



# Mission Report

## AWA Philippines-Palawan Mission Project

### *The Espinosa Family*



“Pastor Edgar, can we go camping?” Daverson asked me, with a twinkle in his sweet brown eyes, which made it hard to say no. Looking down at him, my face squished up in a puzzled look, and I asked, “what do you mean? Where do you want to go camping?” “Oh!” he exclaimed, “one of my classmates told me that there will be a week-long camping trip with the church, and I really want to go!” “Well,” I pondered, “I will have to get more information and see what we can do”. “Oh thank-you!” beamed Daverson.

I then went to find Von, to see if he had the inside scoop. Von is our 24 year-old son. He is living with us while he completes his engineering degree at a local university. Since he was young he has been raised as a

missionary kid in our country, always helping out as a family in outreach in our local village. Now that he is an adult he continues to be heavily involved in church, youth, and outreach activities. He is a District Youth Leader for our district and I knew that he would be in-the-know for this camping trip.

The camping trip, as it turned out, WAS in the works, and very BIG plans were being made between all the district leaders. This was to be an evangelistic camp meeting, lasting a week over the Christmas holidays. Non-Adventists and Adventists were all invited. The venue was planned for Puerto Princesa, which is the largest city on our island. It is an hour drive away from our small village, but because so many are so poor, it might

as well be on the moon. Some children in our village have never even been to the beach, which is only about 5 miles away. Many have never been to “the big city”. This was a huge trip, but because of the distance we didn’t think any of the parents would allow their children to be gone that long, nor that far. Since none of the children belong to our church we really thought the answer from their parents would be “no”. We were wrong!

On the day of the departure, the Adventist children from other villages were packing up to go. To my delighted surprise, Daverson got permission from his mother. She said she agreed to let him join the others because she trusted the Seventh-Day Adventist program and believed their children would be safe. They know what we





teach in the Sabbath Schools and hear them practicing their memory verses and singing godly songs. They like the effect they have seen it have on their children.

I then learned that other parents had also given permission for their kids to go too! I drove down the dusty road, lined with bamboo and fields, to the village to pick them up early Sunday morning. They stood in the road ready and waiting for me. Their faces smiled in excitement. They each had a small backpack or bag, packed with the things they would need. The things in their bags added up to almost everything they own in the world. One of the young girls there was accompanied by her father to the truck. This is unusual, as mostly they just say good-bye at their homes. He stood there and waved goodbye and we took off down the bumpy road. We had a total of five girls and four boys in the back of the truck, as we wound our way along the coast, on the edges of jungle-rich mountains and deep green rice patties. The kids excitedly chatted away as the wind whipped their hair.

Our daughter, Earyl, is a sophomore at an Adventist boarding academy, an hour south on our island. She wasn't able to get out of school when the other kids went, so the next day, we drove her up north to Puerto Princesa. She also is highly involved in missions and outreach and was excited to be able to participate. We were glad for the excuse to go again, so that we could check in on our village children, and see how they had survived the night. We found out that they didn't have a place to stay the night

before. No one had thought to bring a tent...not that any of them owned one in the first place!

We were wondering what to do... one night without a tent was passable, but not a whole week. They needed privacy to change, and a place to escape the bugs, and protection from possible rain. Praise God, we found that one of the brethren from our district brought two tents! One tent was for 6 persons and one for ten persons (and because we Filipinos are so small, we can fit a lot more than that in). Some of the children that were going to use the tent ended up not coming, and we were allowed to borrow their 10-man tent! I was so thankful for that blessing. If the parents found out that their kids were there, tent-less, then they would have ordered them home immediately.

One funny incident happened when one of the boys came up to me and said he needed to go home. I thought maybe he was

homesick, but it turned out that he didn't understand that the camp was to last one week, and he only brought enough clothes for a day! He wanted to go home to get more clothes. I told him we wouldn't be able to go and come back. Fuel is expensive, so he would have to either stay or come back home for good. He was disappointed, but he told me he decided to stay even though he only had one pair of underwear! He enjoyed the games and the bible message that he had heard the evening before, and he wanted to stay the whole week.

That week even though they got some heavy rains, but everyone enjoyed their time, learned more about God and the Bible, and interacted with other Christ-centered kids. We praise God that good seeds were planted in their young hearts.

On the way home we stopped by our house and gave them all some food. They were all very grateful. Their hearts were happy, and looking forward to the next time they could join a camp meeting.

*God bless you!*

*Edgar & Raylene Espinosa*



**Your AWA Mission Family  
stationed at the AWA  
Philippines - Palawan Mission Project:  
Edgar & Raylene Espinosa**