

## DESERT BLOOMS

July 2015



School is just finishing for the summer so we are starting to see some of the Santo Niño special children and their siblings at the center on week-

days again. It is a time that we can offer extra help with reading, writing and math while still finding time for crafts and games that they expect when they come to Santo Niño.

One of our supporters from Albuquerque sent us a Spanish version of *Junie B. Jones: First Grader (At Last!)* Conchita read the first chapter aloud with Sister Janet. She especially liked the name of the teacher: Mr. Scary. "Did you ever have a teacher like that?" She thought for a moment and then she nodded seriously, recalling a particular mathematics teacher last year who told her that she did not belong in a "normal class" and that he was not equipped to teach children like her. Fortunately there have been many more teachers who have made the extra effort to help her learn and she will be in sixth grade next fall.

Isaura is walking! It has been eight months since her tendon-release surgery in El Paso and we have struggled to help her overcome her fear of pain with weight-bearing. She was able to bend and straighten her ankles, knees and hip joints without difficulty while lying on the therapy table. She could even crawl and mimic animals at the zoo! But as soon as it was time to stand, Isaura balked and trembled with fear. Standing with

her walker the knees always bent, the ankles twisted and the hips stiffened. Our breakthrough came when Sister Carol noticed the heavy high-top boots she always wore. "I don't think she is feeling her feet on the floor," she reasoned. The next day at the center Isaura received a pair of bright purple lightweight tennis shoes. She wears them all the time now. The purple shoes and the movement lessons have helped her to regain her mobility— and more. She glides through the center with her walker, holding her head high, occasionally waving a free hand at her adoring public, and watching herself in the full-length mirror. She embraces the role of the princess!

We are happy to have several helpful daddies accompanying their children to Santo Niño these days. Donovan, a tiny two-year old, is blind and has some cerebral palsy. When he first arrived he was unable to sit without assistance. Now he not only sits independently but he is beginning to get to a crawling position. Happy with the progress he has seen, his papa now comes to learn how to work with him at home to continue the therapy. Meanwhile, he has gotten to know the other children and lends a hand at the monkey bars! ←Ishmael was happy for the lift.



We appreciate hearing from all who support Proyecto Santo Niño from near and far. One of our dear readers of *Desert Blooms* writes to us now and again from prison. He recently sent a "Thinking of You" card with this beautiful message: "May God shower you all with mercy and continue to bless your efforts. You are all in my heart, my thoughts and prayers always." How blessed we are! Have a happy summer!

