



For His Children

A Christian ministry to children in Ecuador

August – September 2010

Happy Birthday, FHC!



The photo has nothing to do with our 20th anniversary nor our finances... we're just having a fun time welcoming a llama to FHC-Latacunga, thanks to friends in Quito. The kids are Carlitos, Antony, Alejandra, Mateo, Josue, Javier, and the big people are Melinda, Tía Lourdes and our guard Walter. No, he doesn't have a name yet!

On August 6, FHC commemorated 20 years in Ecuador! Clark, Melinda and their children, Phillip and Lesley moved to Quito to begin the ministry of FHC in August 1990. In 2010, the day came and went at FHC without any fanfare, but we have been deeply moved remembering many milestones – and above all, God's faithfulness and blessings and that of our supporters, who encourage the ministry financially and in prayer. Thank you to all – FHC looks forward to a strong and healthy ministry partnership with you throughout the next 20 years!

We are aware that the global financial situation is still difficult. FHC is under pressure, as you are, to do more with less, trying to stretch our dollars further, while having an even greater impact for God in our world. We know that our supporters care about *meaningful* impact, and that's what we want to share with you in each newsletter – as well as the ministry's challenges. After 20 years in

Ecuador, Clark and I (Melinda) and our staff know that God can do amazing things in the midst of seemingly unpredictable and depressed economic times. Our responsibility is to be consistently aiming toward our God-guided goals and vision, and trust that He looks for those faithful followers who will partner with the ministry financially and prayerfully. Every gift, large and small, is important. But even more important is that when you give, your gift touches the heart of God, as well as touching the ministry of FHC. Turn to the last page of this newsletter for more information and a status report about FHC's donations, our budget, expenses, etc.



Most of our readers know FHC's Ministry Assistant of 17 years, **Brent Bourdeau**. FHC deeply appreciates his generosity and faithfulness. Brent and his late wife, Joyce, (in one of our favorite photos at left) were and are constant prayer warriors and guardian angels for this ministry. We are very grateful to the Bourdeau family (including Barclay, Brent's son, FHC's webmaster) for their friendship, encouragement and support. As of September, Brent has reorganized his responsibilities with FHC - he will continue



with general correspondence with our supporters and other areas of the ministry, while **Jerry Mogab** will be FHC's new bookkeeper. Jerry and Gail (at right) are longtime friends of the Vaughns (Jerry was the best man at the Vaughns' wedding in October '78!). Jerry has been a lawyer in CA and CO for about 30 years, and also managed several businesses. He now works in real property management in Evergreen, CO. **Here's the new FHC mailing address for donations and correspondence: P.O. Box 1095, Conifer, CO 80433; jerry@forhischildren-ecuador.org**. Thank you to Brent and Jerry for the vital roles they fill for FHC.



This past summer we welcomed Emily and her parents, Svein Sandnes and Ester Saetre, (at left) who traveled from Bergen, Norway, to visit the country of Emily's birth and FHC. The family and Melinda visited the government hospital in south Quito where Emily was born. The social worker who processed Emily's case 16 years ago welcomed us, and gave Emily a VIP tour of the newborn nursery. It was an amazing visit and so wonderful to welcome these special friends. Thank you to Emily, Ester and Svein - we so appreciate their support and encouragement.

We have had a lot of amazing and moving moments at FHC— among them the arrival of a child, the day the child meets his forever family... and in the last few years we have had the opportunity to

participate in the experience of the young adult returning to Ecuador to search for his or her birth family. The following story we share with the permission of the Sorensen family, and we thank them for letting us tell their story in our newsletter:

This past July, Marcus José, 16, and his dad, Soren (mom Lene and sister Rebecca were unable to make the trip as flights were booked), traveled to Ecuador from Denmark to meet Marcus' birth family. Weeks before the Sorensen's arrival, FHC's social worker, Cristina and psychologist, Pilar, and Melinda had established contact with the family and went to visit them in Santo Domingo, a city in the central coastal lowlands of Ecuador. Jofre, Marcus' birth father, had since separated from his first wife and was living with his new family. Mayuri, Marcus' birth mother and her new partner were caring for most of Marcus' nine siblings in a town 20 minutes from Santo Domingo. In the preliminary visit, the families were reserved, but agreeable to meeting Marcus and his family.



