volunteers Tracy, Bill, Carla and Patty have started English conversation sessions with those boys who have more advanced English ability (Kevin, Eduardo, Christopher, Javier, Josue, Williams and Ismael). They spend time chatting about various topics which is excellent practice for the boys.



**English Discussions**

**OUTINGS AND EVENTS**

We love to be able to provide outings for our teenagers, not only to burn off some of their energy but also to foster togetherness.

In October, Fred and Cris, as well as many of Fred's friends from the USA, very kindly sponsored a weekend trip to Coscomate. The boys stayed in some lovely cabañas and spent their time hiking and enjoying the beautiful surroundings as well as the cooler temperatures.



**Coscomate visit sponsored by Fred and Cris**

In November the boys got the opportunity to spend a fun filled day with members of the Venados baseball team at the Teodoro Mariscal stadium. They enjoyed a pre-game party, as well as time with the players, followed by the baseball game itself. In addition, the Venados Booster Club very kindly made Refugio the beneficiary of a portion of the proceeds of a raffle. Thank you Venados! And huge thanks to Chris for all she has done to make this possible.



**Boys with members of the Venados**

Pat and Merle and John and Laurie have made it an annual event to host the boys for Halloween treats at their apartments. This year proved to be another fun evening with delicious baked goodies and candies. Thank you, folks.



**Halloween fun with Pat, Merle, John and Laurie**





Dia de Muertos (1<sup>st</sup> of November) is a day on which to remember loved ones who have passed. The staff and boys did some fine work preparing for the day. They made a beautiful altar that included photographs of family members and friends of the boys and staff.

Photographs of Pablo Sullivan and O’Neil McGeen were also on the altar this year.

Ralph, who has previously supported Refugio by making and installing computer desks, invited six of the boys to watch a game of baseball at the new stadium in December. The boys had a great time and what made it even better was that the Venados won.



Six boys at baseball with Ralph

In December the fair came to town and all the boys were treated to a night in which they were each given an allowance for exciting rides and snacks.



A night at the fair

### FAMILY DAY

In October and December, the bi-monthly “Family Day” get-togethers took place at Refugio. Families received counselling on parenting skills and setting boundaries for their children during weekends and vacations. Games

and activities were also part of the day, followed by lunch.



October Family Day included counseling and activities

### CHRISTMAS



Tree decorating

Christmas was a very busy time for the boys. They attended many events and Posadas and received gifts from several generous donors and organizations.

Tres Islas donated funds for Christmas presents and the boys had an enjoyable afternoon out at the Gran Plaza picking out much needed clothes. Thank you, Tres Islas.

Linda and her quilting ladies provided wonderful Christmas gifts of sheets and pillows, and also quilted and stuffed some beautiful personalized stockings for each of the boys.



Tres Islas Christmas shopping

The stockings were hung at the entrance into Refugio creating a most colorful and cheerful display. Many thanks Linda and crew. A number of our boys are also working in Linda’s quilt shop. You will be amazed at the quilts they are creating - we will share pictures when they are complete.



Gifts from Tres Islas





**Beautiful stockings from Linda and the quilt ladies**

Rosie (Chavita) and her family and friends have hosted a posada for the boys each of the past two years. In



**Chavita's Posada for the boys**

December they once again provided pizzas and drinks and arranged for gifts from donors for each of the boys. Gracias Chavita!

The Refugio staff held a posada and exchanged gifts. We are most grateful for their efforts in taking good care of and mentoring our boys.



**Refugio staff Posado**

### DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Tracy and his friends hold regular pantry parties for Refugio with a different theme each time. Attendees donate essential supplies for the home. Many thanks!



**Tracy, Bill & Carla dropping off pantry party supplies**

Tracy also organized Thanksgiving dinner for the boys with help from several other volunteers. The boys once again enjoyed a scrumptious meal.



**Tracy and friends and the lovely Thanksgiving meal**

Christmas was a time for our us to give thanks to some of our tireless volunteers. We appreciate all that you do for us. You make the boys lives better.



**Going around to say thanks to volunteers & donors**



**Bathroom renos**

Peter and Melinda Gebraad of Gems of Mazatlán are very generous supporters of Refugio Mazatlán. Recently they provided most of the funds to renovate the upstairs bathrooms. This project got underway in December. The upgrades were overdue and greatly appreciated.

### THANK YOU!

Many community members donate school supplies, food and other items from time to time, and we thank them all for their kindness. In addition, we have regular volunteers who cook for the boys on Sundays including Richard and Lawrence, Michelle, and Gustavo. Patty and Karen have also resumed their English classes. Thank you - we value the gift of your time and energy.

We update our list of "Current Needs" on our webpage (<https://www.refugiomazatlan.org/current-needs>)

There are significant costs involved with caring for our teenagers, including staff salaries, education costs, utility bills, transportation costs, medical expenses and food. Refugio Mazatlán is most grateful to those who help us financially. Special thanks to Tres Islas and The Gems of Mazatlán. Huge thanks also to those who make generous donations to cover school sponsorships. Thank you from all of us at Refugio Mazatlán – your generosity is truly making a difference for these young men!

## MEET SOME OF THE BOYS



Guillermo is 16 years old and attends IMSS secundaria school. He participates in Taekwondo and English classes and likes playing the guitar. He is interested in electrical systems.



Angel is 13 years old and is in his second year of secundaria at IMSS. He participates in Taekwondo and English classes. He also enjoys yoga classes with Judith. He is interested in engineering and robotics.



Kevin is 16 years old and is in his last year of secundaria at Pesquera. Kevin speaks good English and continues to practice it. He is part of the Red Cross and is a volunteer firefighter. He is interested in medicine.



Paul is 13 years old and is in his second year of secundaria at IMSS. He participates in Taekwondo and English classes. He also enjoys yoga classes with Judith. He is interested in engineering and robotics.



Diego is 15 years old and is in his last year of secundaria at Pesquera. He is a talented athlete and excels at Taekwondo. He also participates in English and Math classes and works at Linda's quilt shop. He is interested in medicine.



Juan Diego is 13 years old and is in his first year of secundaria at IMSS. He participates in Taekwondo and English classes. He also enjoys yoga classes with Judith. Juan Diego does garden work to make some money. He is interested in law.



Ian is 15 years old and is in his last year of secundaria at Pesquera. He participates in Taekwondo and English classes. He is interested in medicine and engineering.



Kevin Alejandro is 13 years old and is in his second year of secundaria at Pesquera. He participates in Taekwondo and English classes. He is interested in joining the Marines.



Jairo is 14 years old and is in his last year of secundaria at Pesquera. He participates in Taekwondo, Math and English classes. He works as a gardener to earn some cash. He is interested in architecture.



Martin is 12 years old and is in his first year of secundaria at Pesquera. He participates in Taekwondo and English classes. He is the younger brother of Guillermo.



Daniel is 14 years old and is in his last year of secundaria at IMSS. He participates in Taekwondo and English classes. He also takes part in Literature classes with Ana Belen. He is interested in mathematics.



Jesus is 12 years old and is in his first year of secundaria at Pesquera. He participates in Taekwondo and English classes. He is interested in law.