



Holden Newsletter - November 2016

We hope the following highlights will help you find and read what interests you!

Main Topics

Main Points

Praises/Requests

Dear Friend, Encourager, Partner-in-Mission,

WORKING IN DARK PLACES

Sometimes when I hear myself say that I minister to girls ages 9-17 rescued from human-trafficking not only do the people I'm speaking to stop and take a quick breath but even I, sometimes, do the same! When I first met the director of this ministry, it was because of a misdirected phone contact. But within seconds after realizing I had a wrong number I found myself asking questions and with a deep desire to meet face to face with him. After listening to his testimony and how God was working in this ministry I knew that I had NOT dialed a wrong number because it was all in God's plan from the start.

After three hours of intense conversation in his office, he asked me to pray about whether God might be asking me to serve in this ministry. My initial thought was to say "no," but instead the words that came out of my mouth were "I will pray about it." Then he introduced me to the girls; one had just turned 10 years old. I left that day with a heavy heart and God would not lift that burden from me until after six weeks of prayer and when I would eventually say "yes" to His plan.

For the past year, we both have become involved in praying for these girls, the ministry, the staff, volunteers, and the director and his family. We have come to develop a relationship with them and have shared struggles and encouraging seasons this past year. God also placed it on our heart's to share about this ministry while in the U.S. last spring. This resulted in a team from our church coming to Ecuador last August to help with a re-construction project on the new property purchased for the future site for the expanding ministry program and new safe house for the girls.

Recently, a weekly opportunity came about to help another volunteer teach English to the girls. This other person knows very little Spanish, so I help her and the girls when translation is necessary. **No sooner, had I committed to helping and the unthinkable happened - a serious breach in security at the government shelter in which the girls are staying. This is the first time this has occurred and the girls, along with the shelter and ministry staff, are now on high alert with increased security measures being put into place.** We wish we could share with you more information but because of the nature of the incident and the threat of future contact with a potentially harmful individual or group of individuals we can only share with you what we already have.

PLEASE PRAY for the safety of everyone as we all continue serving in this ministry! These girls are precious in the sight of God's eyes! Also, please pray for the construction of the future facility and home which is already underway! We feel that 'the enemy' is attempting to discourage the staff from continuing in this type of ministry and it's potential for danger. We plan to return to our U.S. community sometime next year and will be able to share with you more as to the faithfulness of Our Lord - even in dark places!

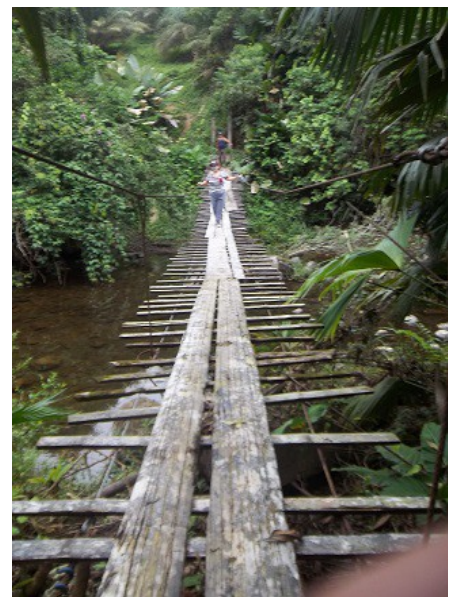
PLEASE DO NOT share this information unless it is for the purpose of prayer with people you can trust. Do not discuss this information, our names, or the name of the ministry with youth or with children, over the phone, in an email, on Facebook, over Skype, or in any form of social media for the safety of the staff and the girls. We will send out basic prayer requests as things progress.

GOD'S CONTINUED LOVING CARE

We went into this type of ministry knowing that our life would be both joyous and challenging. Big city life has taken a toll on us at times but we are learning to create balance in our annual, monthly, weekly, and daily living practices. **The Lord has certainly provided for us** in the form of an 8-day vacation to celebrate our wedding anniversary, as well as a ladies retreat, both **in the month of October.** **But He didn't stop there. In November, we were able to get away for a weekend with an Ecuadorian couple we know.** Rosy and Bolivar "Bolo" own 85 acres of land halfway to the coast and have acres of various crops including palm trees which produce palm oil. Rosy is retired and Bolo, though near retirement, still works full-time in addition to managing their palm oil crops.

