

WEB History Pages

2021

Jan/Feb:

We arrived the end of January to a thoroughly soaked Floron, Ecuador! The glorious monsoon rain had our banana, mango, orange, and lime trees blessing us with not only 'fruit from the vine' but also kept our cistern full for purifying water, thus reducing non-potable water purchased from the city.



Unlike summer oranges, the winter oranges must be picked when they just start to have a hint of yellow because if allowed to become full yellow, they will be spoiled. Winter oranges are good for juice only, not eating.

What can we say regarding COVID-19 except "*Great job!*" to Dra. Silvia, our medical director and the Emanuel Church next to the clinic. . . both are strictly practicing the 6' distancing, giving everyone a hand squirt of sanitizer as you enter, masks and prior to entering, wiping your shoes on a 'Clorox instilled mat'. Even our morning devotions are 'COVID-19 consciences'.



Morning devotions to start the day – then let the patients now use the room!

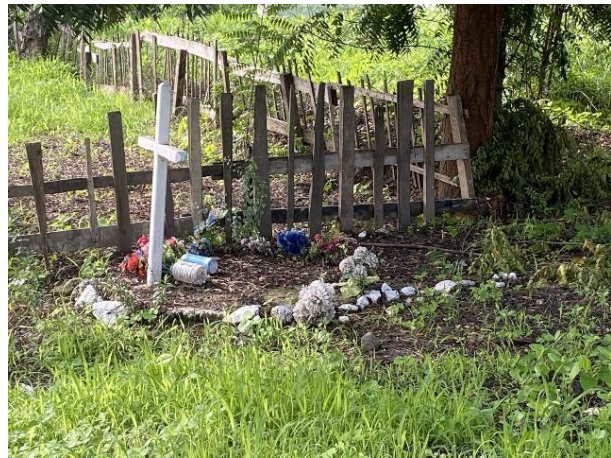
Regarding water sales, our major challenge is competition . . . other water plants even in Floron and large trucks delivering the competitors water driving by the clinic and water plant. Here is a photo of the water team.



Jorge, Pepe, Michael, Moises

Richard took Elizabeth out to the cemetery to show her how bad of a condition it was in. the project she planned involved cleaning it up – to not only beautify

Pastor Gruezo's grave area but the whole cemetery. She had no idea how huge of an area it covers and what it will take to accomplish this project. She thought this would be simple, but found out that she was very, very wrong. . . and even more humbled! During the rainy season the grass and weeds are green – the dry season, brown and ugly.



The refugees from Venezuela remain. Eliana and Mayra put together care bags with soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, and that were donated by individuals in the US and because of what we were able to purchase in anticipation of a mission team that was cancelled last October.



Myra (Nurse) and Eliana (Accountant)

Rice, lentils, and chicken were purchased so that Dra. Silvia could make meals along with baby diapers for those that needed them.

Mar:

Unfortunately, we have two trees that need to be trimmed once a year but due to the cost we let it slide several months beyond.



A lot of wood sheeting has to be put up to protect the bushes and plants below.

Elizabeth expressed her disappointment in the condition of the Floron cemetery as she hoped it would be a project she could take on. The size of the area and condition was a little overwhelming. She and the church youth began levelling the ground at Pastor Gruezo's crypt site— planting flowering bushes using a machete. Yes, that world-wide useful tool. It not only cuts limbs off trees but one can also use it to dig holes. Carlos could dig two holes to Elizabeth's one. . . he used a machete; she used a shovel.





During the rainy season, the water distribution valves to Portoviejo and Floron are closed for cleaning. When that happens or when we have not been able to collect rainwater, we need to get a water tank truck from another location to fill our cistern in order to continue pure water production.

Pastor Alexi's church last Sunday is in a different part of Portoviejo and he asked us to be praying for Ecuador. He has been a dear friend for many years.



Our 1ST EVER (and last) FYTA COOKBOOK (224 recipes!) was produced and sold at \$15 each just in time for Mother's Day!

Apr:

Covid cases amount to nearly 200 deaths per day, medical employees nearly 20 deaths per month. There are driving restrictions as well as curfews – 8pm till 5am every night where no one can be outside their homes except to-from essential jobs. The weekend is worse – Friday 8pm till 5am on Monday. That means no church services! Unemployment is very high. Before Covid, the un-official rate was 12% - now 30% plus.

May:

Covid cases have remained high the entire time. All hospital beds are full with Covid patients. Vaccine is now available for age groups 70 and higher. Government first responders and finally private first responders were able to get the vaccine – the Chinese version Sinovac and some Pfizer. They have now ordered vaccines from Russia – “Sputnik V”.

The trees were just trimmed in March, but this trip highlighted the need to remove two trees since it became evident that the roots were beginning to invade the water plant structure and water pipes. Sadly, the large rubber tree along with a **Ficus** tree had to be removed. The large mango tree right next to the water plant had to be topped (top half removed) to prevent its roots from causing damage. The scenery in our back yard has changed a lot but the good news is that there is now only one tree needing trimming once a year or so.



Large rubber tree removed



Top half of Mango tree removed.

After many years of water pooling on top of the large storage building that was a huge breeding ground for mosquitos something had to be done. The ceiling inside was also being destroyed (cracks, paint, and cement dust/pieces) due to water damage. Richard hired Pastor Ramon (who has a mini-construction business) to add concrete to the roof giving it a slight slope to drain the water.



