

The Colors of Tres Días International



Fall/Winter 2009

TRES DIAS TEAM GUIDE NOW ON COMPACT DISK!

The Tres Dias Guide for Team Members is now available in an electronic version, giving communities that purchase the CD-Rom greater flexibility than in the past for distributing Tres Dias materials to team members. The copyright provisions allow a community purchasing the CD to print all or part of the guide and to post a copy of the guide on the community's web site. The only restrictions are that the community's charter must be valid, material printed from the CD must be to support Tres Dias activities, and the content cannot be edited or changed in any way.

To support this flexibility, the CD places each section of the guide and each rollo outline, together with that rollo's purpose and commentary, in a separate file. The CD also contains one file with the entire guide.

In developing the CD, the policy committee emphasized that reproducing parts of the guide must not be allowed to detract from the unity and progression of the talks. The rollos form one talk, given over three days—not fifteen separate talks.

For anyone joining a team for the first time, the entire manual should be required

reading. Seasoned rollistas, as well, benefit from reading through the entire guide periodically.

For those who prefer reading from a computer screen rather than the printed page, doing so is now possible.

Copies of the CD cost \$5.00 and may be purchased from "supplies" at Tresdias.org.

Got a database problem? Need Help? Don't know where to start?

Every new community faces the problem of managing the data that accumulate each weekend—not just names and addresses of new pescadores, but also information on who has worked in various positions and who has met the community's qualifying criteria for serving as rector or working in other leadership positions. Indeed, every community faces the challenge of keeping the information in order, but the problems can be especially troublesome for emerging communities.

The International Secretariat's Services Committee hopes to ease these difficulties by offering new communities an opportunity to use a "starter kit" approach to building a database. The Services Committee is looking for volunteer communities that need help and are willing to put the starter kit to use as a first step on the way to a full database.

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You, the Community

by Richard Thornhill
Vice President, Membership

Tres Dias is a powerful Christian, ecumenical movement uniting the Body of Christ worldwide and raising up leaders to support local churches. The Tres Dias International Secretariat is dedicated to serving and supporting local communities as they go about fulfilling that mission.

My friends, and even people in my community, have sometimes asked me to explain exactly what the Secretariat does. Why, exactly, do I fly to a different part of the United States three times a year for a Tres Dias meeting?

The answer, simply, is that I am meeting with 26 other pescadores—people like you, who have been given a special love and a special calling to serve our Lord through Tres Dias. You elected us to serve on the Secretariat, which becomes the board of directors for Tres Dias, Inc. We become the working hands of Tres Dias, Inc., distributing the responsibilities among five committees: Administration, Executive, Membership, Policy, and Services. All have the attitude: “Anything we can do to help your community, let us know.”

My place of service is on the Membership Committee, which has the responsibility for chartering and renewing charters for each local community, for teaching the Essentials, and for maintaining contact information on all communities.

Each Tres Dias community must renew its charter every two years. One of the requirements for renewal is that an Essentials workshop must be conducted within the community by a certified trainer during that two-year period. This training helps all pescadores understand the Essentials and their importance and value. The Essentials are what make Tres Dias unique and equip it to bring believers together at the cross of Calvary.

To arrange for a certified trainer for your community, you may contact me (or my successor as membership vice president). I will ask someone with certification to contact you, and you can arrange for the workshop, as needed. But there’s no reason why someone in your community can’t obtain the certification. The Membership

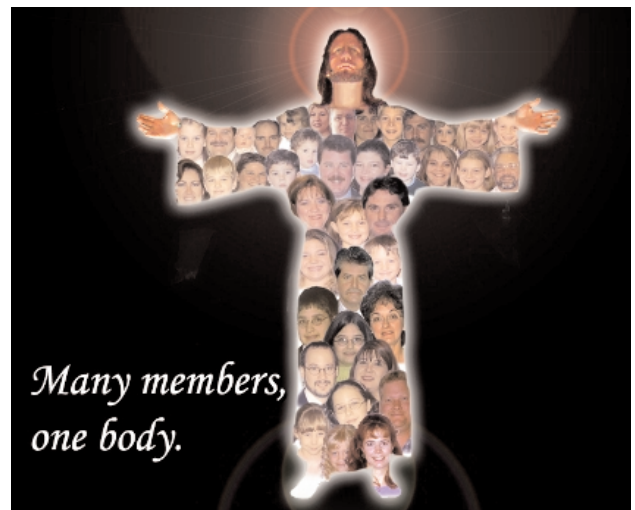
Committee conducts Essentials workshops and train-the-trainer sessions at every Annual Assembly (held in July) and during the spring (March) and fall (October) Secretariat meetings. Attending those workshops is all that is needed for certification.

