

Love Letter

A Newsletter for Friends of Arms of Love

Autumn 2016

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He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

— PSALM 23:3



Arms of Love
International

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877.ARMSOFLove • www.ArmsOfLove.org



ONCE IN A LIFETIME

The short flight was inexpensive, but the experiences were priceless for 2 boys. One of those tales is below.

(The boy's name has been changed to protect his personal story.)

A narrative of how our dedicated Social Worker in the Philippines helped a child unlock a mystery.

Our file on James Luke consisted of just his young, hazy memory, and a patchwork of stories. According to social services his father had passed away, and he had no known family that could care for him. We know James survived abuse, and time on the streets. He has lived at Arms of Love for nearly 5 years. While James has a new life now, to a once abandoned child the questions of “why” and “how” can be a lifelong quest. Our social worker, Lovely, went above and beyond the call of duty to get answers. This is a snapshot of the story from her perspective:

“Many hours of searching through

government documents turned up no information. I decided the only option was to take some steps of faith and go on an adventure. The social welfare office thought it was such a waste of time that they only sent me with an intern for help. I followed any lead or inclination I had. One lead, which led me to an unfamiliar island, was a name that was similar to that of James’ father. I travelled to that home and met an elderly woman, who, to my surprise, began crying when I showed her a photo.

“Finally, I knew I had made a breakthrough.” — Lovely

Finally, I knew I had made a breakthrough. The woman shared that it was believed by the family that James

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Dentist Q & A with our Nicaragua Dental Team

Led by Dr. Earl Floyd, D.D.S. of Bonney Lake, WA, the “Nicaragua Dental Team” has been blessing our ministry and communities since 2003.

Dental care is something we often take for granted, but it is a vital need and often unavailable in Nicaragua. Dr. Floyd and his teams, including Arms of Love sponsor Jaime Westby, R.D.H., continue to serve our children.

Why do you keep volunteering in Nicaragua?

I continue to serve because I fell in love with the people. – Dr. Floyd

Nicaragua is filled with wonderful, caring people who have become more like family than friends. I feel that I was drawn to serve there and my life changed for the better. – Jaime

What's the most meaningful takeaway from your visits?

The very deep friendships that have developed. – Dr. Floyd

Every year I learn something new about myself and about serving others. – Jaime

What's the greatest dental issue you've witnessed?

We checked the children at a local school and they all needed at least eight fillings. – Dr. Floyd

At Arms of Love, the dental needs of the children vary depending on age and how long they have been under our care. Establishing home care education for the children is critical. – Jaime



What's the hardest part for you?

Waiting for our next trip! – Dr. Floyd

Having to choose how much treatment we can provide to each child. – Jaime

What else would you share about your years of serving?

I always feel I get more than I give on these trips. – Dr. Floyd

We are only scratching the surface of what is needed every year we come to Arms of Love. This year we were blessed with help from several local dentists, and I look forward to the possibility of working together again next year. In the future I hope to be able to stay longer and spend more time one on one with all of the children. – Jaime



“The biggest blessing has been watching the children grow and being able to return every year and see changes in each of one of them.” — Jaime



A GROWING FAMILY Needs Advocates

Arms of Love continues to welcome new children into our Nicaraguan and Filipino homes, including a sibling group of four children in the Philippines. We do everything in our power to keep siblings together, because whether orphaned or abandoned, we believe family connections are important. These children come from tragic beginnings, but now they're part of our family . . . a family of restoration and hope!

At Arms of Love they will be fed, clothed, tutored, disciplined, empowered, and loved.

We need monthly sponsorship commitments to help ensure our in-country budgets can cover the increasing costs of our increasing family. We have different giving options, so whether you're a \$10 monthly Homes of Hope supporter, or a \$140 monthly Child Advocate sponsor, you can make a difference!

Can you help us provide for a child that needs a sponsor?



You can mail the enclosed return card, visit us online, or call. Please share your preferences, or you can let our staff choose a child based on need. You can email any sponsorship questions to: sponsorship@armsoflove.org



We Give Thanks for our Volunteer Teams!