We traveled 3 ½ hours by car, through beautiful mountains to a lush tropical grassland region where we were able to get relief from the dry, dusty, cool air of our mountainous city and enjoy the warm, clear, and moist air of the lowlands. Their property is an inheritance from their parents to which they escape to twice per month. **It seems even the native city-dwellers desire to leave this city whenever possible!**

We spent our Friday afternoon and Saturday enjoying their beautiful gardens and lying in hammocks next to their pool. Bolo has planted every type of tropical tree, bush, and plant that we've come to know since our arrival here. **Rosy and Bolo's two sisters**, who were also staying at "la finca" (the hobby farm) that weekend, **spoiled us with their homemade dishes**, including plantain (prepared in every manner possible with every meal) and fresh tropical juices.

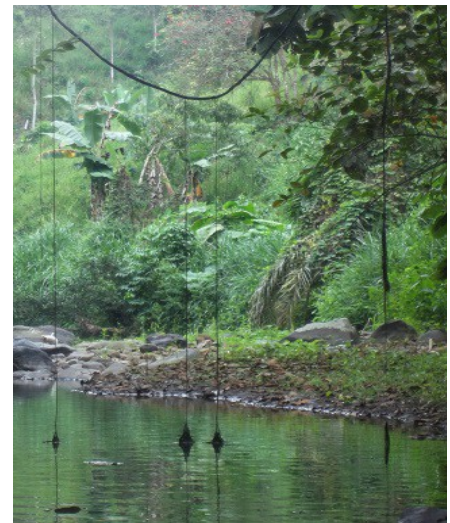




Saturday we traveled to the local village where everyone seems to know Bolo's family. We strolled through the little park, ate ice cream, and visited the locals who were sharing lunches at an outdoor restaurant. **In the heat of the day, we took naps in the hammocks and went for a swim in their pool. In the cool of the evening, we listened to music, in English and in Spanish, from the outdoor speakers, singing and dancing and laughing under the starry sky** (something you don't see much in the city). Rosy speaks just a little English, Bolo knows a few sentences, and the sister's know a few funny expressions which kept us in tears of laughter most of the evening. **It's amazing how people can enjoy each other's company despite language barriers! We are grateful to the Lord for providing such an enjoyable weekend for everyone!**

MIXING WORK AND PLEASURE

Seems we've been traveling a lot lately - the coast, the tropical grasslands, other parts of the mountains, and now back to the jungle. Darrell needed to return to Shell (formerly Shell Mera, where Nate Saint's wife, Marge, kept contact with him in his airplane when the five missionaries were brutally killed in Ecuador in 1956). **We decided that since Darrell had to work there three days, we would add on two days of vacation and stay the entire week.** Monday through Wednesday, Darrell held a fire extinguisher information and training session and also helped out with some maintenance projects at Reach Beyond's properties in Shell. While Darrell worked mainly outside in the humidity and hot sun, I worked in the warm and humid indoors near ceiling and table-top fans taking care of our ministry office work and bookkeeping. It rained nearly every day, cooling things off a bit. But after the showers ended, the sun would come out and steam things up more than before! **We thank the Lord that the evenings provided some relief from the heat** yet it was a challenge to sleep with the various jungle bird noises during the night in the bushes right outside our bedroom window.





We stayed in a dorm-style building with a common kitchen and living space. Our bedroom had an outside entrance on one side of the building. **On the opposite side of our building were bedrooms for older foster children being taken care of by the government. Then a few feet away were three more dorm-style buildings which houses additional children rescued from situations and homes where they had experienced neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse, and other situations. There are 23 children in all, ages 3-17. This Christian ministry - El Centro de Acogimiento Esperanza Eterna (The Eternal Hope Welcome Shelter) - is housed in part of the former Hospital Vozandes-Oriente (the Voice of the Andes Hospital in the jungle).**

Because of unfortunate circumstances the HVO hospital is no longer able to continue serving the people of the jungle. Many hearts of the local people, whom the hospital served for more than 50 years, were broken when this change came about.

