

Hairdressers on a Mission

Day 7 to 9



We start out today by going to the Triqui Tribe neighborhood. Most of the hairdressers have not seen this area except Heather and me so they are interested in the environment. It isn't the safest place to be but I am confident that in the day time we shouldn't have any problems.

town.

We drive around and of course all the streets are dirt. This whole area is all dirt roads except the main highway coming through the

So much of the living conditions surprise me even after being here for almost a week. We see so many structures that we think are falling apart shacks and yet they are inhabited by many people in each one. We didn't get out and walk around as we thought it would be best to just see and leave.

We head to a town south of here about 15 miles called San Quintin. We know there are several beauty schools and we want to see how they are set up.

We pull up to one and with Lidia, our interpreter, we go into a school. It is very small and has several students taking tests. Two girls are doing color and we walk up to them to have them share with us what they are doing.

I start talking color to her and then Shannon and Heather take over. They have a way of getting their knowledge across to the students even without an interpreter; however Shannon is doing really well in her Spanish.

Hey Shannon here;

When we arrive at this school I am very excited. I want to see what other schools in this area are like. We walk into the first little room and that is the office/reception area. There is a glass case with a little bit of retail and the rest is office things. We then walk through a doorway into a bigger room (maybe 10 by 10) and there are several desk type tables in there and many posters with the parts of the nail. I am assuming this is the nail room. There is also what looks to be a tiny hair cutting station. There is another small doorway and we walk through it into an even smaller room. There is a tiny shampoo bowl and two chairs. Two students are working away and we find out





that they are taking a test. They are doing some foiling and Dave can't stop himself from checking out what the girls are doing. He checks out their foiling and it is very cool because the hair in between the foils they braid. What an innovative way to keep the hair neat, especially if you have to keep flipping the hair up to check the other foils. It is a pleasant surprise to learn something from these students. Heather and I start talking to them about their application. They show us

how they apply foils and I show them how I apply. One of the models is being pre-lightened and then they are going to put red on her. The other one wants platinum pieces. Of course! The teacher asks me what they should apply to the platinum one for a toner. She gets out her color book and I show her where her hair needs to be pre-lightened to and then what toner to use and how to come up with that color using the color wheel. Then she asks Heather and me about the one that wants red. Did they lighten her enough? We ask her which red she wants. She points to one and we tell her that what she has done is fine but it didn't have to go that light. The color they have is not wrong it will just be brighter. Then we show her how light to get it to get the true color. She seems very grateful.



After we talk color they ask Dave if he will teach them some haircutting. Well, you know Dave, he jumps all over it!

He grabs Mary M. (not the one that has organized the trip) and sits her down. He then begins to walk them through her hair cut. He shows them how to establish a guide line and how to find it as you work through the cut. Things we take for granted in our work now but were so difficult to understand when first learning. He teaches them both shears and clippers. After the hair cut is done Heather



and Dave teach them how to hold their shears and palm them. Another technique we take for granted. Palming is second nature to us. For them, however, it is a whole new concept, even for seasoned hair stylists. After showing them how to practice we decide we need to leave so we can get back to our place (called Welcome Home) for lunch and cutting the children's hair that are there for day care.

We arrive back at Welcome Home and it is almost time for lunch. We set up a table with all our hair cutting tools so that as soon as lunch is over we can get to work. We eat quickly as we cannot wait to start on these little niños.

Dave picks out one little boy, puts him on the table and starts cutting with the new Oster tool the **Mojo**. Once he is done with him the rest of the kids can't wait to get their turn. It probably helps that they get to have a piece of candy after their hair cut. Everyone is cutting the boys hair so I take out my shears and find a little girl that needs a hair cut. Once I finish with her the girls are lining up. The littlest kids (they are 2) want nothing to do with this so they go back to their classroom. Trying to comb through the girls' hair is so difficult. They have enough gel on their hair for about week. They probably haven't had it washed in a week too. As we are working away these kids are on cloud nine. We even have Cory and Nathan cutting some of the boys' hair. (They don't cut hair and never have)!



When we finish up the kids go crazy for Dave. He reminds me of the Pied Piper.

After clean up we decide to go over to the school and do some more hair. Heather is going to highlight Lidia's hair and I am going to highlight Rosa's. Rosa is the one of the women that runs Welcome Home.

