

WEB History Pages

2022

Jan:



Oh, what fun it is to ride – in an airplane full of masked people!

Yes, masks were required on all airlines and in the terminals. A Covid test was required for entry into Ecuador and when we returned home the US also required one.

We have not been able to hold our staff Christmas party for the last 3 years. And due to covid we decided it was best to not hold the party in our 'snug' apartment as was normal for many years. It was held in the large patient waiting room where we could give each other some space. We did however need to be close for some of the fun games that were led by our two 'game experts,' Eliana and Loly.



Dra. Silvia 'administering' the cracker placement on Elizabeth and Loly's forehead. The idea is to wiggle your face muscles to move the cracker down and ultimately into your month. The first one to accomplish this feat – wins! Elizabeth did it!!!!



We had everyone take their masks off for the photo but Dra. Karolina was playing it safe. Two of our staff members could not make it – our day guard and night guard.

Richard brought down a couple more bird dummies to scare away the birds at night or day. Had our day guard Meza secure them in the trees. Love birds, but too many is a mess and a major health hazard.



Water competition has gotten so tough that our plant has gone from self-sufficiency to being supported for now. It is a money-making business, especially if you do not have to pay minimum wages and social security even though they are required. Below is a competing water truck.



May:

This trip was brief but of a different focus. If you recall Juliana, now twenty-one, was born with a three chambered heart and major vessels transposed. Juliana had repeatedly asked me when we were coming to Floron; she wanted us to be there for her wedding. . . What an honor it was for us to attend her and Alejandro's wedding.



The reception was in the 'Oriente' (jungle) at Alejandro's parents' home. A young boy was teased to climb one of the palm trees and pick a fresh coconut for us. The

next morning Juliana and Alejandro brought us a huge palm branch with *six* coconuts. And the day we were to return home Juliana called me and said we must go out in front of the clinic . . . Her dad would be there momentarily! And at that moment he came chugging and sputtering in his car and handed us fresh, out of the oven, hot pan de yuca (bread from yucca). They could be described as the consistency of Elmer's glue on the inside with a delicious, distinctive flavor.

Juliana and family live in Floron 8, perhaps we have previously mentioned that it is 'peligroso' . . . dangerous. Juliana's mom makes 'pan de yuca' every morning and then Fernando walks the streets and peddles them.



Juliana and her mother

Besides the joy of being at Juliana and Alejandro’s wedding there were two ‘unexpected’ blessings for me. The first morning at devotions, we were stunned and speechless at the closing prayer which is usually by one person. . .However, every person offered a prayer. . . and this included the four ‘water technicians’ whose prayers were passionate and from deep within each heart.



Morning staff devotions in the patient waiting area.

Pastor Meza (clinic day guard), wife Bella and family normally attended Sunday morning services at the church next to the clinic – which is also the one Elizabeth and Richard attend. But now, Pastor Meza and family offer Sunday morning services at the small chapel/church next to their home in Floron 8. They also do the Wednesday night services there.



Jul:

Arrival in Quito was marked by 20,000 Indigenous that descended on the city a week earlier and were blocking all major highways throughout the country with piles of dirt and boulders. They presented thirteen demands of the current president regarding education, healthcare, the price of gasoline, food, job availability, etc. Unable to travel to our friend's home, we had to stay at a hotel close to the airport. We were unsure if we could continue to our Manta flight the next day since our taxi driver pointed out rocks, boulders and dirt mounds that had been pushed to the side of the highway. He told us that he wasn't sure if we could return to the airport the next day. United had cancelled two days of their daily flights prior to our leaving Denver because the Quito Airport had been shut down by the indigenous uprising. They were only able to continue because they managed to get their staff around the blockades and put them up in the hotel right across the street from the airport.



We were able to return to the airport and fly as planned the next day. That is how the trip began. .
.Grocery stores were looking grim: not an egg to be found, no meat or poultry, etc.

