

May Bulletin - Friends of the Deaf/LAVOSI



Hello everyone!

Álvaro and Melvyn have returned from their visit to the USA and Gallaudet University!

Their visit was a **huge success** and they made many friends and contacts that will enrich their lives as well as the future of LAVOSI. All the people they met were truly interested in what we do in Guatemala and expressed admiration and respect for the achievements we have had at LAVOSI in just our second year of operation.

Above left, they are seen with Monsignor Joseph Catrambone, who helped organize the visit, along with members of the faculty of Gallaudet. On the right, Álvaro and Melvyn are presenting Volume I of Álvaro's excellent textbook on the Guatemalan Sign Language to Dr. Barbara White, Head of the Department of Social Work. Thanks to the many presentations and conversations that Álvaro and Melvyn had with Dr. White and others at Gallaudet, LAVOSI will begin receiving social work student interns from Gallaudet next January! Just one of the many "fruits" that Monsignor Joseph Catrambone harvested for LAVOSI during their visit to Gallaudet!

Happy Mother's Day!



All our students were very excited to celebrate and share this special day with their mother. On this occasion, the students presented a play and some dancing. They prepared for several weeks during which time each child made something special with their own hands. The older children made flower vases made from bottles decorated with painted seashell pasta and filled with crepe paper flowers. The younger children made baskets filled with soaps that the students decorated with their own designs.

LAVOSI Students present skits and dances for their Mother's



The students prepared skits and dance routines to entertain and demonstrate their skills. They all participated in different activities. In the photo, left above, Luis is the "Big Bad Wolf" trying to blow down the little piggy's house of brick. On the right, the girls are ready to do a special dance for their moms. I was amazed to see how well these deaf children moved to the music!



There was much laughter, hugs and tears of joy. To see the students work so hard to make this a special day for their mothers demonstrated the great dedication they have to be the best that they can be. They wanted to share the great love that they have for their family and friends. They may lack the ability to hear but they have the same innate talent that we all have to be creative, caring individuals.

Elizabeth Donates Student Desks and Whiteboard to LAVOSI!

Our volunteer from Australia, Elizabeth, along with her fiancé Duncan, donated 16 new desks for our elementary students and a new whiteboard for Alejandra's first grade class. Elizabeth's heart went out to our students and she believes strongly in LAVOSI's mission to make their lives better. She worked hard everyday to help individual students in their classes, prepare them a healthy snack a break, help the teachers with preparing material, etc. Thank you Elizabeth and Duncan for you kindness and very generous donation!



Free dental work for LAVOSI Students!



LAVOSI is very fortunate to have the support of the dental clinic of Dr. Porrás in Antigua Guatemala. Dr. Porrás very graciously offered free dental consultation for all of our students. Here, Julio and Sofia are receiving dental treatment. Thank you Dr. Porrás and Monsignor Joseph Catrambone for this special gift to our students!

Students visit from North Carolina to give hearing tests!



On May 17 we were visited by audiometric students from the University of North Carolina. After touring our facility and practicing Guatemalan Sign Language with our students, they set up their equipment in order to examine each child. As we are still working to set up our own hearing clinic at LAVOSI, this was a great opportunity to have our children's hearing evaluated. It was also a wonderful opportunity for the students from UNC to see how LAVOSI is working hard to transform the lives of these children. This exchange of ideas, information and cultures is what motivates us to move forward.

Welcome Gelga!

We are very happy to have Gelga Vivar as part of our LAVOSI team!

Gelga is a multi-talented person and has a very important role in LAVOSI. She helps teachers in the classroom, coordinates activities with volunteers, runs the snack program; writes the newsletter of the month, helps Álvaro with administrative duties in the office, etc. She is truly a "Jill of all Trades"!



May has been a successful month, full of activities, meeting new friends and continuing to feel the love of a close knit family!

PLEASE VISIT www.friendsofthedeaf.org TO SEE HOW YOU CAN HELP GIVE THESE VERY DESERVING YOUNG PEOPLE A BRIGHTER FUTURE TODAY!

THANK YOU!

Chris Tackett,

President and Founder of “Friends of the Deaf”

Photos and commentary by Gelga Vivar