Standing water shown by collected dirt.



Hand mixed cement on the roof – Ugh! They probably need back surgery!



After 5 years of challenging studies, compounded with keeping up with his custodial job at the clinic (which we believe were Spirit driven), Fabricio Mendoza received his certification as a lawyer on March 31st. However, due to Covid, they could not schedule graduation ceremonies until Thursday May 27th. The photos show his mother (Nelly) pinning a San Gregorio rosette (University of San Gregorio) on his left shoulder and his two daughters Nicole and Saraii.



Fabricio with mother Nelly



Fabricio with daughters Sarai and Nicole

Oct:

The Covid virus was so severe in the Buen Samaritano area that our concerns plummeted. Upon arrival in Floron two pastors and their wives were invited for dinner. Concerns and queried if the Floron Community was even aware we were a Christian clinic. Pastor Jon said the community is fully aware the clinic is Christian; however, his next comment initially stunned us and said that the problem was internal. With the combined suggestions of Pastors Gabriel, Jhon and their wives we came up with an innovative approach for morning devotions. It began Monday morning with all the staff. Our board, Richard and I, and many others had daily prayed for their protection in the many, long months of covid that took unspeakable numbers of lives daily. And I knew that God could not continue to protect Buen Samaritano with halfhearted allegiance to God, Our Father. . . His Son who shed His blood. . . and ignoring the power of the Holy Spirit residing in each of us. We must whole heartedly return to Him.

Thus, "En Contacto" (In Touch magazine) was used for devotions Monday through Thursday; and Friday would continue to be reserved for each person taking turns preparing a devotion. It took off like wild fire! What a blessing!



Buen Samaritano was contacted and requested aid for a 90-year-old mother with her invalid son. They lived totally isolated. Thus, one of our hospital beds, medical supplies and food were supplied.

Do you recall Juliana as an infant? She has a 3-chamber heart and major vessels are transposed. Incredibly she has graduated from high school, and she was just baptized. We have no idea how long her heart can sustain her body, but we and her family are all thankful for her every day.





What a joy! Pastor Gabriel assists an elderly man in the use of the “In Touch Messenger” which includes the Bible and sermons by Charles Stanley. “The Messenger” recharges by solar power or an electrical outlet adapter. All Messengers (over 150) were donated to us by “In Touch Ministries”.

Dec:

Richard returned to Ecuador one last time for the year to continue work on specific projects from his previous visit. Most of which are pretty much mundane and probably of little interest to you, but he was so glad to get them done.

We had an estimated bird infestation of over one hundred birds that decided that they needed a communal home in two of our trees as well as the clinic roof area. Well, you can imagine what that did to the ground below and the clinic – a major sanitary crisis never seen in all the years we have been in Floron. The roof railing is covered with silver bird tape and the one tree looks like a Halloween prank. It is an orange tree so it can not be trimmed. The other tree normally is trimmed every 1 ½ to 2 years but received an early shave.

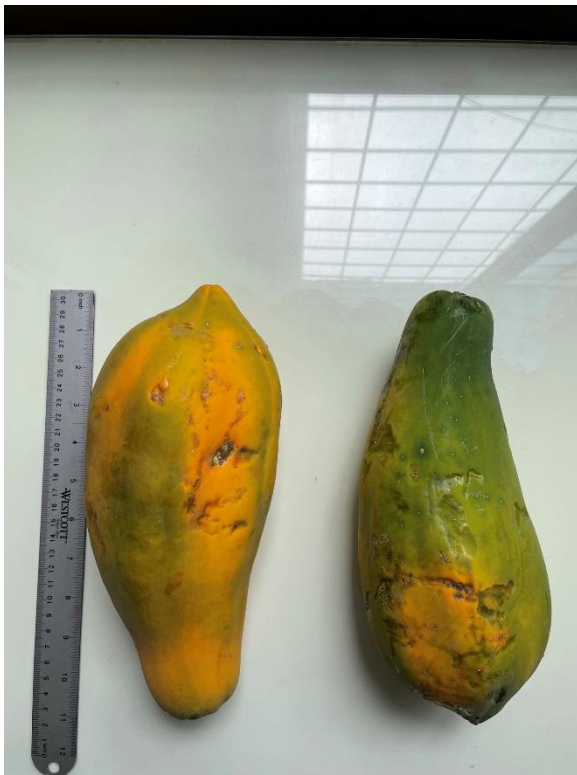


The back of the water plant has several very important pieces of equipment that were damaged by the sun. It was baked by the sun because we had to remove the huge rubber tree that originally protected that equipment. So, a new extensive cover was built by our pastor/construction friend Ramon.





Richard also enjoyed the harvest of the first ripe papaya that sits just outside our bedroom window. We now have five fruit trees – oranges, papaya, mango, limon and banana. One would think that we run a fruit plantation instead of a clinic and water plant!!!! It has taken a lot of years to develop.



We just added our 7th specialist that is collaborating with the foundation (clinic) to offer their services to our patients. Dra. Patricia Morales, a neurologist, will offer services on Fridays.

God willing, both Richard and Elizabeth will return to Ecuador in early January 2022 as another year has come about where we were not able to hold a Christmas party for the staff in December. So once again it will be held in January.