We have stepped out of our comfort zone to explore a new evangelism avenue as we hosted Music Director Chris Lang from Colorado Community Church. Chris was on a scouting trip to investigate a possible 'music mission' in 2023. We prepared a lunch meeting with the two local pastors (Gabriel and Jhon with their wives), Dra. Silvia (our medical director), Fabricio (our custodian and lawyer), with Cliff (our board member who was back to visit family). It was great – with Cliff translating – to see the warmth and eagerness between everyone. With his music musician team Chris has travelled the world evangelizing. Besides concerts, they bring donated instruments and teach musicians in the church - which he actually did on this trip.



Jhon, Chris, Gabriel

Cherry Creek Quilter Ladies continue blessing new moms coming to the clinic. Hundreds of quilts have been brought down and gifted. . . and when giving a quilt to a new mom, it is a joy to tell them it is ladies in our church in the United States that made these cheery quilts for their new baby. Many thanks Cherry Creek quilting ladies!



Cherry Creek Pres has continued to donate many Bibles that we continue to bring down and give at the clinic plus we have been able to also give Bibles to Pastor Gabriel and Pastor Jhon who were more than pleased to have for new members in their churches.



Sept:

Elizabeth stayed home to babysit granddaughter Cora (2 ½). Richard coordinated with Dra. Silvia and Fabricio on minor clinic issues and then worked with the water guys (technicians). Together we continued to work on fine tuning the equipment and operation manuals. It was evident that they needed some re-current training.



A longtime friend and patient of ours, Joffre Sanchez, only 44 years, went to be with the Lord prior to Richard's arrival. He left behind his wife, Maria, and their three children.

Another long-time friend, Pastor Gruezo, went to the Lord in December 2020. Here he and Joffre are shown together. They both passed away due to a heart attack and are deeply missed.



Pastor Gruezo and Joffre



Joffre's wife Maria and family.

On a Sunday Richard attended church and as usual, near the end of the service (2 hours +) they celebrate birthdays by having the individuals stand up front while the congregations

sing the happy birthday song with a Spanish twist (different than our English version). Low and behold they were celebrating one hundred years for another long-time friend, Ramon, who came to our Wednesday morning Wheelchair Program. He always had a great smile whenever he saw Elizabeth. We had not seen him for some time, so it was wonderful to be able to shake his hands and wish him well on his landmark birthday!



Oct:

We had asked Candy McCune to return to Floron to the review principles of “Peacemakers” (Biblical conflict/resolution principles) to the clinic staff (For some, it was the first time presented, others a review from six years ago). Candy has a gift for going ‘below the surface’ in situations where it appears there is resolve but in truth there remains deep hurt that fester and grows over time.



Luz Marina Vera (interpreter) – Candy McCune – Flori Zambrano



Clinic staff plus pastors Alexi, Gabriel, and Jhon

Elizabeth Engkjer authored a book highlighting the various events that she felt the workings of the Holy Spirit in our mission. "I CAN'T DO THIS!" ("So, Who Will?") was given to all the staff who appeared in the book. . . It was gratifying to see their reaction and sincere thanks to those who have purchased a copy through Amazon as a fundraiser for Buen Samaritano Clinic and Water.

Nov:

November 28th found us heading back to Ecuador for a brief trip. Diana, from our el Floron church, was graduating from a five-year government nursing program that we supported. Finally, the date for the graduation ceremony was given just a week prior. Through the last several months she repeatedly asked if we could please be there, but no graduation date was forth coming. We then ultimately made a last-minute trip to arrive early morning the day of the graduation.



Prior to the ceremony Diana gathered six of her friends to meet us.



After the graduation program, we were invited back to her parent's home in Floron. . . very humble and the perfect setting for beginning the Advent of Jesus birth. At the graduation home celebration everyone gave words of congratulations for all of Diana's accomplishments. Now she will be sent to an underserved medical location in Ecuador where she will work for one year.