Melinda, Marcus and Soren meet up at the Hotel Quito shortly after the Sorensen's long flight from Copenhagen to Quito; Melinda showed them photos taken during her visit to Marcus's birth families.

A couple of days after Marcus and Soren arrived in Quito, they headed to Santo Domingo with Melinda at the wheel. And we could fill pages writing about the emotions, impressions, and experiences – we hope the photos show how beautiful and unique this reunion was. Both sides of the Ecuadorian families were very welcoming and gracious. Especially moving was the visit with Maryuri, and how she constantly hugged and looked at Marcus as if she was seeing her “baby” for the first time. The families asked lots of questions about Marcus, and he brought a photo album to help tell the story of his life in Denmark.



Mayuri, Marcus and his older sister, Jaqueline, 22, in one of their first hugs after Marcus's arrival.

Life was and is very hard for families in the coastal lowlands as the majority of the men and some of the women work on agricultural plantations. Jofre, Marcus' birth father began working on the plantations when he was six years old and did not attend school.

(Marcus' family explained that 16 years ago, after Mayuri gave birth to Marcus, she was told their baby needed immediate medical attention and they took him to Quito. The doctors told them to leave their baby and return in a week. They returned over a week later and were told their son had been sent to a children's home. They were intimidated by the big city, hospital personnel, costs, etc., and they returned to Santo Domingo leaving their baby in Quito.)

A second visit to Santo Domingo was scheduled before Marcus and Soren returned home to Copenhagen. The second visit was flavored with the spontaneity that comes with familiarity: the impromptu family soccer game with grandmother and big sister Jaqueline as goal keepers... spending the night in Jofre's family's home when the truck battery died late one night... roosters crowing at two and five in the morning and watching daylight filter in through the cracks in the bedroom walls... heaping plates of rice, chicken and glasses of Coca-cola served with such loving care and attention... hugs, touching, caresses, smiles and laughter... sitting on the tailgate of FHC's pickup truck under the streetlight with mom, siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles while the kids kicked a soccer ball around... Soren's patience and confidence as he interacted with the families with amazing cultural sensitivity, and of course his deep respect and love for his son... and towards the end of the visit, how no translations were needed as hugs, tears, smiles, and laughter replaced the spoken word... and then the bittersweet goodbyes.



Literally a *fraction of a fraction* of Marcus's new family on his father's side. At far left is Marcus's birth father, Jofre, and at far right is Luz, his 92 yr. old great-grandmother.

Now, Marcus has dozens of new relatives – including a 92 year old great-grandmother! And they assured him there are dozens and dozens more who couldn't make it to the family reunion. Marcus is planning a return visit to Ecuador when possible – and he's now motivated to learn Spanish. The Ecuadorian family is learning how to send e-mails! In the coming year, we hope we send an update on the new family ties. Thank you again to Marcus and the Sorensen family for letting FHC share this story with our FHC supporters and friends.



Dulce, 2, presents her parents with a bouquet during their first meeting on July 15th at FHC-Quito. Mattias and Marie work for various companies in Sweden. Dulce is their first child.



On July 26th, "Kiara Alexandra Sakae", 2 1/2, met her dad, Visileios, a Greek businessman living in Quito.

FHC recently celebrated the adoptions of several children (Dulce, Sakae, Ian, Mateo and Carlita). Enjoy the photos above and throughout this newsletter. Our best wishes to these beautiful new families who have opened their hearts and homes to FHC's little ones who have been waiting years for a family. We are thrilled to think of how these children are "blooming" with the love of their forever families.

