

Dear Friend, Encourager, Partner-in-Mission,

MISSION MINISTRY UPDATES - SONDRA

Sondra attended her first 2015 Free Soul (women's prison ministry) staff meeting. ----->

She and 5 of the 12 Free Soul volunteers conversed for 2½ hours (yes, in Spanish) discussing upcoming plans for Bible studies for the female prisoners, and discipleship classes and other ministry programs for the women on probation. In the excitement, there were sometimes 2 or more women talking at the same time. It was wonderful to be able to break for lunch and share in much less energetic conversation and a lovely Ecuadorian meal. **Please pray for Sondra's first visit to Casa de Confianza , where the team ministers to the women prisoners, scheduled for Wed. August 12.**



'Free Soul' ministry team meeting.

In June, Sondra met with Boris, a young Christian Columbian man, who leads the Dunamis ministry. This Christian ministry, well-known by some Reach Beyond missionaries, works with very young girls rescued from prostitution (10-16 years old). -----> After a 3-hour private conversation, listening to Boris share what is on his and his family's heart in concern with God's ministry to these girls, Sondra came away devoted to prayer to see how the Lord would have her assist. **Please keep her and this ministry in prayer and we will update you during our September visit to the U.S. and in the next newsletter.**



Ministry to young rescued prostitutes.

At the end of August, Sondra has a scheduled orientation for also beginning ministry with the Quito Family Resource Center. This ministry is part of Extreme Response International and works with families who live and work in the Quito Dump. Sondra's first visit to the dump was in 2005 with Operation Christmas Child. In the past 10 years this ministry has grown tremendously and now provides specific services for the men, women, and children workers of the dump. **Please pray for protection during her re-visit to the dump and for wisdom and guidance as she determines the best way she can assist the families.**

In early June, Sondra began her ministry at Reach Beyond. The first week, she helped prepare food for a team of 17 working visitors. The following week she began her "green thumb" ministry. With limited staff, time, and resources, the facility's greenery has been in need of much TLC. During the first 8 weeks, she examined over 125 indoor plants, diagnosed problems, trimmed and removed "the unwanted", applied fertilizer, and moved them to better locations. Next she will be replacing much of the cement-like volcanic soil in the pots, replacing it with composted soil trucked in from another location, and training the cleaning staff in proper watering techniques unique to each plant, bush, and tree. **She and her supervisor, Mary Paola, have made 2 of 3 scheduled trips to Nayon**, a beautiful little village which specializes in selling every imaginable type greenery that one can imagine, along with hand-made pots. So far, they've brought back 2 pick-up truckloads of goodies for Sondra's special design projects for the HCJB Radio-Ecuador building and the Reach Beyond facility and adjoining properties.

Sondra's been putting in extra hours working on several "design projects".

Her first was for the grand opening of the newly remodeled HCJB-Ecuador radio studio. This is one of many artificial and/or green arrangements she created - - > The next 2 will be for the Quito Connection which houses visiting missionaries, and Harmony Hall where some of Reach Beyond's missionaries live.

Exactly what difference does having "a green thumb" make in serving in ministry? The smiles and comments of the staff and visitors reveals the impact it is having. How wonderful it is to be greeted each day with comments like "Que linda!" (That's beautiful!) One upper management staff said "I think I hear the plants singing because of the special love and care they are getting!" Several visitors to the facility have stopped to talk to "the gringo lady" who is often on her knees with dirty hands taking care of the plants. One gentlemen said that since Sondra was already on her knees, he felt he should pray over her...and he did! Others want to know where she's from and why she's here which has opened up doors for great conversational Spanish and opportunities to share her faith. Sondra has been nicknamed "La madre de las plantas" (the mother of the plants) and is getting to know several of the Ecuadorian staff, new and regular visitors, and even the guards. **We praise God for this opportunity for Sondra to use her talents and skills that the Lord has given her to brighten the work-day of other missionaries and staff. We also thank Him that she has a twice-per-week reprieve from this city-of-cement to work with her hands in God's wonderful creation.**



Radio Bldg Design Project

MISSION MINISTRY UPDATES - DARRELL

God continues to amazes us (and Reach Beyond) with the way He's building upon Darrell's relationship with the Quito F.D!

In June, Darrell was invited by the F. Dept District Captain to a nearby community to help with a large public fire department demonstration. In July, Darrell was asked to assist the Quito Fire Dept during Pope Francisco's visit on July 7 !

Our long day started at 4:00 am.

We rode with a Carcelen F.D. officer to the Bicentennial Park to join up with 1000's of Quito firefighters, paramedics, police officers, military, and Red Cross workers to assist in providing emergency care for the attendees of this historic event. The city of Quito was invaded by 1.5 million extra people who wanted a glimpse of Papa (Pope) Francisco, to hear him speak, and receive his blessings. During the 8 hours we were there Darrell attended to 3 patients with varying health needs and Sondra was able to comfort and pray with the families involved.

