

For His Children

A Christian ministry to children in Ecuador

December 2005 – January 2006

Didn't 2005 pass by like a roller coaster ride? - downhill at an ever increasing speed into the end-of-the-year holidays, and suddenly it's chugging uphill again with resolutions and plans being made for the New Year. January feels like an "uphill" ride here at FHC, but before the month is over, we're back in the rhythm of work and activities. We ask ourselves some big questions like: what will God do in our lives in 2006? How will he use us and others? How can we be more "open" and receptive to serving Him? - intriguing thoughts to contemplate as the New Year begins. Often we haven't a clue to the answers, so our prayer is "Show us, Lord." When December 2006 rolls around, we pray we will all look back and see many ways in which God has worked in our lives. *All it takes is a willing heart.*



Three amazing young people allowed God to use them at FHC in 2005: Dan Ackley, Kara Warner and Salomé Schardt returned home in December after spending several months at FHC. Dan spent a year at FHC, and is now at home in northern California. Kara returned to the southeast, where she is job searching as a Language Pathologist. Kara spent six months at FHC. Salomé returned to Switzerland after spending two months at FHC. We thank them for their sacrificial service to FHC. We could count on these three to always be willing when there was a need - they were proactive in making FHC a better place. (At left are Kara, Clark, Melinda, Salomé and Dan.) If your heart is moved, no matter your age, abilities or foreign language skills, God can use you and change your life in marvelous ways at FHC. *Remember what we wrote about a "willing heart"?*

Wilma, 4, is now in foster care with Dan and Cyndi Maloy, missionaries with World Radio Fellowship in Quito. The Maloys are parents to three biological children, as well as foster parents to Patrick and Wilma (at right, in Cyndi's arms), both from FHC. What is extra special about the Maloys is their willingness to care for children with special needs. The Maloys plan to adopt Wilma (now "Lauren Grace") and Patrick. We are thankful to the Maloys for their friendship, support, and for opening their home to two beautiful children. They are demonstrating a willing heart, and God did the rest. Please keep the new Malloy family in your prayers.



Mateo's Story – Part II: In our last newsletter we shared the story of a baby boy found outside a downtown cathedral. Amidst much media attention, the baby was brought to FHC. A week later, his young mother called and said she wanted her baby and repented of her wrong choices. FHC accompanied the mother through a maze of court hearings and a DNA test. Results confirmed that the young woman is Mateo's mother. By late January, we expect the court to give authorization for mother and baby to be reunited. Thank you for your prayers! God answered them - *one less child abandoned.*

Christmas is one of the busiest times of the year with parties, visitors and more visitors bringing bags of clothing (December must be closet-cleaning month!), and “navidades”, pint-sized plastic bags filled with cookies and candy, a typical Ecuadorian treat for children at Christmas. We were blessed by visits from Joyce Bowie of Florida, who brought a Christmas celebration to FHC-Quito and Latacunga, including dinner for the children and staff, decorations, gifts and stuffed stockings for the children, gifts for the caregivers as well as the traditional holiday basket filled with food staples, and much, much more. Thank you, Joyce!

We thank all our supporters who gave so generously in December. Your thoughtfulness has paid those extra December expenses as well as giving us the assurance that payroll, food and medical expenses will be covered into the New Year. Thank you for responding with such love and kindness in December and throughout the year.



Attention dentists! Since 2003, FHC is the recipient of no-cost dental services from a generous dentist in Quito. If our readers have contact with dentists in the States, Dr. Jacqueline would appreciate any donation of dental supplies (other than toothbrushes and toothpaste), to use specifically with FHC’s children. Thank you.

FHC has always been willing to share our knowledge and our 15 1/2 years of experience with others. On at least six occasions, we have mentored people who feel called to work with children, many of whom have gone on to establish programs for children in Ecuador. Becky and Byron Gudiño are a young couple responding to God’s call to start a children’s program. Becky, a social worker, and Byron, a youth pastor, are spending time at FHC twice a week to learn the “secrets of the trade” from FHC’s professional staff and caregivers. Because Becky and Byron grew up in Quito (Becky is the daughter of American missionaries), their State-side contacts are limited. We offered to help by putting this ad in our newsletter: they need a bookkeeper in the States for their newly formed non-profit organization. If someone you know might be interested, please write them at bgudino@gmail.com. Thank you!

