

For His Children

a Christian home for children in Quito, Ecuador

April/May, 2003

Greetings to our supporters and friends!

A tribute to our volunteers: FHC has welcomed many volunteers over the years from Europe, Canada, South America and the U.S. These volunteers are special to us because it was through similar experiences and short-term mission trips that God guided us (Clark and Melinda) to dedicate our lives to what we have been doing for almost 13 years (yes, we celebrate the 13th anniversary of our arrival in Ecuador in August 2003!) These volunteers and mission teams give love, warmth, time, energy, caring and new ideas. They help shape this ministry into being the best it can be.

We'd like to recognize some volunteers who have served with FHC recently and some who are helping us currently:



Melinda and Clark (with Daniel, Sylvia and Alicia), say goodbye to Erin (center) in late April when she returned to Canada.

Erin Van Giessen of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, spent February, March and April in Quito, thanks to the hospitality of the Tony and Clara Vanderlaan family, missionaries from Canada. Erin took the bus faithfully to FHC every day and helped take care of the babies. She learned the unique needs of each child and even "graduated" to taking care of a group of four babies when we found ourselves short of help one day. She returned home to Canada the end of April. We miss her a lot. She was a loving, cheerful and calm influence on the children at FHC.

Mallerly Restrepo is spending a couple days a week at FHC helping with the babies. Born in Colombia, Mallerly is staying with an American missionary family in Quito for a

year. No language problems with Mallerly, she can converse with our employees and children, and says that she hopes to be at FHC as long as God wants her to be. She loves loving the babies, which helps when she sometimes gets homesick for her family in Colombia. Her quiet manner and gentle handling of the 13 babies in the Vaughn Baby Home is a great blessing.



Guess who Mallerly's favorite baby is...
9 month old Sylvia!



Amanda had the honor of naming Daniel, so he has a special place in her heart.

Amanda Draxler arrived at FHC in February 2003. She was born in Oregon, but has lived most of her life in northern California. She felt led by God to come spend time at FHC and was acquainted with FHC through her parents, who have been supporters for many years. Amanda has committed to spend two years with us. She speaks fluent Spanish and has had extensive experience in overseas ministry. Her day starts at 6:30 am, helping 8 year olds Rosita, Alexandra and Tatiana get ready for school. Then she can be found in any number of places at FHC, from receiving visitors, to helping care for the children, working in the office, or fixing something that needs her mechanical touch. Within the first few days after her arrival at FHC she helped to keep our water pump functioning so that we could supply water to our three homes! Her adventuresome spirit, hardworking nature and diligence are proving to be of great help to the ministry. We are blessed to welcome Amanda at FHC.

Tom and Shirley Brinkley, originally from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, have lived in Quito since 1999. They felt God leading them to become involved in overseas ministry, and left their careers as accountant (Tom) and nurse (Shirley), and moved to Ecuador. They heard about FHC through a couple of our children who were treated at the TB Clinic at the Vozandes Hospital in Quito. They started volunteering at FHC in 2002. That's how they met handsome two year old Steven at FHC. Tom and Shirley are now Steven's foster parents and plan to finalize his adoption in the next few months. As time passed, the Brinkleys became more involved with FHC. They asked for a leave of absence from the ministry they were associated with in Quito, and are now "on loan" to FHC. Tom is filling a big need at FHC as our accountant/bookkeeper. Shirley is now in charge of our FHC Child Sponsorship Program and will soon start a weekly Bible study with our caregivers, in addition to nursing responsibilities.



Tom and Shirley adore Steven and have the blessing of their three (adult) children to adopt him.

Grace Community Church of Mammoth Lakes, California, honored FHC with a 10-day visit in March. Their leader, Jeromy Acton, his wife Patty, and 12 other friends and family from Clark and Melinda's hometown in Mammoth, blessed us with painting, repairing cars, gardening, fixing computers, installing telephones and even a gas-fueled furnace in the infant home (a rarity in all of Quito!). Once again, God knew exactly who we needed to accomplish tasks that had been lingering on the "back burner" for months, even years!

