



The SonLight Beacon

...the power is on

Fall 2008

Up close & personal with rookie 'mates



Newest teammates shine the light

think I'm supposed to go to Honduras with you."

Savanna was on board! Her upbeat personality blended beautifully with the other girls on the team – Andrea of Cincinnati and Melvina of Honduras. God brought these three together from completely different

backgrounds and formed a strong bond between them. Allen dubbed the trio *The Three Amigas*.

For Savanna, the "without a hitch" part of the trip might be questionable. From a head cold to a migraine to the dreaded Montezuma's Revenge, Savanna remained cheerful, easygoing and eager to reach out to everyone around her.

"I can't begin to describe the week I spent in Honduras," Savanna said. "But I can tell you that every moment of the week was spent with God. It was the first time in my life that I felt Him beside me, reassuring me for the future, the past, and the present that He is PRESENT."

"What I felt in that presence the whole week was His love. Through everything good and bad, His love was great...I was reminded that He LOVES his children, poor and fortunate, young and old, weak and strong, that He gives gifts to the impoverished, strength to the weak among us, youth to the old."

Savannah continued, "He gives us the opportunity to learn and to gain in order to give. I was moved and changed by His blessings through pain, as when He, through Val, taught me to sing in the torture of a migraine headache. I was given faith through seeing how He loves and has perfectly crafted with strength and a sense of humor my sister Andrea. I was taught of His redemption and love through my beautiful friend Mel's testimony. How can I do anything but praise? Our God is an Awesome God, and He is doing awesome things in Honduras through the people to whom, through His grace, He has entrusted His work."

Blessed with a gift of languages – she speaks fluent French – Savanna struggled with her Fall class schedule. The morning we traveled to the last school, she could hardly contain herself. During Savanna's sleepless night, God showed her what to study: Spanish. Looking forward to her next Honduras trip, Savanna said, "I'll learn Spanish this year and use it to bless His name."

With the leap of faith to travel with the SLP team – particularly with no money for the trip – Savanna mailed 100 letters before the trip describing her new venture. Returning home, she found most of the finances needed to cover the trip in her mailbox, and the rest flowed in. Rejoicing, she alerted the SLP team, "God is great. When He says 'go,' He takes care of the rest."

ANDREA BROWN

Andrea's story told in her own words:

Since this July was my first mission trip with SonLight Power, I wanted to share some of the things that most stand out in my memories of the experience. My reasons for going on this, my first trip with SLP, were a little different than you might expect. I feel very called to my work as office manager and board secretary of SLP. I help Allen handle the organizational aspects of the ministry. I had become very aware that I didn't fully understand what SLP does because I had never done it myself. I believe that what I learned on this trip will help me better do the work God has called me to here at home.

In this day and age, it seems that we don't often get the opportunity to see God work in mighty ways. The SLP teams to Honduras this summer got a front row seat to see that God still moves to bless His people and to bless others through His people. On this trip, there were so many times that God stepped in and took over that it is hard to remember them all. I actually began to feel accustomed to the fact



The July SonLight Power Honduras trip went off without a hitch....uh, more or less. The exciting news is at least 25 of the 120 kids we met **never heard of Jesus before our visit.** Now they know a lot about His love.

Installing solar power systems in the three schools – El Chaparal in Pespire, Los Mangos in San Marcos, and Las Posas in Apacilagua – provided lots of fodder for mission trip tales, but rookie stories are always fun...

SAVANNA JOHNSON

A week before we left for Honduras, things were uncertain. One member canceled, leaving us with an extra ticket. Time was running short and no one surfaced to use it. Who would make a \$1,300 commitment so quickly? Could we change the name with the airlines on such short notice?

Savanna Johnson's story began when SLP Executive Director Allen Rainey met James Gray at a missionary convention a couple of years ago. As MissionFoto founder, James produces promotional videos and documentaries to help missionary organizations grow. Eventually, James and his wife Valerie felt called to join the SLP Honduras team.

Learning of the vacancy on the team, the Grays wondered who God might have in mind to fill the void. They mentioned the situation to a dinner guest, college student Savanna Johnson. Valerie remembered that Savanna froze and her eyes popped wide open. Savanna said, "I



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that God would handle things. As we traveled along dangerous roads each day, I eventually ceased to worry about the fact that I had no seat belt and was holding a child in my lap. I knew that God would take care of us. Period.

