



January 21, 2011
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A happy Maria and Alejandro graduate – and we breathlessly told you about it as it occurred. We’re including it again here to go along with the experiment with videos.

RECENT NEWS

We had a Christmas Party at The Bridge, and you’re invited! We’re experimenting with video as another way to include you in the action down here. Carlos Jackson, Timoteo’s son, got married, and we were blessed with an invitation to the wedding. Remember the movie “The Blue Butterfly?” We got to talk with the man who made the movie – also at Carlos’ wedding. The School Program for 2011 has started – and it’s on a roll.

CHRISTMAS PARTY 2010

And The Day Dawns Brightly – by Nanci Stevens

Seven years now – what an amazing time we’ve had. Ah, but at Christmas, we pull out *all* the stops. With red and green construction paper, glitter, glue, tissue paper, confetti, bits and pieces of recycled junk, we build the decor. Ribbons curl, beads become strings, scissors, staples, sequins, garlands, and more glitter. Piñatas, paper chains, water balloons; homemade baskets filled with pretties, Decorations are complete!

Tooth brushes and paste, scented soaps, hair bobs and candies bedecking every table covered with satins and lace. A table setting for royalty! Paper placemats for everyone to color, with designs by kids and staff. The Bridge really knows how to throw a party! With the help of our wonderful donors and volunteers, we do it up big.

Christmas lands at the beginning of the rainy season, when it has been possible to canoe down the road in front of the house. Trees topple because the earth is so squishy. But the party depends on sun; or, at least, no rain. With absolutely no way to put nearly 100 people under cover, we choose not to have rain. Choose not? A conscious setting of an intention to manifest a dry day.

I tell people, “This is God’s gig. I’m only the hands, the feet, the eyes; the tools of the great Master. He/She/It may give me the ideas, but also has to supply the money and wherewithal to make it happen. If He/She/It wants me to host a party for a God-zillion people, it has to be a dry day. And for the last 6 years, God has complied, with perfect weather at least for the party. After

so many weeks of downpour, the sky will suddenly lift the day before, giving us a chance to shake ourselves off and dress up the place for the gala event. .

But this year, someone offered us a tarp, a big blue fancy thing, 18 ft long and 16 ft wide, enough to keep at least 4 more tables out of the rain. What rain? I thought we ordered sunny weather for the 25th. And then another tarp was offered. And then a canopy. Does that mean we're supposed to prepare for rain? And rain it did. Hard, solid rain for days before the party, and all night long before the big event. So, at about 9 AM Christmas morning, preparing for the inconceivable, I set Barry & the Bridge volunteers to working like madmen, stringing tarps to canopies, to complete the job in time to set up the 15 tables and benches, get them clean, wiped, bedecked and bedazzled, and the yard ballooned in order to be able to open the doors as always at precisely 12 noon on the dot.

Trust stretches credibility. Could all those other dry Christmases have been a fluke? Could less than a handful of affirmations and prayers really alter the rainfall in one of the wettest places on the planet? I sure believe that, and science has proven that we are really powerful creators. I surely must have more faith than a grain of mustard seed.

However... although not heavy by any means, a light rain did continue to fall that morning. So, up went the tarps.

And just when did the clouds part revealing a radiant, warm, and beautiful sunny day, that glistened like billions of tiny diamonds on the clean green of jungle flora?



I wasn't watching at the 11th hour, when the glorious sun broke through the clouds. For the next six hours, not one drop of rain fell on our parade, allowing us – as usual – to have the perfect Christmas party.

And was all that extra work with the tarps just so much wasted energy? They kept the hot tropical sun off the heads of the 97 partygoers – who also had faith in a perfect day.

Just testing – yes, Lord, I do believe!

Nanci

Welcome to the party – Christmas, 2010!

As Nanci said, we were blessed to be able to serve 97 people at our Christmas party this year. She, the Kids, and the Volunteers had the place looking bee-you-ti-ful! We thought you'd appreciate some fotos.



Here, Timoteo Jackson and Abelio get together to help get the tarps in place. We had just seen the sun break through, but the tarps are good "just in case" – in case there's more rain, in case there's intense sun.

The rainfall had been so steady that when the sun broke through we had to *really* scramble to get the place ready for the party. The guests had already started to arrive, and the scramble was on!



Nanci, looking slightly frazzled, Mary Jennings, Abelio and his father, Timoteo and Catie (with the Santa hat), jumped in to get things done.

Through some miracle, the crew got everything in place, and the party got under way.



And get under way it did! First, with the initial period of "coloring"... the images that Nanci provided as place mats, combined with crayons at each table – and "Bingo!" Even Timoteo and his wife Pastora at the far back table on the right, get into the act by coloring theirs.

To get you closer to the action, we've added a few videos – made by a complete amateur – me. (We're trying video as an experiment in this issue. As you'll see, there's a lot I have to learn. If you have any comments or suggestions, I'll be delighted to receive them, be kind please.) In the table of videos below, I've also included the running time and size of each clip. Depending on your browser and media player, each clip may download before playing. We don't know how many of you are on dialup, so the running time and file size will let you know what to expect.

Onward - and Welcome to the Christmas Party for 2010!
You can (almost) join us down here by clicking on the video clips below.

CLIP NAME	TIME (SEC)	SIZE (MB)
01 Waiting at the gate.avi	21	2.5
02 Arrivals.avi	36	4.3
03 Food service - volunteers and troubadors 1.avi	27	3.2
04 Food service - volunteers and troubadors 2.avi	18	2.2
05 Nanci opening remarks.avi	39	4.7
06 Timoteo opening remarks Bribri and Spanish.avi	134	16.0
07 Timoteo does a Bribri chant and prayer.avi	244	29.0
08 Daniel working the pinata -2.avi	81	9.7
09 Feliz Navidad.avi	47	5.6

People gather outside the gate, waiting for the party to start – sometimes, an hour or two in advance. We've included some clips from the food service "chaos", and you can hear Rene and Sarah Galli being our troubadours in the background. Nanci and Timo welcomed in the crowd. Daniel, a long time figure at The Bridge, helps with the piñata. Finally, Rene and Sarah close us out with "Feliz Navidad".