New arrivals at FHC-Latacunga: we welcomed Diego Mauricio (above) in late November. His mother gave birth at a local hospital, and later, in desperation left the baby inside a church. The infant was found and returned to the hospital, where nurses recognized him and contact was established with the mother. After receiving counseling, the young woman, a single mother of two children, has made the decision for adoption for her son. Diego is healthy and doing well.

Selena (at right) is from an indigenous community in the province of Cotopaxi. Her case was brought to the attention of FHC when a counseling center in Quito called FHC for assistance after the 13-month old baby and her mother were found wandering the streets of Quito. Her mother suffers from a serious psychiatric disorder and was unable to properly care for her daughter as well as several other children who are cared for by an elderly relative. Selena’s mother was admitted to a psychiatric hospital, and the child’s care was referred to FHC in late November. Her father wonders how he can assume his daughter’s care. No other family members are willing to help. The matter has been taken to the indigenous community leaders in their town, and the family said they will abide by the leaders’ decision. Selena is healthy, curious and quiet, and is just now beginning to feel more secure at FHC-Latacunga. She was very clingy and cried a lot at first. FHC’s psychologist helps our caregivers know how to encourage Selena to feel more confident and relaxed.



Sofía (next page, at top) was born in the hills above Latacunga in late November; her mother gave birth in a field and then left the baby. She needed medical care, and went down the mountain to Latacunga’s hospital. The doctors quickly realized she had given birth and asked her where her baby was.



After some vague answers, the doctors insisted she take them to her baby. The child was found, miraculously alive, despite exposure to near freezing morning temperatures for several hours. Ambulance personnel immediately took care of the baby, rushing her to the hospital. After the mother and baby were given a medical discharge in early December, the mother was charged with child endangerment and sentenced to house-arrest for three months, after which time she will serve a three-year sentence in a detention center. FHC has not yet heard the conclusion of the court-ordered psychologist who evaluated the mother. The court has decided that the child will remain at FHC until her adoption.

At FHC-Quito we welcomed tiny 4- lb. **Grace** (at right, with Lili, our language therapist). Her adolescent mother left her baby at the hospital after giving birth in late

November. Grace has Down Syndrome and cataracts in both eyes, which are seriously affecting her vision. Surgery is scheduled for late January. We're pleased that Grace is gaining weight and is responsive to our caregivers' attention.

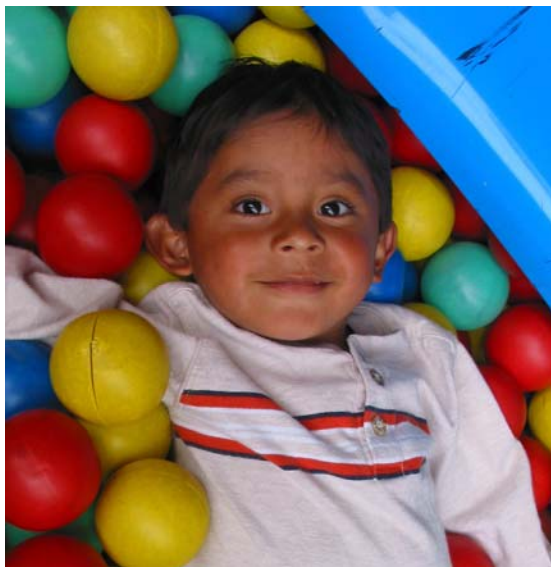


Bolivia, six months old, (at left) was welcomed at FHC in early December. She was brought to Quito in an ambulance from a hospital in the coastal province of Esmeraldas. In a fit of rage, Bolivia's father hit her because she was sucking her thumb. When Bolivia lost consciousness, her mother took her to the hospital, and then disappeared when she overheard a doctor calling the police. Neighbors said the father frequently physically abused the wife and daughters. FHC is in touch with the police and the court in Esmeraldas, and has offered to assist with the investigation as may be necessary. So far, there are no clues. Bolivia suffered severe brain damage, and she will need intensive life-long care.