In April, **The Wellesley Village Church** of Wellesley, Massachusetts and the **Charles Street AME Church** of Boston teamed up for the second time this year to send 14 of their members to FHC for an 8-day visit under the leadership of Mrs. Viola Morse. Our 28 children received lots of cuddling and loving care. The group also enjoyed some sightseeing in between long days spent feeding and diapering babies and toddlers, mowing lawns and painting and staining some of our doors. These two churches joined together last year to send two groups to FHC. We think they like us here at FHC!

We thank all of these special people for their time and help, their technical skills, their motivation, generosity and financial support. They leave their homes, families and jobs to come to Ecuador to spend time along side us at FHC. To work together in the ministry to which God has called them and us is a great encouragement and blessing.



Three in one: Paul, Natalí and Daniel kindly pose for us in the garden at FHC. All were born in the month of February, the 10th, 17th and 23rd, respectively!

New arrivals: Daniel arrived March 7th, Paul on March 17th, and tiny Natali arrived April 22nd. All three were welcomed to FHC from the Maternity Hospital in Quito.

Daniel was found by the police in a neighborhood in south Quito. The police report says that little Daniel was dressed in "blue baby clothes, white wool booties, a blue cap, wrapped in green blankets..." He was taken to a public health center nearby and then transferred to the Maternity Hospital. Doctors estimate he was born at 39 weeks, weighing 4.3 lbs. He spent 12 days in Neonatology. When he was ready to be discharged, the doctors requested FHC be called to care for him. Daniel is healthy, handsome, gaining weight and growing!

At a local public health center, **Paul** was born weighing four pounds. Because he was premature, he was transferred to the Maternity Hospital. After he was admitted, his parents did not appear. Inaccurate personal data has prevented social workers from locating the parents; our joint efforts have been unsuccessful.

Paul was diagnosed with sepsis, (a generalized infection) and hospitalized 33 days. On March 17, Melinda and two visiting friends from Mammoth Lakes, CA, Sue Bouska and Kaycee Mahler, met Paul at the hospital and brought him home to FHC.

Little **Natali** weighed 2.68 lbs. when she was born at 34 weeks. Natali had a rough start with an initial diagnosis of respiratory distress, jaundice, sepsis, and pneumonia. She remained in the Maternity Hospital for 63 days, during which time her mother, 25 and single, left the hospital and did not return. Natali was her second child. On April 22, Natali was welcomed to FHC after first making a visit to our pediatrician's office and then to our retinologist/ophthalmologist's office (her vision is normal!). She now weighs 5 lbs. Being so small and quiet, she was able to accompany Clark and Melinda to dinner and a movie a few weeks ago.

Please keep all our babies and children in your prayers that God would minister His truth in their lives. It's painful to think what these little ones have suffered in their short lifetimes. Many people do not realize that newborns are not "new"! They are born with a history that started at conception and continued through nine months of pregnancy and then birth. They are wise, perceptive human beings...and it is a sobering responsibility to care for them.

For those interested in the psychological aspects of abandonment and adoption, we recommend The Primal Wound, by Nancy Verrier. It's a difficult book to read as it talks bluntly about the trauma experienced by a human being when they are separated from their mother and/or father at birth or shortly after. This separation can have life-long psychological effects.

What is the answer? Prayer! We believe that God heals this deep trauma. Melinda has been concerned for many years about the psychological effects of abandonment. Last year, she was blessed to be able to attend a class on a unique type of prayer ministry taught by local pastor and long-time friend, Jim DeGolyer of The Verbo Church in Quito. Modified over the past year to fit the unique situation of babies and young children, we now make sure that no child leaves FHC without receiving this healing prayer. Prayer from those of us in Quito, along with the prayers of our caring supporters makes this ministry a "light in the darkness".

