

A Jungle Bridge

*Comments, Thoughts, and Pictures
From Costa Rica*



Monday, June 04, 2007

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*Jackie and her roommates at the rehab center.
The woman next to Jackie, in the blue t-shirt, is the director.*

RECENT NEWS

Jackie and Joseph tie the knot – with members of their fan club – Carmelita and Irene – in attendance. Carmelita & Irene get themselves into hot water. A Bridge across the world for Carmelita. An opportunity presents itself.

JACKIE & JOSEPH GET MARRIED

Those of you who have been with us for a while know that we've been working with Jackie & Joseph, a black couple from Puerto Viejo. They've each entered rehabilitation facilities for addiction and are working through the program. You also know that Dennis & Terrie Atkinson, a Christian missionary couple, visited here and prayed with J & J. Then Terrie took a ring from her finger, and gave it to Nanci to hold for when the two got married. They tied the knot at the women's rehab center on Wednesday. We went to the wedding, and since 13-year-old Carmelita and 10-year-old Irene had formed a real friendship with Jackie while she was here, we took them with us.



A Costa Rican wedding is a legal affair, with a lawyer, white shirt on the left, and a minister, on the right, in attendance.

Jackie and Joseph are ready, sitting at the table, as the ceremony gets under way.

After the wedding, they were given a two-day conjugal visit, then it's back to their respective shelters again for another nine months.



It's official, and Jackie and Joseph sign the marriage documents.



Of course, it's not REALLY official until...



... and then things get down to serious business!

There were a couple of things we didn't know before coming to this wedding.

As we looked at maps and asked around about the location of this place – on the north east outskirts of San José – we noticed that people were reluctant to tell us where it was. As we got closer we started to hear warnings about the area – very dangerous, very violent. “Not even the police will go in there”, an armed bank guard said.

So we did the only thing we could do – we went in anyway.

The wedding went off fine, and the minister, Victor Fullas Saboria, took it on himself to ride with us and guide us out of the area.

Thank you, Pastor Victor.

Thank you, Dennis and Terrie!

And Thanks to all of you who have been praying for this lovely couple!

CARMELITA AND IRENE IN HOT WATER

This was Carmelita's first trip into the San José area. It was hard to keep her and Irene out of hot water, as they jumped into the jacuzzi at the Vista del Valle Inn. Hot water is a new experience for both girls, quite accustomed to bathing in the rivers near their homes.



*Carmelita, left and Irene as they enjoy the jacuzzi
We had a little trouble keeping the girls out of “the pond”.*

Mike & Johanna Bresnan, from the [Vista del Valle Hotel](#), hosted us all for two nights as we visited for the wedding.

When you fly in and out of Costa Rica, stay with them. You can help us say “Thank You!” in person!

A PEN PAL FOR CARMELITA

As we reported in an earlier newsletter, Carmelita believes that “learning about animals, and going back to the jungle to protect animals is the most important thing she can do.”

While at the Vista del Valle, we met a family with a college-age daughter who is studying Environmental Science at Johns Hopkins University.



Carmelita stops swimming long enough to pose for a shot with Amanda Kirkhart

Amanda agreed to be an email pen-pal with Carmelita. Even though Amanda plans to spend some time in a study program that will take her to Madagascar, she'll still be able to exchange emails with Carmelita as she works her way through high school and toward college.

Amanda doesn't speak Spanish (yet), and Carmelita doesn't speak English (yet). We can't wait to see how this comes out!

AN OPPORTUNITY

Every so often, we run into a great opportunity, with the potential to make a lot of profit. Unless it's directly connected to what we're doing at The Bridge, we can't add it to our plate of things to do. Some days, we feel like we're too busy already.

However, we ran into an opportunity recently which, because of timing, location, and business positioning, could be a good opportunity for someone who intends to be in Costa Rican real estate. Since it would be partnering with an organization that has been very supportive of The Bridge, we thought we'd report it here. The project is in Costa Rica's north-central zone.

It's not for the casual investor. It's a half completed real estate development where whatever gets built sells out. It's in a high-demand area, The construction is classy, the people involved have their heads screwed on right – wherever they go, they include the local families living in or near the area, and bring them into opportunities to benefit as well, They work very hard to minimize their impact on the environment, ensuring that the area stays "green", often at the expense of profit. The situation now available requires an investment of \$100,000. The potential return is much greater than that.

I've been around this kind of business for a long time, and I'd rather not get any deeper in describing either the property, the investment needed, or the opportunity. This is best done between the principals and potential investors. I wouldn't want to bore the rest of you with the details. I have a feeling this opportunity won't last for long. Feel free to [send me an email for additional information by clicking here.](#)

THE NEW BAMBOO

One of the projects you'll also see coming up will be work done to assist with the growing, harvesting, and using of guadua bamboo. Basically, it's a way of generating revenue for groups of indigenous families. Here's how it works in a nutshell.

