

Les and Jane Zerbe

Missionaries in Costa Rica

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Dear friends,

Dry season Blues. In Alaska it's the Long Winter of cold and darkness; in Costa Rica in our area, there is a rainy and dry season and sometimes a shortage of water in the dry season leading sometimes to rationing. There is nothing more boring than going to a community water board meeting being conducted in Spanish!

But I go; I have my reasons. One is selfish: I like water out of the faucet and a daily shower. The other is, I want the only Bible centered church in Atenas to be the center of community interest. The water board concluded that they need a second well, water lines and another community water tank. That is equal to big bucks! Time out for a short prayer. "Lord, You know what they and I need today."

I told the water board to hurry and get me all the numbers and relevant details, that I could not promise them anything, but that I would look for grant money from the United States. (Just let the printing presses of the Federal Reserve stay on for one more second!)

A week later at the next meeting, we met a man in our community who lives nearby us in Atenas, who has lived and worked in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska since 1974. He rotates when off work every couple of weeks out of Alaska to our community. So, this worker from Prudhoe Bay gets his employer, an oil company on the North Slope to fund the entire project as a tax write off!

The company big shots are even going to come to Costa Rica to meet and greet the water board. I can visualize myself making some fantastic smoked baby back ribs for the water board and the oilmen from Prudhoe Bay. (I make better ribs than Tony Roma!) "Just the thought of it!"

This property where we treat strangers as friends and friends as family will be open to them all.

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Ladies visiting Campo Zerbe: a female iguana in MY basket, a discipleship class in Spanish at our kitchen table led by missionary wife, and a ladies' retreat singing in the shade.



The building for the vocational school is currently under construction. Pictures of gravel, concrete footers and lumber are so boring. I'll send pictures showing more progress later.

Now imagine you are in a four-wheel drive Jeep or Toyota on a really bad road in a third-world country, 100 miles from one of its cities and 100 miles from your ministry point. There are no cell phone coverage, no service stations at all, and you have had two flat tires. Without another spare, what are you going to do? Well, as a practical matter, you should have been a graduate of our vocational school in Costa Rica. Then you would know to simply get out of your vehicle and find your tools that are in the trunk--a short-handled 4-pound hammer, a 1-2 ft long tire iron, a large flat screwdriver, a tire pump, and, of course, the jack.

You would have a can of "Fix-A-Flat", tire cement, and some tire plugs. A small container of Dawn dish soap and, Wal-lah!, You are on your way! Or rather voila! (*"Voila" is French for "Look Here" but people who are clueless, like us, sometimes say or spell it "Wal-lah" because the French do not pronounce the "V" as clearly as English speakers would.*) Now the hammer beats the tire into submission as the tire iron and the large flat blade screwdriver break the bead on one side of the wheel. Use a tire plug first if the tire is not seriously damaged. Also, pump the tire up first to find the hole in the tire and then maybe "Fix-a-Flat" will seal the small hole.

If the hole is too large, use a large tire patch called a "boot" using tire cement and possibly a spare inner tube. Before you pry the tire back on the rim of the wheel, use some Dawn dish soap on the bead of the tire. The tire slips over the wheel much easier and seals to the wheel better. If the bead won't seal on the wheel, cut a small branch from a tree in the forest, find the rope or parachute cord, which you should always have in the vehicle. Place the rope in the center of the tire around its entire circumference and use the small branch as a tire tourniquet, forcing compression on the tire to complete the bead. It's not all that complicated, but do you know a millennial, an 18-37 yr. old who could do this? Much less be prepared for it?

If you can't seal the tire to the rim, spray a little ether (starting fluid) in the tire, get a 6' dry branch from the forest. Light the end of the branch with your cigarette lighter and apply the flame on the end of the branch to the tire with just a small shot of ether. The resulting explosion will seal the bead and scare you out of your tire trance! You then continue to your ministry or home. Even though you got home late, your wife and children will think you are the best "MacGyver" in the world! You made it! www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0emi48dx_4

Thank you for your faithful prayers and support.

Les and Jane Zerbe, Atenas, Costa Rica.

SENOR SAM SEZ:
"People voting for Democrats is like chickens voting for Colonel Sanders!"



P.S. Les says: "Everyone should have a good cigarette lighter and a sharp pocket knife with them at all times. I use my knife every day. I might only use the lighter once in my life. But when required, it's a lifesaving moment!"



Picture not from Costa Rica