Volunteer Teams included:

Vineyard of the Rockies

Mike Berkowitz Family Team

The Vogel Team

Canyon Ridge

University of Virginia

World Race

Jenkins Family Team

Mission Medics

Colorado State University Puksta Scholars

Merkey Minnesota Team

Church by the Glades

Palo Alto Vineyard

Reach Church

Red Tree Church

Dr. Floyd's Dentist Team

The Nally Team

The Arms of Love Philippines Team

Grove City Vineyard Church

Team projects included:

Painting and Restoration Projects

Artistic Murals

Quinceañera Party

Psychologist Office Built

Playground improvements

House Builds in the Community

Bathrooms/Showers in the Community

Neighborhood Outreach

Staff Retreat

Guard Restroom

Staff Continuing Education

Kids Leadership Retreat

Discipleship and Devotionals

Sustainability and Farm Projects

AND MORE!

THANK YOU!



ONCE IN A LIFETIME (continued from page 1)

had died. This woman was the mother-in-law to the brother of his father. This first visit was not just a miracle of discovering family, but it also revealed the true age and history of James. This summer, he celebrated his real birthday and age.

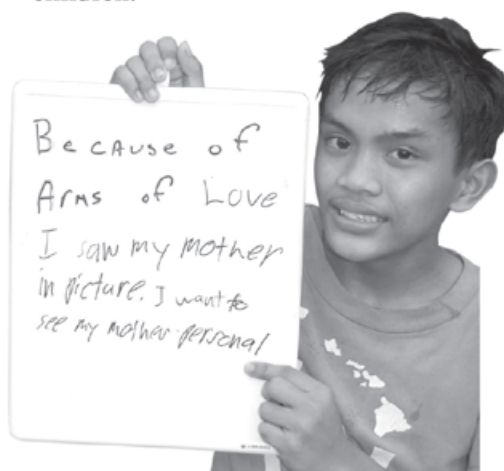
My second trip was with James in tow . . . and he got to see his mother for the first time in many years. I witnessed the emotional battle between pain and yet longing for a mother's touch. James had also deeply missed his younger brother, whose whereabouts at the time of our visit were unknown. We searched around the neighborhood until it was dark. It seemed like time to give up, but I stopped and prayed as we were on our way to the police station to ask for help. To our amazement we saw the little brother at a bus stop. He was dirty, hungry, and sad . . . and then he saw his brother. **It was a 180 degree change in his facial expression.** As a Social Worker I am not meant to cry, and as a person I am not used to it, however in this moment I did. It had been 8 long years since these young brothers had seen each other. Their embrace made all my efforts worth it. There was a powerful moment as

He shared his dream earlier this year (photo), and it came true!

the family came together in a hug and the mother asked for forgiveness.

I am glad to see the joy that has come to a young boy who has learned that he came from somewhere, and that he has biological family still alive, especially his little brother that he missed so badly. The situation for that family remains a difficult one, and we ask for your prayers."

We are hopeful that this redemptive narrative has only just begun, and we are grateful to have a dedicated Social Worker like Lovely on our staff. She has served our mission with passion and fortitude for over 3 years, and her champion efforts have aided the healing process for so many of our children.



detach and return with your gift

RESPONDING

PRAYER REQUEST

You may remember Héctor from our summer newsletter. We ask that all friends of Arms of Love please keep him in your prayers as he battles Leukemia. His diagnosis was difficult news, but we have been encouraged to see him respond well to treatment. **It's a long road, and we're thankful for your prayer support.**



YOUR DONATIONS CAN BE DOUBLED!

Accompanying this newsletter is a special **matching grant Christmas catalog**. It includes some unique gift opportunities to bless our children and communities, as well as info and updates. Do you know someone that "has it all?" Well maybe this is the year to give an alternative Christmas gift! **Give a present that will have an ongoing impact for those in need.**

MATCH-ELIGIBLE CHRISTMAS CATALOG GIFTS CAN ALSO BE MADE AT ARMSOFLOVE.ORG/CAMPAIGN

My gift to help bless the lives of children

Yes! I want to help protect, feed, educate, and empower children through the life-changing programs at Arms of Love.

- \$_____ A Sustaining Stewardship (*Agricultural Initiatives*)
- \$_____ A Future of Wholeness (*Tuition for Children*)
- \$_____ A Community of Hope (*Community Development*)
- \$_____ A Family of Healing (*In-Country Staff Support*)
- \$_____ A Home of Safety & Security (*Where Needed Most — Crisis Response*)

I would like to make a monthly commitment of \$_____ to sponsor a child.
 Nicaragua Philippines

Please see the Christmas Matching Catalog for fund details. Thank you for your generosity!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____



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