

October 2008 Adventures

This has been a month of remembering, laughing, saying good-bye, crying, and experiencing new adventures. We'll start with all the good-byes in Paraguay.

On October 1st, we had a combination service for dedicating the well at the Hermano's Libre church as well as a good-bye for us. It was a great service with about 100 attending in this small, country church. Many of our friends from our former "home church" in Tacuapi came. After the service, in which Ed preached, we had a dinner. What was strange is at the large table of about 25 people, Linda was the only woman seated! All the other women were busy serving. It was kinda odd, but was still enjoyed.

The next day, we installed the hand pump at the Oga Lata School. The kids had been bailing the well since we finished the drilling. The well was now nice and clean and ready for the hand pump. All the kids gathered as we prayed, in guarani, for the well. Then, each of the kids took a turn using the hand pump. What a blessing this will be for this remote school that, previously, had no water.

After the celebration at the Oga Lata School, we started working on the crate for the drill rig. The crate was built on our trailer. We were able to put the trailer, complete with the crate, in the container to move to Nicaragua – but we're getting ahead of ourselves. The guys worked on the crate for 2 days, and were kinda sad to see everything buttoned up in the crate, complete with a plastic tarp. This was the official ending of their working with us as lead driller and driller helpers.



The kids took turns pumping with their new hand pump at the Oga Lata School



Many memories went into this crate that is carrying our drill rig to Nicaragua

The following Saturday began our official "despedidas", that's good-bye parties. We started on a Saturday at our former home church in Tacuapi. Ed preached the sermon. Afterwards, they had us come up front and said many kind words. After that, they presented us with a beautiful hand crocheted table cloth. We then had dinner for the entire congregation (that's about 50 people). It was a fun/sad time for us.

Saturday was followed by a BIG Sunday celebration. We started at 9:00 AM in the Yrybucua central church with a regular church service, but with 325 people! After the service, we were led up front, and each of the 10 churches came and either sang a song, read a poem, or did a short testimony. After which, each church presented us with a gift. It was mentioned by another attendee that no towels were given to dry the many tears shed by everyone. After the 3 ½ hr. celebration, the Central church of Yrybucua invited us for lunch. Then later that day, all the pastors and their wives had a dinner for us of grilled meat. What a day to remember!



Ed sharing with Pastor Roberto and his wife, Patricinia



Here we are with all the North District pastors and their wives

And there was more! We had a luncheon with our friends, Alcides and Fatima. We were their patrons (sponsors) for their wedding in June, 2004. They now have a beautiful 1 ½ year old daughter, named Pricilla. Besides lunch, they gave us a beautiful gift. They will remain special folks in our hearts. Next, the National church had an evening for us. There were about 11 of the central district churches attending. Besides a great dinner, each of the churches also gave us gifts! We said all this has been better than a birthday – we got to open LOTS of gifts but didn't have to get a year older.



This is Fatima, Pricilla, & Alcides. On the right we are receiving one of the many gifts from the churches of the central district.





We're about finished – but still 1 more party to do. All the English speaking missionaries also had a party for us. We had many days of really hot weather, so decided to have the party at the Methodist camp. But, it turned out to be a cool day, but we still enjoyed good fellowship.

Our final despedida was with our new “home church” in San Lorenzo. Again, Ed preached, and shared about our ministry during the past 7 years in Paraguay. No celebration can be without food. We had a lunch of grilled hot dogs – now that's getting sort of North American.

We've now said many good-byes, shed lots of tears, and eaten lots of food. On the highways in Paraguay, the temperatures have hit 46° C (that's 114° F). We were ready to leave in body and spirit. The major obstacle to our leaving was our container with our drill rig and some of our furniture and personal items. We were unable to leave the country until we received the final documentations for the shipment. The final documentation couldn't be prepared till the container left. But after waiting & praying for 4 days, all went well. One of our prayer partners in the US mentioned that perhaps the delay was God ordained to avoid troubles down the road – who knows.

We finally pulled out of Asuncion on Thursday, 10/23/2008. Our container left the night before. We hope you've been able to travel with us by reading our travel journal. It's available at www.mytripjournal.com/Baker-Nicaragua. We've decided to read the book of Exodus each morning as our devotional. Some highlights of our readings:

- † Exodus 7 – Moses & Aaron started their trails with Pharaoh as we started our journey
- † Exodus 9 – The only day we've had rain all day
- † Exodus 13 – The mountains we were crossing were shrouded in clouds
- † Exodus 15 – The first time we saw the Pacific Ocean
- † Exodus 16 – We started our journey into the Atacama Desert

Please continue to pray for us and our travels. Our border crossings have been really easy; we can feel your prayers.

This is coming to you from Peru. Next month. . . only God knows where we will be!

*In His Service,
Ed & Linda Baker*