

L.A. East Annual Camping Trip, 2005

by Joe & Julie Ceja

Our names are Joe & Julie Ceja. We belong to Section 11, Deanery 12a L.A. East (San Gabriel Valley). Every year for the last 10 years we have hosted a camping trip to Wilderness Lakes in Menifee, California.

This year was bigger and better than ever. There were a total of 20 families occupying 18 of the resorts comfy rental trailers and 2 families who towed their own.

With 2 days filled with swimming, miniature golf, biking, hiking, train rides, video games, playground fun and sun we were filled with the love and friendship that we have enjoyed in this community for the past 14 years.

We finally got the group together and situated everyone for a group photo. Along with this photo I asked some of the families to share with us what community meant to them and some of the things they enjoyed about camping.



LA East Campout Group Picture

I know a lasting memory for me will be visiting Michael & Rossana Helbert's (our area exec couple) trailer one morning and witnessing their 3 daughters, 1 cousin and 1 god-daughter sitting down to breakfast and without a prompt singing their praises to God for their breakfast – what little angels. I later asked them to recite the same prayer before we all gathered for our Saturday night potluck.

Michael & Rossana Helbert shared that community is good times, laughter and meeting new people.

Gracyn (their 8 year old) said that she liked the M.E. weekend's cause when a couple goes on a weekend they have kids and then we get to meet them.

John & Gricelda Chavez shared that community is: sharing with other couples and families. It's sharing of time, feelings and relationship.

Juan & Biviana Jimenez shared: The M.E. community is a conduit for the two of us to share God's word of love and communication by holding truth and practicing the fundamental principles the M.E. community teaches.

Ray & Carmela Reyes shared that this was their 3rd year attending the camping trip with their granddaughters. They go miniature golfing, swimming, on the train ride and exploring the campgrounds. Their granddaughters (Yasmine and Ysenia) say that the food "just tastes so much better" at the camp ground. They also are excited about getting together with the other children at the Saturday night potluck dinner.

Joe & I have had the privilege of sharing our lives with these families and have been blessed to have them in our lives. Our community loves us unconditionally, supports our lifestyle and lives the weekend everyday. We are FAMILY!!!