

Les and Jane Zerbe

Helping missionaries reach remote ministry locations through aviation.

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Dear friends,

There's horse manure all over the donated plane. I must be doing something right! I've had two contacts with different Cabécar Indian groups using the plane to get to each.

One group deep in the rain forest has an improved horse pasture landing strip. The manure covered airstrip was scene to two plane wrecks as a Catholic priest, an aspiring pilot, tried to land there. After his second wreck, he gave up. My Bible says that all true believers are "believer-priests" who can "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4:16. So I prayed my short prayer, "Lord, you know what I need," and took two planeloads of Christmas toys to the Cabécar children. No toy stores near them! The Lord knew I needed to miss all the horses on landing, but left it up to me to miss the manure piles. I'm just not that good a pilot! There are old pilots and there are bold pilots, but there no old, bold pilots! Nor are there any known "horse-puckky" dodging pilots.

Second contact: from our last correspondence you may remember that I met a cattle rancher with a 1000 acre pasture filled with 700 cows, 75 horses, and a 40-year-old overgrown runway in the middle of the pasture. The rancher has totally reconstructed the runway for me, making it 3000 foot long with an electric fence to keep off the critters. Jane and I spent five days with the rancher and his family around New Year's.

A group of ten people, including the rancher and me, mounted sure-footed horses, and, accompanied by the rancher's ten cattle dogs, rode out on a day trip many miles to the 7500 foot level of the mountains surrounding his ranch where some Cabécar Indians live. On the way, thorn trees slashed my face; mud was often knee deep on the horses. We observed jaguar tracks on the way, but saw no cats. The dogs chased up two large wild boars with ugly protruding tusks. The boars ignored the dogs, daring them to move closer, and eventually ran away in the thick brush.

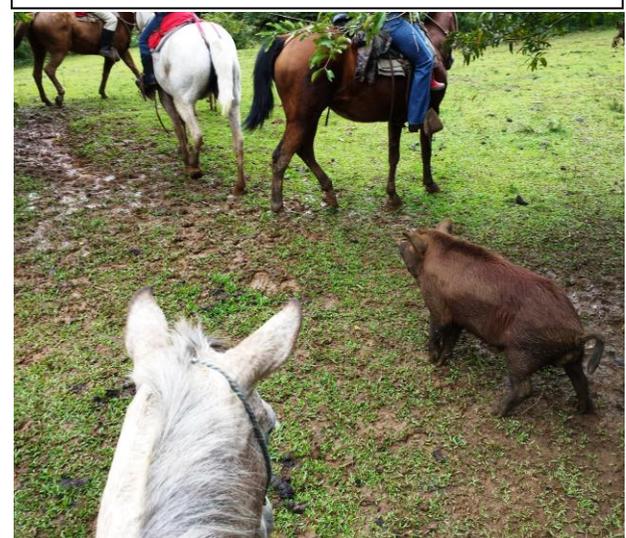
Upon reaching the Cabécars, the Indians' horses attacked our horses, kicking and nipping and running at them. (Some kind of a horse turf war, I guess.) We had to let our horses defend themselves, while trying to stay in the saddle. The dogs eventually chased the Indian horses off. The Cabécars thought it just another day in the neighborhood. Wished I had a rope so I could lasso a boar to make things more exciting and have meat for the supper table. When I get back to Alaska for the summer



One of the "grass mowers" on "Horse Puckky Field"



Getting ready for the mountain trail to the Cabécars



Worried horses keep track of wild boar on trail.

flying schedule, I'll round up my cowboy hat, belt buckle and boots and show them what a real cowboy is!

The horses took us where no dirt bike or ATV would ever go. At the end of the day, I was ever so sore and ready to get off this ancient mode of transportation. Now I need a Spanish speaking tail-wheel capable missionary pilot who can accept this free plane and go to the Cabécar Indians with the Gospel. If you recall, besides the runway, the rancher has a large beautiful church on his property. The Catholics who were there were not allowed back. The church can seat 1000 souls and it's for me to use as I want. Oh, for a Spanish speaking pilot to fly in here. The Cabécar Indians will show up on their horses from at least 10 miles away.

Now back to our little Tico house in the country near Atenas, Costa Rica. ("Tico" is what the Costa Ricans call themselves, and their simple homes are made from plastered cinder blocks with tin roofs.) A man helping me cut the jungle around our house with a weed eater ran across the deadliest snake in Costa Rica. The dumb snake trying to squat on our property wished he'd never gotten acquainted with an iron weed eater blade spinning several thousand RPM. We do not have any real problem with snakes because we keep the grass trimmed short. All this to one day hopefully have a meaningful gospel outreach to these hidden rainforest dwellers called the Cabécar. To that end, pray that God will send a tail wheel capable missionary pilot.

As in so many things in life, there is a door of opportunity that may close. A friend once told me: "Time kills deals." Pray that a great door and effectual will be open unto us. We plan to be in the Eastern half of the US March – April and hope to see many of you.

We recently had around 30 young people with Pastor Alex Melendez come to our place in the country for a special young people's meeting. The following week another pastor with a group of 120 young people came for an all-day youth meeting. These were some of the best youth meetings I have ever witnessed. A pastor's wife brought her teen girls class of eleven out from the city for a sleep over in the tranquil country. Some young people were saved at these meetings. We've shared hospitality with several Costa Rican pastors who came for a couple of days to take a rest from their busy schedules.

A big thanks to all of you for the special Christmas gifts to us and the continuing support for our Liberian pastors with rice, funds, and the Ebola awareness campaign funds. Last month \$1700 came in for Liberian pastors.

Muchas gracious,

Les Paul Zerbe

P.S. After Feb 25 you may contact Les on his cell phone 907-322-8807



Cabécar Indian dream house—tin roof and plank walls instead of thatch and bamboo



Vacant ranch church available in Cabécar country



120 young people meeting near where we live

SOURDOUGH SAM SEZ:
"In these last days, with mud up to the knees, let's all stay in the saddle."

A cartoon illustration of a cowboy wearing a hat and a mustache, looking thoughtful. The cowboy is drawn in a simple, sketchy style with a prominent mustache and a wide-brimmed hat.