FHC NEWSBITS >>> Thank you so much to the mission teams that blessed FHC this past summer with their visits to FHC-Quito and FHC-Latacunga: **Wellesley Congregational Church, Wellesley, MA; Altadena Community Church, Altadena, CA; Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Alexandria, MN; Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Red Bluff, CA; Glenkirk Church, Glendora, CA; Sierra Bible Church, Sonora, CA; and Applewood Community Church, of Arvada, CO.** >>> **Thank you** to Sarita, daughter of FHC Board member Carol Wambeke, for her summer internship at FHC- she set up a digital archiving system for FHC's children's files. We will now have an electronic archive of all our information in each child's files. >>> **Please pray** for Clark and Melinda who are in the States until early January and are visiting supporting churches. >>> **Our older children** at the Faith and Harlow Houses participated in a dance recital at FHC in late August. Señora Amparo, our dance teacher, is at FHC every Saturday morning to encourage the kids in all kinds of expressive movement, from ballet and Ecuadorian folk dance to hip hop! >>> **Children at FHC-Quito and Latacunga** traded places for a week of summer camp in **August** – Quito kids spent a week in Latacunga, and vice-versa. They visited local attractions and enjoyed all that their respective cities have to offer. It was a lot of fun. We heard some wistful comments from the kids like, “Do we **HAVE** to go home?” ☺>>> **We've been reorganizing** at FHC-Quito... for those of you who have visited us, you know the names of the homes and which children are cared for in which home. Our staff had analyzed the benefits of some changes to better utilize the homes, so the CASA HARLOW children have moved to the CASA FE, which has been renamed CASA SOL. The CASA FE children have moved to the CASA HARLOW. Everyone has adjusted very well to the move, and we're continuing to assess the benefits so as begin to make more permanent modifications to the homes if needed. So – the bottom line: the names of the homes stay (almost) the same, but the toddlers are now at CASA SOL, and the older children with special needs are at CASA HARLOW.



Huggable Geovanny (at left) was admitted earlier this year (we forgot to mention him in our last newsletter!). He was born prematurely in late January, and admitted to another children's home in early April. When it was discovered that he had a minor spinal cord deformity, FHC-Latacunga was asked to care for him in May. “OF COURSE!” we replied. Geovanny is now doing well thanks to our physical therapist, Andrea, and our loving Tías.

Michael Josiah (at right) was born August 21, 2010, and admitted to FHC 10 days later. His mother kept her pregnancy hidden and gave birth at home by herself. Later she went to the hospital for help, but left her baby at home. Hours later, her family



found little Michael Josiah and brought him to the hospital, where the doctors called child-protection authorities. Currently, the case is in the courts to determine if the baby will be reunited with his birth family.



We have a new Child Sponsorship Program Coordinator! Alejandra Gavilanes was born and raised in Ecuador, graduating from the university with a degree in Marketing and Psychology. She attends English Fellowship Church in Quito. (At left, Alejandra meets some of the little ones in the Vaughn Home: Felipe, 11 mos., Alfredo, 17 mos., Aisha, 21 mos., and Thalia, 1 yr.)

We asked Alejandra to share a little about herself: “Hello to all of FHC's friends and supporters. It's an honor and a privilege to serve the Lord at For His Children. About two years ago, God saved me from a near-death experience and transformed my life, giving me a new vision for the future. I couldn't imagine back then what the Lord had in store for me to serve Him.

As I patiently followed His guidance, I have had the opportunity to serve as a volunteer with non-profit organizations and mission teams. I can truly tell you it is a life-changing experience to see God's love manifested as we serve others in His name. My desire is to continue testifying to the gospel of God's grace as I work with the Child Sponsorship Program and to witness the faithfulness of our God as He provides for the needs of the little ones He treasures deeply. I look forward to being in close contact with you all. If you have any questions about our sponsorship program, you can contact me at sponsorship@forhischildren-ecuador.org.

Thank you, Alejandra – and welcome to the FHC team. By the way, FHC has children who need sponsors! Please contact Alejandra at the address above for more information.

On target with FHC's strategic plans, FHC has formed a legally recognized nation-wide network of children's programs/homes to advocate on behalf of children. "La Red" ("The Network") meets once a month. After planning and organizing sessions, they scheduled meetings with Quito judges and court personnel to share problems and concerns and to work toward solutions. FHC is participating in meetings with high-level government leaders in various advocacy efforts, among them the government's desire to establish a foster family program in Ecuador, as well as drafting reforms to the Children and Adolescents Code which could shorten the length of time a child spends in protective care. We're excited about these opportunities to advocate on behalf of children in Ecuador.



Karen and Rich Iverson of Barnesville, MN, and their children, Sophie and Isaac, welcomed Ian, 4, (holding flowers) into their family in late summer 2010. Karen is a nurse's assistant and Rich is a pastor of the Hope Lutheran Brethren Church. The Iversons report that Ian is adjusting well. He is learning the names of his other siblings, and his English is improving every day. Doctors say his lungs are getting stronger, which is an answer to prayer. Congratulations, Iversons!



