

MOUNTAIN MILESTONES

News from Bill and Linda Brierly in Guatemala

Our Garden - March 2009

The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers, and cities, but to know someone here and there who thinks and feels with us, and who, though distant, is close to us in spirit, **THIS makes the earth for us an inhabited garden.** Goethe

During the past 3 months we traveled across mountains, rivers, and through cities and spent quality time with many of you who are "close to us in spirit". The time we spent with you was a privilege and a delight for us.

Now our feet are solidly on Guatemalan soil again and you are all very distant from us.

We are getting settled and working on a new routine to maintain balance and calm in our daily lives. And to live healthier. We've started daily walks again which we had let slide in the last few years and are more careful with what we eat.

Things are calm with the ministry, although we haven't started all our programs in full swing yet, mostly due to staff changes and the local disaster of the land slide in January. Dolores had left to live and study in the capitol, but - Praise God! - after we had a meeting with her, she has decided to come back for this year. Meanwhile Eva had been having health and family struggles and had decided she needed to take a 3-month leave of absence starting in March. But-Praise God!-this week she had what she calls a spiritual and family breakthrough and now doesn't need the time off. Glenda, Nicolas, and Carlos are fine, firing on all cylinders!

We won't start the community health and bible education until April, which will leave us time to plan for and carry out the Rural Pastors Bible Seminar due to take place in March. A team from Michigan is coming down to teach again for the second time. This will also allow us time to implement the God's Story Project with the collaboration of the local pastors. During the next two weeks the Pokomchi Evaluation DVD will be reviewed by various groups; then we can give the "green light" to the folks in California to produce the final professional master DVD. Another step forward!

The 2 Pokomchi nurses, Mateo and Roberto, continue to serve faithfully and excellently at the Health Post. There are no signs that the Guatemalan Ministry of Health will be taking over the project in June of this year, so we have decided to extend our commitment until the end of December. We

are trusting God to supply the funds we will need to cover the salaries and the medicines.

Our 10 middle school scholarship students are in full swing in their third and last year of middle school. We have the promise of a scholarship for one of the boys to study to be an Agricultural Technician starting in 2010. We hope to find scholarships for the others to be able to go on to study a career next year.

We are experiencing a "hiccup" in the Goat Program. In December a lot of baby goats were born and some of them died within a few weeks. One young nanny died trying to give birth to triplets. Nicolas, our staff goat resource person, spent 13 days of his annual vacation going out to the community to help care for the goats. It seems that the ladies have decided to blame Nicolas for the deaths and now they don't want us to continue helping them. Two steps forward, one step back. Sometimes it seems like ONE step forward and TWO steps back! We've asked the ladies to come to our office to talk it over if they want us to stay involved. So the ball is in their court.

The landslide situation has settled down. Most people have returned to their villages, although the access road still is not cleared and probably never will be again. The big issue is how to create a new access road to that area. This is a national government decision which will probably take a LOONNG time to decide. Meanwhile people are trying as best they can to resume their lives. In one of the affected villages, deaths left 20 children orphaned. The rest of the families in the village have decided to keep the children there and take care of them in the village. They have a lot of distrust of government authorities.

Thank s to all of you who donated to the disaster relief through ASOSAP. We were able to send \$1000 worth of relief, mostly in the form of food, but also we donated two wood cook stoves with pots and utensils, and some clothes.

Thank you all, as well, for caring about and supporting what happens in our lives and the ministry here in Guatemala. You truly DO make our world an INHABITED GARDEN!

Digging Away and Trying to Smell the Flowers,

Bill and Linda

For financial gifts, please mail your checks to the following:

In Canada

Hope of the Pokomchi
Box 1817 RR#1
Clearwater, BC V0E-1N0

In U.S.A.

PRISM Foundation
6831 Cottage Hill Lane
Celina, TX 75009

Make check out to:

Clearwater Christian Church

PRISM Foundation

In lower left of check, write: Hope of the Pokomchi -(either) Brierly Support (or)
Project