There’s an added advantage to this choice. By sending delegates to the Assembly and Secretariat meetings, your community is actively participating and becoming involved in supporting Tres Dias, at the local, national, and international levels. By attending the Essential training, your delegates can come away as certified trainers.

You, the community, are vitally important for accomplishing the Tres Dias objective to “be a friend, and bring a friend to Christ.” It all comes back to you. Those of us who serve on the Secretariat know that you face many challenges, and we continue to look for ways to unite and encourage local secretariat growth and leadership development, and to support you, the community, in all three phases of the Tres Dias experience: pre-weekend, weekend, and post-weekend.

How can we help you? Let us know.

To contact Richard Thornhill, send an e-mail to MembershipVP@tresdias.org.



The Colors of Tres Dias International is published three times a year by the Services Committee of the Tres Dias International Secretariat, Ned Heffington, chairman. Don L. Bohl serves as editor, Rosann Miloscia as artistic director and production editor, and Ned Heffington, proofreader. To submit comments, requests, or suggestions please e-mail newsletter@tresdias.org.

Tres Dias communities are hereby given permission to reproduce material contained herein in their local newsletters, so long as the content and intention of the material is not changed.

SRO at a Secuela?

By Rosann Miloscia

SRO is an acronym for “standing room only,” used at popular Broadway plays and other venues to indicate that all seats are taken. Is it possible to have standing room only at secuelas? This is the question posed by Diane Hrubik and Dan Kearney to attract participants to their workshop at the Tres Dias Assembly, held in Cleveland this past July.

Working toward an SRO goal does not mean removing all the chairs, the leaders explained, nor does it mean having the secuela in a small chapel. And no, it does not mean filling the room with relatives. As a matter of fact, the community has yet to achieve the SRO goal, but it has seen consistent increases in secuela attendance over the past two years.

Community leaders adopted a marketing approach, starting with an analysis of attendance trends. By tracking how holidays and weather issues affected participation, they were able to see if secuelas could be skipped in certain months. (The Tres Dias Essentials encourage, but do not require, monthly secuelas.)

The community tried babysitting, but found that allowing the children to be in the sanctuary with their parents boosted attendance. Secuelas are open to friends and family members who have not done a Tres Dias weekend and members of the community are encouraged to issue invitations. There is universal agreement to avoid using the Tres Dias vocabulary (“pescador,” “abrazo,” etc.).

Every team gets commissioned at a secuela. This encourages attendance and allows the community to pray over the team and the weekend.

Secuelas are scheduled as soon as possible after weekends. This not only improves attendance, but brings new pescadores together in a way that makes it easier for them to form reunion groups.

The community also credits improved attendance to special dinners scheduled prior to the secuelas. These include picnics, a Thanksgiving or Christmas potluck, and a “Pay it Forward” dinner. This dinner, held once a year, raises money to help offset weekend costs.

The seminar leaders noted that it’s all too easy to find excuses for poor attendance. People who complete a weekend become leaders in their congregations; they participate in reunion groups and small groups. Why should they come to a secuela, another night out from their families?”

The answer is to re-create the feeling of the weekend, using music and fourth-day speakers to build the kind of spiritual excitement that draws in more people.

The community requires that the music team practices together before the secuela. The post weekend committee also arranges for the host church to supply the musicians. This also ensures that the music flows easily and prevents anything from happening to take away from the worship experience.

Many communities place the responsibility of secuela planning with pescadores at the host congregation. Cleveland uses a more centralized approach, with the post weekend committee actively involved in planning and securing resources.

Those who sat through the workshop realized that enthusiastic leaders also help—with workshop presenters Diane Hrubik and Dan Kearney providing living examples to reinforce that point.

Rosann Miloscia is a member of Mid-Hudson Tres Dias and attended the Assembly in Cleveland this past July.

Got a database problem?

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The kit allows for a great deal of flexibility. Almost every community has a database of some sort, whether on paper, in Excel worksheets, or some other format, and they are all different, based on local needs and local database talents. It is not possible to build one database that would fit everybody’s needs. For this reason, the starter kit enables a community to get started, learn MS Access, and grow on its own.

