



June 2009

Last month was busy with all the things we love best at Acorn – food, friends, fiestas, and lots of new students. Tina Dodge Vera, who runs healthy cooking classes on behalf of OSU Extension, held a weekly class on Wednesday nights. The place has been filled with busy chefs and helpful children, and of course, great smells. The women prepared and sampled a variety of dishes from different cultures – Chinese, Salvadorian, Mexican and American, so far. The final class is next week. There were about 10 women most nights, and more than 15 children. Fortunately she had a couple of OSU student volunteers to help with the childcare, and set-up and clean-up.

It's such a privilege to have long-term friendships with many of our students, even after they move away. At the beginning of May one of our former students, Paola, from Colombia, came to visit with her husband Jim and her 14 year old son Elvin. Elvin ran right over to the neighbors' house to hang out with his buddies, and Blanca (our friend from El Salvador) joined us for a lovely reunion.

We had three great parties this month, two impromptu and one planned. One Saturday night, Blanca and her husband Luis joined Rick, our computer tech tenant, a friend of his, Hundley, and Peter and me for dinner. It was a great evening and the best part was that there were people coming and going around the duplex, and it became a bit like grand central station. I love it when there is life and community happening at Acorn – that is our number one goal for the ministry. Then another afternoon we decided to make pupusas (a special dish from El Salvador) and invite some people who hadn't tried them yet. Now when I say we, that always means Blanca and Luis and me, because they are the pupusa experts. We invited one of our volunteers, Chris, and his wife Donna, and one of our students, Fernando, and Rick. Our biggest party of the month was last Monday night when we celebrated Rick's birthday – all the neighbors brought food and we made pupusas again (!) There were about 20 of us, including the kids, and it was the perfect expression of the community we have built.

And yes, we do actually teach English and computer classes to Spanish speakers, in case some of you were wondering if we do anything but party. This month we had over 40 different students come through the doors, and more than 10 of them were new. They may have seen our flyers in the Mexican bakery or La Poderosa store on 9th, or the big sign we have on the side of the building. But really, word of mouth is our best advertisement.

Finally, we're looking forward to celebrating the beginning of our 10th year of ministry on Division Street with an open house on Sunday, June 21st from 11:30 – 1:00pm. I'll be sending out more information about that soon, but please consider this an invitation to come and celebrate with us the work that God is doing through Acorn.