The pool is really cool... Lots of changes have been going on. Take a look at the photo and you can see that the construction of the therapy pool at FHC has progressed a lot! We're convinced even a major earthquake couldn't crack this concrete! Judd Johnson, our contractor, and his workers have taken extra care in its design and construction. Plans call for the building and pool to be turned over to us in June, with much of the finishing work to be completed by future visiting mission groups from the U.S. This will help us maximize the use of our therapy center funds. We're looking forward to having the project completed by the end of the year.



Thank you to all who responded to our plea for financial help! In our last newsletter, we shared the urgent news that donations to FHC had decreased 30 to 40% since January. Many of our donors responded quickly and generously; our financial situation is once again "in the black". We are very grateful!

Located on the property of the "Faith House", where our five 8-year old girls live, the pool is taking shape. It will be ready to use within a few months, we hope!

FHC operates month-to-month...we very rarely have even one month's reserve. At first it was disconcerting to us as we looked at the financial records. Many friends with experience in overseas ministry economics tell us that most ministries operate on a month-to-month basis. We have seen God provide through the generosity of our supporters over the years. Again, thank you very much to all who responded so generously.



In April, the directors of six children's homes and child protection programs in Quito met together to read and discuss the new Children's and Adolescent's Code, scheduled to go into effect July 3rd. The code took several years to plan, write and approve, and contains many changes in the areas of child care, national and international adoption, family reunification, etc., that directly affect our ministry. The Directors of the children's homes met to compile suggestions as to how to implement the new law, and we will submit these to the Minister of Social Welfare in Quito this month. These meetings are part of the continuing monthly directors meetings started by FHC in October 2001.

The directors met at FHC in December 2002 (photo) to discuss proposed changes in child care in Ecuador.

Most of the directors believe that these meetings have been beneficial; strengthening our relationships, providing accountability, encouraging professional growth, as well as decreasing the "isolation" that many times we feel in our ministries.

IS THERE SOMETHING MISSING IN YOUR LIFE?

It might be because **Sandra Janeth** (at right) is waiting to come home to you and your family. Sandra is now seven months old and has eyelashes to die for. She was born premature and as a result, both retinas are detached. Listen to all Sandra can do: she is learning to sit up and turn over with the help of our caregivers and therapists, she is babbling and likes to "converse", she smiles when she recognizes a familiar voice, enjoys playing with shaving cream in her therapy session, and would love to know that she has a future as someone's special daughter. Don't wait any longer. Send Melinda an e-mail.



And if that empty place in your life can only be filled by a BOY...then **Felipe** (at left) is waiting for you! Born in July 2002, Felipe is turning over, will be able to sit by himself and probably will learn to walk with the aid of a walker. He was born with nerve damage in his lower spine. He is a beautiful baby, sociable and easy-going. He can pick up Fruit Loops with his fingers and babbles when he thinks no one is listening!

We are encouraged for Felipe's future because we have cared for another child with the same condition (Myelomeningocele). We are in contact with the (Ecuadorian) family that adopted the other child, and we are amazed with how smart and intelligent the child is, his skills and his surprising mobility. So, don't wait any longer. Write us and find out how you can fill that empty place in your life.

To remember in prayer: 1) We are grateful to God for answering prayer for our financial needs through the responses of our supporters. Thank you! 2) FHC has been involved in caring for children for almost 13 years, yet we are still amazed and humbled when God brings a child to FHC for love and care. What a great world it would be if there were no need for FHC, yet we know He purposefully directs the lives He wants to come to FHC. We give thanks for His guidance.

Please join us in praying for: 1) The new Children's and Adolescent's Code that becomes effective July 3. Pray that all involved in working on behalf of Ecuador's children will have wisdom and understanding and will be able to move effectively and efficiently as the new law is implemented. 2) The very busy summer at FHC that is already taking shape. The number of requests we receive from volunteers, groups, visitors, etc. has increased every year. We know prayer will help us structure our schedules efficiently this summer. 3) Please join us in giving thanks and praying for our volunteers... national and international, those with us currently, as well as the many volunteers who have been with us in the past. All have strengthened and encouraged FHC.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support,

**Clark and Melinda Vaughn, Myriam Canacúan
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