The Services Committee can’t teach a community how to use Access, but it can assist, starting with the collection of data. At least two courses are available in local colleges and universities that teach the basics of Access. Specifically, the Access 2003/2007 Beginner’s Course and Access 2003/2007 Intermediate Course are available through ED2Go, an organization that partners with local schools to offer noncredit continuing education courses. The courses can also be taken on-line (see www.ed2go.com).

If your community needs help in building a database and is willing to put in the effort, let us know who your contact will be, how much data is available already, and in what format (e.g., paper, Excel spreadsheets, etc.).

The Starter Kit will get you started!

Send inquiries and interest to ServicesChair@tresdias.org

Yes, Lives Do Change—To Find Out How Much, Just Ask

Tres Dias was an initial opening of my heart and spirit to how much God loves me, and how that love can be shared.

I am into the Word as never before. I have held many positions in my church since my weekend. I am now involved with Kairos prison ministry.

What did Tres Dias mean to me? It was a Road to Damascus experience that changed my life in every way.

By Don Bohl

Do people who participate in a Tres Dias weekend *really* feel closer to Christ? And do they *actually* become leaders in their local congregations? Are their lives after the weekend essentially the same as before, or has something fundamental changed?

The best way to find answers is to ask people to reflect on what Tres Dias means to them. The Fairfield County Tres Dias community did just that by inviting pescadores to complete a 25-item questionnaire, distributed at a closing and also made available online at the community's website. Fifty persons responded online, and another 40 completed paper questionnaires. The quotations at the head of this article are a sample of the kind of testimony respondents provided.

The questionnaire collected information on reunion groups, sponsorship, secuelas, outreach, and other matters. This information, much of it statistical, should prove useful in the community's strategic planning effort, launched in January of this year. But the most valuable responses were those indicating how lives have changed—valuable because they confirm that the Tres Dias weekend does exactly what the Essentials say it should do.

Research writers always look for ways to announce that "the data provide startling new insights into..." whatever the subject may be. In this case, however, there are no surprises. The respondents' comments speak to a truth that almost everyone who has been through a weekend understands. Those comments are not so much "research data" as they are a prayer of praise—an awe-filled, humble, profound welling up of thanksgiving for what the Lord has done in their lives.

The most satisfying insights came from two open-ended questions: "Describe how being a member of a reunion group is helping you on your fourth day," and "Describe the ways Tres Dias has led to changes in your life." Almost all respondents took the time to answer these questions, with the 50 online respondents being especially fluent in open-

ing their hearts to share what Tres Dias has meant—and producing more than 2,000 words of inspiring commentary on the second question alone.

Three major themes emerged from the answers:

- More involvement with and support of the local congregation. Some respondents listed a dozen or more volunteer activities and leadership roles they had assumed since their weekends.
- More frequent Bible reading and study of the Word—often on a daily basis.
- Increased ability to share Christ with others.

Secondary themes included "greater awareness of God's grace and forgiveness," "increased ability to cope with life's problems," "greater inner peace," and "knowing God's plan for my life."

Often, of course, the themes are interrelated with, for example, more frequent Bible study making a difference in other aspects of life.

I definitely do more Bible study now and give more thought to how to apply Scripture in my daily life. I have become more thoughtful in how I interact with others and more aware of the necessity to be Christ-like at all times, especially when discussing my faith with others and encouraging them to get to know Jesus.

I am a daily reader of the Bible. I have increased my involvement with a variety of ministries including support for the unemployed, prison ministry, lay Eucharistic ministry, and hospital visiting services, and I have begun education for ministry training.

Daily Bible reading, creating improved relations with my children, greater inner peace, and less self-imposed pressure – Tres Dias really was a miracle experience!

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A number of respondents told about how Tres Dias had helped to bring about a total change in their lives.

The change was in all ways and in all things. First of all, I did not have a church I called home and I now do. I did not have a relationship with Christ, and now I do. We are now active in church— youth ministry and other ministries, and of course Bible study. Our kids love to attend church. It’s become their foundation and we are forever grateful.

I’ve totally changed priorities. I have shifted my attitude to be more interested in what God thinks than what other people think. This has helped me to be more open in discussing and sharing my faith with people whose religious views I am unaware of.

Tres Dias inspired me to step out and develop my music skills in ways I did not think I could.

It was the beginning of seeing myself as a leader and being able to understand, accept, and act upon God’s call for my life.

It made me realize that God loved me so much that he sent His only Son to die for me. I always thought I wasn’t worthy enough. Now I realize no one is worthy enough. Praise God for His mercy!

