



Dear Friends,

If I only learned one thing in the colonias is was this: one person can make a difference. One person can change not only a life, but the lives of generations to come.

So many individuals make that difference. Today, a child eats a meal and enters a classroom ready to focus on today's lessons without the constant distraction of hunger. One day that child will graduate. The child may go to college. The child will marry and have children. Those children will be educated and each subsequent generation will be better off. All because someone sent 12 cents a day to provide a daily meal to a school child.

We continue to learn and improve.

Every visit to the colonias provides more information and feedback about how we operate and about the ever changing colonias. We continue to hold on to what works and to improve at every opportunity.

The violence and the often exaggerated news reports impacts the way we operate. We keep mission trips to a few families at a time and we only take those we know and trust. It is important that we only take people that follow instructions to the letter so that we can safely help the people in need and show them our support by our presence. We limit mission trips to the colonias of Acuña, although we provide help to other areas of Mexico.

When new violence occurs, it is likely that few, if any, charities or churches will be delivering food to the poor or the shelters for children. People will be afraid to cross the border."

Our response is simple. Cross the border and deliver food. This is not bravado. The actual risk of becoming a victim is very low. I have no involvement in the cartel or with law enforcement. I only have groceries and have no money. There is no insurance or ransom money.

I go in and deliver the food. I may visit a few homes and help where I can help. I don't play games at the border. I declare the items I bring into Mexico. At some crossing, official often waive the fees and taxes. Sometimes I am even offered a police escort, which I decline.

In short, we see a needs in today's news. We respond immediately and help those most in need.

Nobody contributes money, time and energy because they are required to do so. Instead, those that choose to help, befriend the working poor. Paper Houses accepts no money from the U.S. government. We continue to be a group of volunteers that want to work with the poor of the colonias.

I hear and read many opinions about immigration, Mexico, drug cartels, border violence and read suggestions and ideas. Suggestions and ideas are good if they result in action. Good ideas can only become good if they result in action.

We cannot let bad news frighten us away.