- Guadua removes much more carbon dioxide from the air than "normal" jungle trees;
- It produces significantly more oxygen than "normal" jungle trees;

To produce revenue:

- It can be processed into furniture, and into construction materials;
- Government agencies and private companies pay for "carbon credits" – cash paid per ton of carbon dioxide "sequestered" from the atmosphere. Since Guadua is more effective than "normal" jungle trees, this is expected to produce significant revenue for the indigenous groups who participate.

To see more go to this website: <http://bamboocentral.org/shareinrepair/whybamboo.htm>

We'll keep you posted on this one.

WEBSITE UPDATES

You may have noticed we've been updating the website frequently, adding daily information to the home page and trying to keep the website up with current events.

We've also completed one pass through accounting data for 2006, and have added a page displaying some of it on the website. To see the initial report, dealing with direct costs, [click here.](#)

Coming:

We expect to add a summary of indirect costs shortly.

Also coming soon: a page added to the El Puente online store, with cards and prints from Nanci's new art series she calls "Flor'n More".

Stay tuned!

YOU CAN HELP US!

[Send this email to two people you know who might also enjoy it.](#)

DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Thanks to Cherrilynn Birchwood, who recently brought a couple of boxes of donated school supplies from Canada to the west coast of Costa Rica

Thanks also to Henry Kantrowitz, who collected those boxes, brought them to the airport, and bundled them into a cab to the Hotel Brillasol, where Nanci and the girls picked them up.

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

It's an interesting time. We've been working right along, with your support from donations and product revenue; Here's a quick recap from recent months.

| | |
|---|---------|
| Donations or Product Revenue received April 1 - May 31 | \$3,022 |
| Cash needed for completed projects or projects in-process | \$2,693 |

MONTHLY OPERATING EXPENSES

| | | |
|--|-------|--------------|
| Operating - School Kids (12) in Puerto Viejo (Feb - Dec) | \$150 | 6% |
| Operating - Community Kitchen (90 people/week) | \$610 | 26% |
| Operating - Bags of Food (7) | \$400 | 17% |
| Facilities - building, electric, phone, water, trash | \$576 | 25% |
| Miscellaneous - personal expenses, food | \$579 | 25% Personal |

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| Monthly Needs | \$2,315 |
|---------------|---------|

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Total Cash Needs April 1 – May 31 | \$5,008 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|

| | |
|---|---------|
| LESS CASH RECEIVED BETWEEN APRIL 1 - MAY 31 | \$3,022 |
|---|---------|

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| The Amount needed at this time is | \$1,986 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| CASH ON HAND AT THIS MOMENT IS | \$93 |
|---------------------------------------|------|

We are blessed with suppliers who will extend credit as we need it, and we are more than able to continue operations.

We are also blessed with the support of donors, and of those who continue to purchase the cards and prints that are available through our [online store](#), as well as various locations in Costa Rica and now, in the USA.

We invite inquiries from anyone who would like to have more detailed information about our operations. Feel free to [send us an inquiry email by CLICKING HERE](#)

NOW's a GREAT time to contribute.

Go to the website donation page by [clicking here](#), where you can use a credit card.

Or, mail a check made out to "El Puente" to

USE Credit Union, 8697 La Mesa Boulevard, La Mesa, CA 91941

With 29409704 in the "memo" field.

Remember – deductions are tax-deductible

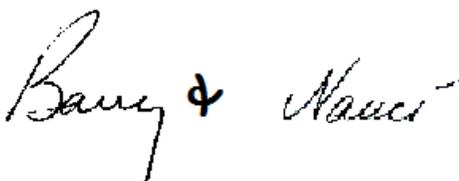
Do it NOW! You'll be glad you did!

Thank you for your support!

Well,

...djmiache

Enjoy!



IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE SEEING THE PICTURES

...go to www.elpuente-thebridge.org/weekly and download the file with the date of this issue.

Go to The Bridge Website by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Go to The Bridge Online Store by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Download a Powerpoint presentation and a brochure by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Go to the newsletter archive by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Here's some Video clips showing activities at The Bridge:

[Nanci and Alejandro working together to serve lunch on the porch](#)

[Daniel, Barry, and Alejandro setting up for the movie](#)

[Watching the movie: this day, "Winnie The Pooh" in Spanish](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Barry's Email: barrystevens@earthlink.net

MSN Instant Messenger: barrystevens@earthlink.net

Nanci's email: nancistevens2001@yahoo.com

Our toll-free number from the US is
1-866-462-7585