One of my favorite moments was the pole-raising at the first install. Men lined up along the pole got the job started by lifting; when it rose beyond their reach, they stepped back to watch as men with ropes continued to pull. As the pole rose, I felt a sense of jubilation to see the array of glass solar panels soar skyward. The pole reached vertical, then my heart froze as I watched it travel past vertical and begin to fall back toward the ground on the other side. As the men pulled desperately on the ropes to right the array, I stared in complete disbelief at what I was about to witness. Then, an instant later, the pole was in the hole and all was well. I never saw it pulled vertical. One second the pole was falling and the next, it was completely upright and securely in the hole. I assumed I had blinked at the wrong moment, but another observer later confirmed that my recollection was accurate. There was no human process of slowly muscling the pole back into position. God simply picked it up and placed it in the hole.

God's provision was also evident in the team of Hondurans He provided to assist our teams. Meilyn, Mauricio, Manuel and Pastor Ceasar were God's faithful servants as they arranged lodging, transportation, food, translators and everything else we could possibly need. I was also amazed to discover that I had a home in Honduras. Returning from Choloteca to Mei and Mau's house felt more like a homecoming than arriving back at my own house in Cincinnati. It was a place of safety and rest – God knew what He was doing when He told the Moncadas to add on two more floors to house SLP teams.

I can't talk about this adventure without mentioning my new friends. Good friends are hard to come by, but God put together quite a trio on this trip. My roommates and I fit together like pieces of a puzzle. Savanna is a college student from Indy and Melvina is a 5th grade teacher from Tegucigalpa,



animals while I cringed, anticipating the next balloon "POP".

We were all from different walks of life; we learned so much from each other. Now we have a common connection and a unique friendship that can last a lifetime. God had everything under control – I hope I can learn to trust Him everyday here at home as our team trusted Him in Honduras. After what I witnessed on my Honduras adventure, I am awed at God's power and provision. Truly, if God is for us, who can be against us?



KEVIN ST. CYR

Kevin St. Cyr joined the team for his first mission trip ever. "I miss Honduras, I want to go back," he said. "I told my wife it was like spending a week, walking around, holding God's hand, feeling His power and love, void of fear and anxiety, full of hope and anticipation."

Envision the Honduran children clutching their notebook and pencil gifts. "I will never forget the look on the faces of those children...looking up at the solar panels, smiling ear to ear. I truly believe for some...that will be one of the best days of their entire life. I hope that they will remember that day and let it remind them that through God all is possible; and that they always feel His presence and His love", Kevin said.

"When we arrived, for the first couple days, I felt overwhelmed with despair. How could our small effort make

a difference? By the end of the week, it was so clear we had made a difference... and that by lifting up the next generations, we can help Honduras be the best that it can be," he continued.

From Kevin's success story, it's clear that God will lead SLP to complete the 400-plus school project – providing 30 years of electricity to each. SonLight Power is solely funded through prayer and donations.

You can help by offering:

- Prayer – While all levels of support are important to achieving the mission of SonLight, prayer support is critical.
- Online Giving – Become a Beamer! See <https://dedicated.mwnm.com/sonlightpower.org/donate.php>
- Major Gifts – Major gifts allow us to effectively plan for the future and frees up resources to focus on impacting the lives of the poorest of people.
- Social Network Fundraising – Do you know 50 people who would donate \$100 to sponsor a school and fund your trip to take light into darkness?
- Sponsor a School—\$3,500 provides all the solar equipment for a 3-5 room school in Honduras, providing light and power for audio-visual electronics, fans.

To schedule a SonLight Power representative for a personal appearance, call the SLP office at 513-521-0708.

Videographer James Gray recently unveiled the videos he has produced for SLP. The three-minute mini is a whirlwind look at a typical SLP mission trip, complete with three installations – don't blink – you'll miss a lot!

The 40-minute documentary is an in-depth look at the July 08 Honduras trip, including interviews with each team member. James has also recorded several interviews with Honduran teachers who teach at schools which received SLP systems.

The videos are available for a donation of \$10. Also: coming in late October—Dates and costs for the six 2009 SLP mission trips.

SonLight Power in the news: Go to: <http://www.sonlightpower.org/articles-news.php> — for the latest interviews and articles about SLP.

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SonLight Power needs YOU to be a Beamer now!

Forty more Beamers are needed to complete Allen's support team and release him to tell the SonLight Power story country wide. Beamers donate \$25/mo or \$300/year to support SonLight Power. Call or go to www.SonLightPower.org.