Joy and Tony Anzalone, long-time missionaries in Ecuador (now living in Manta, Ec.) are the loving parents of Mateo, 5 ½, (holding mom's hand) from FHC-Latacunga, and Carlita, 7, (at far right) of FHC-Quito. Above is the new family with their son, Teddy, who was adopted a couple of years ago from Ecuador. The Anzalones also have adult children living in the States. Best wishes to the Anzalones!

FHC is on Facebook: [facebook.com/Fhc-Cpsn](https://www.facebook.com/Fhc-Cpsn). Share with us your experiences and take a look at photos and hear the weekly news from FHC.

FHC Child Sponsorship makes a perfect holiday gift. Plan now, contact us for details at sponsorship@forhischildren-ecuador.org and we'll send you a unique personalized card acknowledging the gift. Thank you from all the FHC children.

We have a new preschool teacher! Our preschool teacher of three years, Daniela, left FHC earlier this year to work for her husband's business, and so we began the search for the perfect preschool teacher for our toddlers. We selected Lorena Benavides, (in photo next page) to direct our program. The school year started October 4th for our two year olds: Joshua, María Belén, Jeremías, Ricardo and Josué. Attending a separate class are Nathalia, 3 ½, Daniela, 5, and Lesley, 6, who are being prepared to attend a regular school next year.



Teacher Lorena, above, has a busy group of two year olds at FHC's preschool this year!

After evaluating the educational program for our older children with special needs at “Casa Fe”, we decided we needed to direct our own program for our children with special needs. Teacher María Sol (in photo below helping Rosita at clean-up time) is guiding our learning-challenged kids in their new school: Rosita, 15 (in photo), Tatiana, 15, Lisseth, 13, and José Luis, 10. They started class on Sept. 20th and we’re anticipating a great year for all the FHC school children.



FHC's financial facts:

- After some crazy fluctuations, FHC ended the 2009-2010 fiscal year “in the black”. We are so thankful!
- Since 2000, FHC has had enough financial reserves to be a two month “buffer” should there be a downturn in donations.
- FHC received a combined total of \$30,000 LESS in donations for the months of May through September 2010. FHC has had to utilize all of those reserves to cover our monthly budgeted expenses.
- Our current budget to operate the two campuses in Ecuador (Quito and Latacunga) is \$34,000 per month. Some “specifics”, so you can see how the math quickly adds up: each Tia earns \$50.00 per 24 hour shift, plus govt. mandated benefits, and we have approximately 8 to 10 Tías (Quito and Latacunga) on daily 24 hour shifts. Our total salary needs for the month of October are about \$20,000 for Quito and Latacunga.

What do we need to “keep the engines churning” at FHC? First: YOUR PRAYERS. Second: A commitment from each person reading this newsletter, a pledge for a monthly donation which will help us stabilize our financial situation and know how to best plan our budget, and very importantly, so we can begin to build up our financial “emergency” reserves.

We are grateful – on behalf of the children, the Tías, and all who work so hard to make FHC the amazing ministry that it is, for your partnership. We continue to move forward with the vision God gave us to care for children in need and to help place them in loving, permanent homes as quickly as possible. Your support makes this happen. Thank you.

Clark and Melinda Vaughn, Directors

Verónica Rodríguez, Administrator

FOR HIS CHILDREN Tax deductible donations (U.S.) may be sent to: FHC, P.O. Box 1095, Conifer, CO 80433

See our website to make tax-deductible donations in Canada. www.forhischildren-ecuador.org (English and Spanish)

Credit card or electronic check donations can be made on our website, too.

Donations/financial info: Jerry Mogab – jerry@forhischildren-ecuador.org

General information and correspondence: Brent Bourdeau – info@forhischildren-ecuador.org

Child Sponsorship Program: Alejandra Gavilanes - sponsorship@forhischildren-ecuador.org

Directors: Clark and Melinda Vaughn – clark@forhischildren-ecuador.org, melinda@forhischildren-ecuador.org

Thank you to the Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Red Bluff, CA for printing and mailing this newsletter. Please advise FHC of address changes. If you are able to receive this newsletter via e-mail, it will reduce the cost of printing and mailing. Let us know! Thank you.