While we are doing that Dave, with Lidia's help, talks to Teresa, (the school owner) about how to run a business. She has no idea about how to make a budget let alone what a budget is. Dave tells her about a budget and how to get her money to grow. The people down here make about ten dollars a day. Her husband does not work and she has two children. Can you imagine?

Once Dave finishes talking to Teresa some more of the women that are down here with us ask to get hair cuts and of course Dave can't say no. When we finally get done with all the hair coloring and cutting it is time for dinner. We all decide to eat at a Chinese restaurant. I know, we are in Mexico and we go to a Chinese restaurant. Needless to say if it didn't look like chicken I didn't eat it. One of the soups ordered had tentacles in it! Yikes!

After dinner everyone is sitting around talking and Dave and I decide to walk back to Welcome Home. We are only a couple of blocks away. It wasn't far but kind of scary. I will let Dave tell that story.

Dave here...

We hit the road at about 8:30PM and go about a block when two guys in a junker truck start yelling something at us. Well I answer "Hola Amigo." Shannon immediately says "shut up dad, they are probably drug dealers!"

They start to get out of the truck and it is a dark street with not much light. We are almost in front of a Taco stand that we ate at earlier in the week and I tell Shannon "head for the stand and we will start talking to the cook." When we walk up to him recognizes me and starts talking and shakes my hand. The two dudes see this and get back in their truck and drive off. That was a close one...

We then walk into a "Farmacia" (pharmacy). The store owner is all alone and wants to talk politics. We hang out there for about 10 minutes to make sure Pancho and Lefty are gone for good.

We make it back to our hang out fine and hit the sack.

Saturday we are up early again and head to the beauty school. We have planned a "Hair Fiesta" today for the school. We advertised it in their weekly paper and had people put up fliers all over town.

The students, with our help, will be giving free haircuts to the towns' people as a way to get people to patronize the school.

We set up haircutting stations outside and run power outside. We know we will be cutting with a lot of clippers as we expect a lot of very thick hair.

People start showing up as soon as we put up the **OSTER** banner. It's amazing how in the time I've been here I am already being called the "**OSTERMAN**".

Pretty good branding I'd say.



We hold off cutting until 10:30 and when we start it gets packed full with people in no time.



We are told that no one has ever done anything like this for these people. Heather starts helping one of the students with a little dude while the rest of us hook up with students and get the hair flying...



I bump into the school owner Theresa who is helping a student with a long hair cut. I jump in and teach Teresa and the student how to layer long hair with our new cordless clipper the **MOJO**.

At first the student is scared to death. By the time we are done with that hair cut she grabs another person with long hair and the **MOJO** and goes to town on it. "No necesito ayuda" ("I don't need help") she tells me in Spanish and then gives me a huge hug and didn't want to let go.

I find out later that she grew up in an orphanage and Lidia (translator) tells me for her "I never have had a father and I wish Dave could be my father, please tell him I love him as his daughter".

Man you talk about just falling apart at that second. None of us had any idea just what kind of an impact we would make here. These are abandoned and abused young women who desperately feel there is a better life for them.



We have so much work we can do here and other areas of Mexico and possibly other countries. I pray that I am able to share with our industry and that they will want to be a part of changing lives within our field around the world.

Like I've said once already **"it's never about a haircut!"**

We keep up the pace of cutting for 4 hours and we must have cut at least 150 heads of hair. The sun is baking us and we never stop for lunch. We just keep downing water.

Mary C. had rounded up food for all the people and beverages. Because I picked up all the costs of the plumber and the paint job it freed up money to pay for it all, YEAH...

When we quit cutting hair Shannon and Cory along with Nathan get the Piñata going for the kids and they have a blast. Candy is flying everywhere and kids are flying everywhere, it is great.



We are about to start loading up and we get hit up for autographs and picture taking. After about 30 minutes of this, not just for the students but all the townspeople, we say our good byes to the people and the students. It is very hard as the students do not want to let us go and neither do the towns people. We are all in tears; Shannon finally has to leave and hide out in one of the vans as the emotion of this whole week just took over.

We will never forget this experience and we will not leave this earth without returning here to bring our experience and ability to these wonderful people.

They have learned so much from us and they have showed us just how little we know...

Well it's Sunday morning and all I can say about it is;

"We're coming home..."