A GRADUATION AT THE BRIDGE!

Maria and Alejandro graduated recently from elementary school into high school. Graduation ceremonies here are a hoot – words like “pomp” and “ceremony” are understatements. We just started including videos, and thought you’d like to join us as we bring you as close to actually being here as we’re able.

CLIP NAME	TIME (SEC)	SIZE (MB)
1 Alejandro entrance march.avi	28	3.3
2 Maria entrance march.avi	53	6.3
3 5 yr old finishes feliz navidad.avi	17	2.0
4 skit - little girl meets an angel.avi	34	4.0
5 Alejandro and Maria go through the reception line.avi	39	4.6
6 Maria and Alejandro graduate - walking out.avi	24	2.8

In these brief videos, Alejandro and Maria each strut their stuff as they go through the dance routine we’re calling the “Entrance March”. A very short clip follows this from a rendition of “Feliz Navidad” by a five-year-old. Next, a little girl falls asleep, and meets an angel in a brief dream-dance. As the ceremony progresses, Alejandro and Maria go through the reception line of teachers and aides to get their diplomas. Finally, our Hero and Heroine get to be in the Exit March. They get up and walk out of the meeting hall, with Maria being the first out, and Alejandro the last. As they begin, the electricity goes out and what would have been about a twenty minute march is pared down to about thirty seconds as they dash out the door. So much for ceremony!.

JUNGLE WEDDING

We were honored to be invited to join Timoteo Jackson and his family as they celebrated the wedding of his son Carlos to a Bribri woman named Vanessa. Fotos are best here, and we say “Thank You” to volunteer Mary Jennings for capturing the event for us.

What’s a wedding like in Costa Rica? Unless a Catholic Priest marries you, the first person to speak at any wedding is a lawyer, who has the actual legal authority to conduct the wedding. In Carlos’ case, next up is the Christian minister. Then, the Bride and Groom, as seen in these candid shots.



The Lawyer



The Minister



Carlos and Vanessa

The Lawyer gives the “by the power vested in me” speech, and carries the legal documents that the couple and witnesses sign. The Minister then takes over, and in this case he delivered a “how-to” talk. How to keep a marriage together, respecting each other, listening to each other, and so on.

After the ceremony, the Bride throws that beautiful red flower that was her bouquet. Yes, there was a young woman who was delighted that she caught it. We were invited to join the family and friends in the reception, held in Timo’s office across the street from the family house where the wedding was held. The first thing on the agenda – Carlos picked up a drum and gave us a traditional Bribri chant. He’s got a really good voice!



The Minister and Vanessa listen as Carlos gives us a Bribri chant

A reception wouldn't be complete without a wedding cake, and this gala was no exception.



Vanessa, illuminated by flashlights, cuts the wedding cake

We got a real surprise at this wedding. Remember the movie "The Blue Butterfly"? In the movie, an entomologist from Montreal brings a 10-year-old boy with a brain tumor to Costa Rica to find a blue butterfly before he dies. The boy finds the blue butterfly, which legends say has magical qualities, and runs into a shaman along the way. Although no one knows quite how, the boy goes home without the brain tumor. The entomologist is the author of the story and maker of the movie – and he sat down right next to Nanci and I at Carlos' wedding. Ladies and gentlemen, meet Ms. and Mr. Georges Broussard.



The boy he guided down here, by the way, is alive and well back in Montreal.

Nanci and I were pleased to have the opportunity to spend time with the Broussards after the reception.



And again, thank you Mary Jennings! It's nice to be in a foto with Nanci!

SCHOOL PROGRAM 2011 HAS ALREADY BEGUN!!

School Program 2011 seems to have gotten itself under way! Even before we asked for your support, several people are already signing up to sponsor one or more children at \$150 each. Another donor came down from Canada to actually get hands-on involved in the suiting up process! You'll meet her in the next issue.

Stay tuned! In the next few days, you'll receive another mailing, asking for your support for what we believe could be shaping up to a whole lot more than fifty students this year!

DONOR NOTES

We are blessed with 18 angels who are in the "Intrepid Bridger's Club" – they have committed to a monthly pledge amount. You can see the Pledge Program by [clicking on this link to visit the website.](#)

YOU CAN HELP US!

There are several ways you can help.

- **Send this email to people you know** who might also enjoy it.
- **Post a message about us on relevant web sites or discussion boards.**
- **Look at our list of critically needed supplies** – [click on this link to get to the "What Can I Bring?" page on our website.](#)

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

**Thank You for the continuing support we have been getting.
You all are allowing us to continue to serve!**

NOW's a GREAT time to contribute.

Make a **Monthly Pledge** by [clicking here.](#)

Make an **Immediate Donation** by [clicking here](#),
and donate online using PayPal, or mail a check.

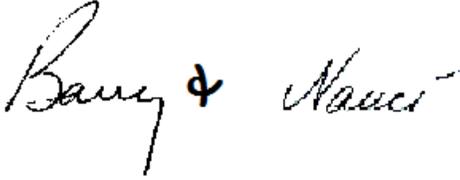
Do it NOW! You'll be glad you did!

Thank you for your support!

Well,

...djmiache

Enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry & Nancy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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 Blog** -"Angels With Their Skins On" by [CLICKING HERE](#)

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See some **Video clips** showing activities at The Bridge by [CLICKING HERE](#)

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