Of course, the weekend is only one phase of the “Tres Dias Method,” and the questionnaire also collected statistical information and insights on the pre-weekend phase (sponsorship) and the post-weekend phase (secuelas and reunion groups). Clearly, there is work to be done. Respondents reported that it has become increasingly difficult for potential candidates to take three whole days away from work and family. Also, the cost of the weekend is proving an obstacle for some. Other respondents pointed to the need for better promotional materials.

Only about six out of ten respondents said that they were currently active in a reunion group. However, almost all who were not active said that they would likely join a reunion group if invited.

The secretariat entered into the research praying that the data would reveal God’s plans for Tres Dias in Fairfield County and provide insights into how to make the blessings of Tres Dias available to more people. The work has just begun.

Note: Other communities are welcome to use the Fairfield County questionnaire as part of their strategic planning. For a copy of the survey instrument, send a request to newsletter@tresdias.org.

The Effects are Lasting



There’s the saying that “what is said on the weekend stays on the weekend,” meaning that the personal, often painful disclosures that teammates and candidates share are spoken in confidence, in the presence of the forgiving and healing hand of the Savior. While those disclosures are not to be talked about outside the cloister, the changed lives speak eloquently.

Here’s an accounting by Jamaica Tres Dias after that community’s September 2008 weekends, as described in the July 2009 “Community Highlights” report to the International Secretariat.

Fathers were forgiven

Marriages were restored

Bitterness and hatred were healed

Self-destructive thoughts and behavior ended.

At least one child that we know of will not be aborted. Thank you, Jesus.

Prejudices were recognized and broken

Leadership developed

Joy was restored

The men had 24 candidates and 3 dedications on their weekend. The women had 42 candidates and 6 dedications, hopefully to be followed with baptism at their local churches.



To our readers...a request for help

Do you have a story to tell about how Tres Dias has helped to develop lay leaders for your congregation? If so, tell us about it. Our staff is planning to develop an article on this theme for a future issue of The Colors of Tres Dias International and we need your help. Send your anecdotes to newsletter@tresdias.org or simply give us your contact information and we will interview you to get the story.

As the Storm Raged, They Celebrated Victory

Here is how Anna Dubrovsky of Moscow Tres Dias describes the events that set the tone for a weekend in Voronezh, Russia, earlier this year.

"On Friday there was a strong storm and many trees around the facility were fallen. The electricity was turned off because of the accident. We had a forgiveness ceremony during that moment. There was no panic; we simply lit candles. At the end of that day in the chapel, we sang the weekend song, "Hope" by Hillsong. The chorus contains the following words, "When the oceans rise and thunders roar, I will soar with you above the storm. Father, you are king over the flood. I will be still and know that you are God."

Anna describes how that song transformed fear into praise. "Behind a window lightning sparkled and there was rain, and in our hearts there was a victory celebration, joy and gratitude for God for His power, love, and mercy to us. All of us experienced God's presence."

The Dubrovsky's newsletter, *Tres Dias in Russia*, reports what some of the candidates had to say about their experience.

I completely forgot about my cell phone, my family, my job. I have never opened my heart to God so wide and never told God so much. Before the weekend I wanted to score success by myself in order for God to be proud of me.... I compared myself with others and saw their sins and problems but not in my own.

[Before the weekend] I had no power of Christ and no willingness to be a real Christian. I repented of my sins and turned toward Jesus.... Jesus showed me my sinful heart. I am humbled. I realized I need a strong relationship with God.

Tres Dias is for me a lifting. I have again risen.... I came to the weekend strained. I was disappointed in the Christian life. I served

automatically. I prayed, fasted, talked to pastors, but helped nothing.... God restored me. Here I was released. I should go further, to serve, love, and grow in Christ.

Voronezh is an emerging community sponsored by Moscow Tres Dias. The team for the weekend drew from both the Moscow and St. Petersburg communities. People from St. Petersburg spent 21 hours to get to it at Voronezh by car. For the Moscow team, it was much easier, only 11 hours.



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Upcoming Meetings

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| Mar 12-14, 2010 | International Secretariat | Abundant Life Tres Dias/Northern Illinois |
| July 9-11, 2010 | International Assy & Secretariat | Cleveland, OH |
| Oct 22-24, 2010 | International Secretariat | RIMA Warwick, RI |
| Mar 11-13, 2011 | International Secretariat | Central Georgia |
| July 8-10, 2011 | International Assy & Secretariat | Mid-Carolina Belmont, NC |
| Oct 21-23, 2011 | International Secretariat | Long Island Tres Dias |