In the afternoon we were given a private tour of the oldest historic Fire Dept. in Quito. At the end of the tour, the head officer took us to the roof-top for an amazing view of Quito and to extended to us 2 invitations: 1) to join him to visit his extended family in the Amazon region some weekend, 2) for



Standing By Ready to Serve



Ministering to Patients



Chatting with EMS Workers



Mingling with Top Officers

Darrell to volunteer as a Paramedic on his department any time that he is available! As a result, Reach Beyond has given Darrell permission to spend his time at the F.D. during his regular work hours of ministry! **Later in the evening** we were put on a special assignment to march with the Quito fire-fighters up a street (where only officials were allowed) to the San Francisco church where Papa Francisco would be speaking to the dignitaries. We were the only non-government workers (and “gringos”) in the march. Excited observers standing behind the barricades were shouting out “Thank you for protecting our Pope!” At our destination, we had the privilege of being allowed into a high-security area where normally one would have to obtain special passes to enter. When the event was over, we had a “cozy” ride back to Carcelen in the back of an ambulance with 12 other firefighters! **Only God could have planned such a memorable day!**



Waiting for Special Assignments for Event at S.F. Church



Seeing Pope Francis Up Close at Bicentennial Park

EVERYDAY OPPORTUNITIES TO MINISTER

One day, on the street, we met Edgar, the President of Manaza D (our designated neighborhood). This friendly Ecuadorian man welcomed us and extended a special invitation to the Community House for a traditional celebration of food and music. At this event, Edgar invited Darrell up onto the stage to introduce himself and tell everyone why we are here. Later that week, he invited us to a private community meeting. **He asked us to join him in teaching English to the local children and their parents.** After much discussion and prayer, we told him we would love to help children learn and practice English with their parents, but **we had to decline his invitation** because of our already busy schedule and commitments we have to our mission agency. We assured him that if we could see a way to help in the future that we would be in touch with him. **Please pray that in the future, we will be able to assist him in some way , as time allows, and according to God's will.**

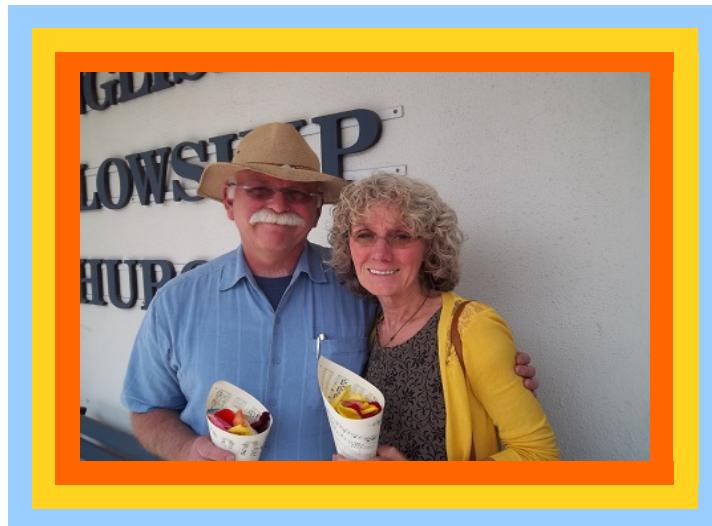
Darrell is now the 'official plumber' for Carmen's house. She and her family have had multiple problems with their plumbing in their 3-story house. Although the house is owned by Carmen's absent husband, she makes the house payments which is a financial struggle for her and her family. Trying to find an honest, reliable plumber (or any repairman) can be a challenge here. And because the house that Carmen's husband allows her to live in is very large, many repairmen assume she has a lot of money. The last “leak” occurred in Verito's first-story apartment (she's the oldest daughter - a single mom with 4 children and a 30-hr/wk job at minimum wage). The plumber charged the family \$80 to just chip away a small amount of ceramic and cement to find the leak but not actually fix it! They can't afford this bill (which is outrageous even by Ecuadorian standards) so we loaned them the money. Verito works as an attendant on a school bus for \$2.50/hr. July and August is summer vacation during which she has NO income, and yet she has to soon buy school supplies for 4 children. So we offered to hire Verito to help Sondra with several household projects in order to work off the loan and to buy the things she needs for her kids. Being that she is an extremely diligent worker we have agreed to pay her more than minimum wage. **It's a win-**

win situation that the Lord put on our heart. This family of 8 is now able take showers and cook again, keep their dignity, prepare the kids for school, and we get some much needed help around the house. Oh, and the recent plumbing job? Darrell was able to completely repair it for the price of the parts (under \$20!).

We thank God for the many opportunities He is providing us to be involved not only in our mission ministry, but also, to be active in the church and in the community! Your financial support, encouragement, and prayers enable us to bear fruit here in Ecuador!

Darrell and Sondra Holden

Serving with Ripe For Harvest - Partnering with Reach Beyond



in Ecuador, South America



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