

DESERT BLOOMS

January 2016

We are always happy when some of our special kids with whom we've lost contact return to Santo Niño. Sometimes they have moved away. Other times home situations make it difficult for the children to participate regularly. Two weeks ago Magdalena, now 26 years old, came back to the center after more than a five year absence. She currently lives with her brother and is working part time bagging groceries at a local supermarket though she is confined to a wheelchair. One of our moms saw Magda there and invited her to come for therapy at least once a week.

Our mother-therapists are often the eyes and ears of the center, maintaining or reestablishing contact with children or adolescents with special needs who have drifted off our radar screen for whatever reasons. Lucy keeps us abreast of what's happening with Maggie, a young woman with severe cerebral palsy. Maggie's mom died of cancer and her dad Jose was one of our team members until he

remarried eight years ago. His new wife wasn't comfortable with their participation at Santo Niño so we rely on Lucy to let us know when there are ways we can help without being intrusive.

Gloria, our former team member who now comes

to the center for therapy for multiple sclerosis, has brought news of several of our kids who live in the Anapra neighborhood. "They are going to have to remove Ruby's eyes because they can't keep the pressure down and it is so painful. Cindy is amazingly still alive, living in the same horrible situation that she did ten years ago. Adrian died of pneumonia a few years ago." And driving around the colonia Sister Carol has seen Edgar, increasingly frail

with muscular dystrophy, sitting outside in the sun in his wheelchair and Freddie playing in the street, doing very well after his repeat surgery for clubfeet.

Sometimes for better and sometimes for worse, we receive the news of these children who were part of our lives for a time. We reach out when we can and we give thanks for the gift they gave in allowing us to know and serve them. Our service is not always within the walls of Santo Niño. Recently Reyna's kindergarten teachers contacted her mother Tania to ask if Sister Carol would ever be able to come after school to give them a treatment. They were in a car accident over the Christmas holidays and were still having back and neck pain. And how much would it cost? So Sister Carol and Tania took the treatment table to school last Wednesday when they went to pick up Reyna. Carol used the neuro-movement education method that has been so helpful in her work with the children and staff at Santo Niño. Both teachers got significant relief from the session and were delighted. And Sister Carol was happy to provide the service (gratis!) to the teachers who have been so wonderfully attentive to Reyna.

We are still awaiting a call from Pope Francis who will come to Juarez on February 17. He is known for his spontaneous calls and unscheduled visits so we will continue to stay close to the phone! For now we are just planning to stay overnight in the center on the 16th since we've heard that the international bridges will be closed from midnight onwards. We might just be watching on television but we will be together at Santo Niño. Stay tuned!

