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Missionaries in Costa Rica

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Dear friends the outpouring of support on the vocational school for missionaries has simply been overwhelming, leading to contributions that have left us stunned and extraordinarily grateful.

I recently talked to a 40-year-old missionary who had never used a drill bit. In fact, he did not know what a drill bit was! He had never changed the flat tire on a vehicle; he had insurance for that. None of this works in the rainforest!

Long story shorter, I wrote my last letter, and said we needed \$35,000 for a 70 foot by 100-foot free-standing, all steel building. This building would have a concrete floor strong enough to support a loaded semi-truck, and a 300-foot driveway. So far \$30,000 came in for the project in the first month! I'm sure the remaining \$5,000, plus some toilet money for the vocational school for millennial missionaries will come in due time.

I found out I can get a plastic septic tank delivered here for \$1,500. It's only when you don't have a commode nearby and you need one, do they become very important! Outhouses don't work very well here--too many creepy crawlies! And the temptation to "rig" the outhouse is just about overwhelming! Just imagine someone in the outhouse, already worried about creepy crawlies under the seat, and a recorded voice says in English and Spanish, "Hey! Could you be just a little more careful? I'm working down here!"

Juan Carlos, our Costa Rican Christian contractor has already started construction by moving the dirt and digging out the stumps from approximately 10 beautiful mango trees full of mangoes that were cut down with the chainsaw. Don't cry over the mango trees that we cut down; if you visit here, there are probably about 30,000 more mangoes on the property for you. I'd send you some mangos if U.S. Customs would let me. We won't run out anytime soon!

I may not be able to write for a while to personally thank each one of you who gifted this project. I'll be "up to my ears" in hard construction. Results soon! There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world, and that is an idea whose time has come.

A deacon in a church in Florida who is a fully licensed-contractor skilled in many different areas of construction is planning to come as a full time missionary and to teach in the vocational school. Also, some national Costa Rican builders from a church in another town will come to teach another set of the practical classes in Spanish.

The \$30,000 that has come in already has allowed us to start the project. Any future gifts will buy toilet, septic tank, and security bars to keep all our table saws, chainsaws, and many other tools from "walking off." Until then we must log chain and heavy padlock everything. I plan on having the students help me build a very strong tool room in the future. When you're trying to get something done in remote regions anywhere, ignorance is not bliss. If the Millennials



Many mangos hang on each branch.



Clearing the new building site



Newly extended driveway and pad for the building

are somewhat ignorant in certain practical areas, most likely they had no opportunity to dream and invent and think certain things out. The idea that it would be very difficult for a millennial generation missionary with only computer skills to make a go of it in a primitive area has taken hold.

Every generation has its challenges. It's a challenge when I'm flying in instrument weather, meaning I can't see anything beyond the wingtips. There is a simple question that must be asked almost every 5 to 10 seconds. "What next?" Without scanning the instruments constantly and taking care to honor the demands of every electronic checkpoint in the sky, I could find myself very quickly "in the weeds." To the millennial, it probably means "where does this cursor go next?" Or, "I wonder who colored their hair today on Facebook?" The "what next" questions when trying to reach an unreached people group are entirely different and challenging. It should be an interesting school. Thanks to all of you who gave so quickly this generous funding, so we could get started!

From a human standpoint I must report some unwelcome news. We have lost Eduardo Solano, our Costa Rican pilot. He just got sick, went to the hospital and a few days later was with the Lord. After an autopsy, they are still trying to figure out what happened. A few days later his boss at the small airport also died after similar symptoms! At night the entire small airport (not the international airport) was sprayed to kill whatever virulent germ may be at the airport. Suffice it to say, we are puzzled and saddened. The Cabécar Indians wait, and we wait for another Spanish-speaking pilot. All I can say is that Adam and Eve started it, but we will in the future be in the presence of the Almighty who has the hairs on our heads numbered. We must leave it with God. All else is fatalism with no answers. Death takes no bribes.

Recycled coyote! We now have a brave coyote who has eaten two of our roosters! A coyote sheds his coat once a year; his disposition never. A live trap I'll fabricate myself will fix that problem. I do plan to relocate that coyote, right into the stewpot! Then give to the chickens coyote stew. The chickens will then lay some more eggs, which I collect for breakfast. And a millennial asks me, "what's for breakfast?" I'll say, "recycled coyote." The millennial says, "just the thought of it...", and I get a double portion of eggs! If you are planning to go to the unreached people groups, you are going to have to get over "just the thought of it!"

We had our second anniversary of the "horse barn church" last Sunday. Aviation to the Cabécar is on hold until we find another pilot.

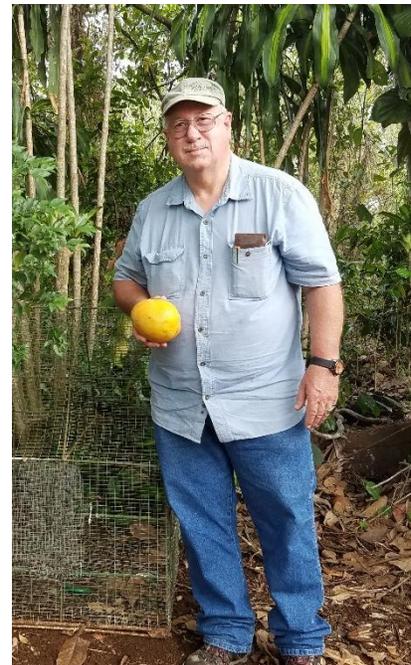
Okay, enough of this. There is more, but this is not supposed to be a book. The best thing of having no mailboxes at any house here is that I have not received even one piece of junk mail this year! Tree huggers should really be having riots and marches against junk mail in the USA; it uses up so many trees! The way to contact us is email zerbe.ak@gmail.com. The way to donate is to mail it to CMC with a note included "for the ministry of Les Zerbe" or for the ministry of Les Zerbe—vocational school." (Or however you may designate it.)

We continue to need your prayers and personal support. Thanks for all you do. Hope you know we are grateful and trying to represent you well here.

Thank you for your prayers and support.

Les and Jane Zerbe, Atenas, Costa Rica.

P.S. Due to an error, this May newsletter was only sent to the folks who receive paper mail letters. You email recipients are receiving our lost letter now. (At least we didn't lose 30,000 emails like that gal in the news!)



One of 30,000 mangos left and the coyote trap

SOURDOUGH SAM SEZ:
"Noah's Ark was not built with a computer. Neither were the pyramids!"