Angelito's story is almost as incredulous as Bolivia's: he was born in August 2004, and in mid-December, a substance abuse center called FHC to receive a tiny, malnourished little boy. The center makes visits to a river on the outskirts of Quito, where caves have been dug, sheltering homeless drug and alcohol abusers. The counselors found Angelito (at right), his 19 year old mother and an unidentified man hiding in one of the caves. The couple said they would accompany the counselors back to the center where they could receive food, therapy and medical attention. The mother said her name was Angelica, and that the little boy was her son. As the couple followed the counselor out of the cave, the mother and her companion bolted, leaving Angelito behind. The police are investigating the case. Meanwhile, Angelito has adapted well to FHC. He shares a bedroom with four other children in the Harlow House. He is becoming more outgoing, and we hope he will continue to adjust favorably to his new home.



Jairo (top, next page) was referred to FHC by a national organization dedicated to caring for families. Their executive director called FHC in early January, asking if FHC could receive a 3 ½ year old boy found in the streets. He was sharing food with street dogs and sleeping in doorways. When a neighbor woman found the little boy, she brought him to relatives. They refused to care for the child, saying his



mother was a substance-abuser and had alienated the family. The child's father died of leukemia a year ago. Jairo was then taken to the national family organization. Thanks to your support, FHC was able to welcome this little boy. He has adjusted very well to his new home at the Faith House. He always has a big smile and hug for visitors.

Nancy's 18 year old mother went to the hospital in the final stages of labor. In less than an hour, Nancy (below right) was born, weighing 6 ½ lbs. What concerned the doctors was the baby's large head circumference. In order to receive special care and supervision, Nancy's mother was taken to a special area of the hospital for teen mothers. On January 2, she told her roommates that she was going to the nursery to see her baby. She dressed in her street clothes and slipped out the hospital doors. Nancy has been diagnosed with hydro-encephaly, or an



excessive amount of cerebral-spinal fluid surrounding a very, very small brain. A neurosurgeon inserted a device to drain the fluid, which seems to be functioning well; her head circumference has not increased in size. Meanwhile, she is warm, safe and loved by our caregivers. If the diagnosis of hydro-encephaly is confirmed, her life-expectancy may be a few weeks to a few years.



María Antonia (at left) was abandoned by her 19 year old mother at the Maternity Hospital shortly after her birth in December. We know very little of Antonia's mother other than she is a student at a Quito high school. María Antonia was born a few weeks premature, with low-grade respiratory distress and anemia. Our pediatrician has ordered tests and checkups with specialists, and we expect Antonia's development to be healthy and normal.

Adoptions are moving forward in Ecuador. FHC has five children waiting for family assignment in late January. It's important for supporters to know that FHC's priority is to *prevent abandonment* by providing support services, counseling and temporary economic assistance for a mom or family that is trying to hold it all together. FHC assist the children's hospital and maternity hospital in many cases where support services are needed. Mateo's story (page 1) is just one of those cases where FHC's support is making a difference.

Thank you for your support, for reading this newsletter and remembering our children in prayer. We start 2006 full of optimism, convinced of the mission of FHC to provide loving, quality care in a warm and welcoming home for children who find themselves victims of abuse, abandonment and neglect. Your donations also help us to try and keep families together. Again, thank you!

P.S. We are praying for a plumber and helper to come to Quito to begin the project of replacing galvanized and plastic pipes with copper in the Harlow and Group Houses at FHC. Please contact Clark for details. Thank you to that special plumber out there, whoever you are, with a *willing heart!*

Clark and Melinda Vaughn, Directors

For His Children

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