But Dr. Wolff, a former surgeon of HVO has now opened a medical clinic in one part of the hospital building and also provides space in another part of the building for the shelter for these children. Praise be to God!



Monday through Wednesday I concentrated on computer work in the morning when the children were in school, and then in the afternoon, I spent some time getting to know the the children and the ministry staff. Many of the older children seemed pleased that we would spend time chatting with them on our front patio and offered us plenty of smiles and 'high-fives' whenever we would see them. The youngest referred to me as "Mami" and would jabber away believing I was fluent in her language and could understand her every word of Spanish mixed with 'baby talk'. Of course I couldn't but smiles and hugs work well to fill in the gaps!



Thursday, Darrell and I were invited to join in a Thanksgiving feast with 12 other missionaries. We enjoyed a traditional North American meal of turkey with all the trimmings, including pie. The home in which we enjoyed fellowship was the home of Ian and Linda McFarland. Ian, an Irishman, has served with Reach Beyond on their medical caravans in rural areas around Quito and in the jungle for many years. **We thank the Lord for this chance to celebrate our home country's traditions with such hospitable people.** Then later the same afternoon, we strolled downtown to watch the parade celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of Shell enjoying the native dress, dancing, and other local traditions of the people from the jungle areas.



Friday, we visited another children's facility near Shell. Casa de Fe (House of Faith) is a Christian ministry which houses and cares for 53 children, mostly with disabilities. Patty Sue, a former military servicewoman, has been the director of this ministry for the past 17 years. She introduced us to a visiting team from Georgia and to some of the children.

Three in particular, touched our hearts:

a 3-year-old girl who was brought to the center by her prostitute mother, a 2-year-old girl whose mother is HIV positive, and a 2-year-old girl who was born without a right eyeball - - - >



Like the 23 children at The Eternal Hope Welcome Shelter each of these 53 children have their own stories of hardship. But one day, because of being cared for by loving, Christian workers, they will have new stories to tell about how the Lord protected them and provided for them!

At the end of our visit, Patty Sue asked Darrell, during the next time he visits Shell, if he would be willing to teach her ministry staff topics in Fire Safety, First Aid, and Emergency Awareness.

On Saturday we left Shell, grateful for the many ways in which the Lord places opportunities before us to serve others with the skills He's given us!



Darrell teaching the missionary staff about different types of fire extinguishers and the proper uses for each type.



Darrell providing hands-on training of the proper techniques for extinguishing fires.



Darrell working with Vinicio and other maintenance helpers fixing a fence that was damaged by falling trees during a jungle storm a few months ago.



Sondra and two local Waorani women from the same tribal people who speared the five missionaries in 1956 and many of whom are now Christian believers. These two women were selling handmade jewelry.

***This Thanksgiving we wish to thank you from the bottom of our hearts
for your prayers, your financial support,
and your hands-on physical support
which enable us to serve the Lord in these ways!
May He bless you and your families abundantly!***

Darrell and Sondra Holden

Ripe For Harvest Missionaries - Partnering with Reach Beyond - Ecuador, S.A.



Send Your Financial Gifts to:

Ripe For Harvest
Acct 20319
PO Box 487
Monument CO 80132-0487

Our Email:

dsholden.ec@gmail.com

Our Personal Website:

www.ReachBeyondTheMountains.com

Our Skype Name:

dsholden1

Our Ecuador Cell:

593-099-908-2264

Mail Letters & Cards Locally To:

Darrell and Sondra Holden, c/o Tina Bush, 1250 Peach St, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

Mail Letters & Cards Directly To:

Darrell y Sondra Holden
REACH BEYOND
Casilla 17-17-691
Quito, Ecuador 170508
SOUTH AMERICA

Ship DHL Packages (Under 3 lbs) Directly To:

Darrell y Sondra Holden
REACH BEYOND (frente el Hospital Vozandes)
Oe-52 Villalengua y 10 de Agosto
Quito, Ecuador 170508
SOUTH AMERICA