

Porch de Salomon

Panajachel, Guatemala
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*Short-term mission teams
in Guatemala

*Humanitarian relief for
indigenous families

*Solomon's Porch
café ministry

*Live music outreach

* Helping transform churches



PorchTalk

Volume 93

February 2013

CHANGES

by Lloyd

Behold I am doing a new thing; do you not see it? *Isaiah 43:19*

Ch, ch, ch, ch, changes... *David Bowie*

In our last newsletter, we asked you to help us "finish well." Many of you responded, beautifully and generously, to cap off a high-impact 2012 for Porch de Salomon.

Muchas gracias!

Now, the new year brings **big, positive changes** for our progressive mission ministry!

- Amber, Will, Abra (4) and Ezra (2) Deeds joined our Panajachel local team January 24. They rendezvoused with me and Melanie in Guatemala City, after "selling out" in Indiana, to become full-time assistant directors in Panajachel. Please keep them in your prayers as they get "their bearings."
- Noe Benjamin Perez succeeds Hector as our Humanitarian Relief Director, effective Feb. 1. Hector and his great work will forever be part of the Porch story of serving the lost, least and last. We will miss him but are excited for Noe to re-join our ministry. *Please see Noe's story of change on page 2.*

*Our ministry has purchased the Hotel San Sebastian; it is where our teams stay, right in the center of Panajachel. Porch has built 50 houses plus church kitchens, basketball/soccer courts, bathrooms and more and given them all away; we never bought or built anything for the ministry. Late last year, I came under conviction that good stewardship called for us to explore harnessing the \$23,000 (and more) annually our teams pay for rooms, and we pay for café rent, to gain a ministry facility for the future. The owner was motivated by 16% interest on his loan and "doors" opened for us. Melanie and I mortgaged our home in Florida to secure the purchase loan (not what we expected to do at our age, after being mortgage free for 11 years.... but we have a sense of peace about this). Our teams' room charges will pay the note payments (and we hope to use special donations, etc. to pay off completely in five years).

(Continued on Page Two)



The time has finally arrived! We Deeds moved down to Panajachel on the 24th to join the Porch in ministry! This season of preparation has been a good one for us.

Although this will be a big transition for our little family we feel that God has been preparing our hearts to serve the people of Panajachel. So we again say "goodbye" to many close friends and family members and look forward to what God has for us in Guatemala.



(Above) Will cutting Pedro's hair in Patanatic. A new referral, his bed and covers were so bad they had to be burned.

(Right) Good changes are in store for the six cleft palate kids, like Edison Fernando, who will receive surgery Feb. 9.

"For the lost, the least and the last"

CHANGES *(Continued from Page One)*

Solomon's Porch café will downsize and move to the hotel's street level space in February. We will no longer be paying rent for the café; everyone we have spoken with about this says it makes sense. Let's see what God says! We welcome your prayers, questions and comments. I would love to share more details and our strategy with you if you contact me. Check out <http://sansebastianhotelgt.com/> for more pics!

The Prodigal Returns

by Noe Benjamin Perez

As a younger man, I managed Solomon's Porch cafe. I left that job to try other things in my life, start my own business and become a volunteer firefighter. I matured and learned a lot about helping people.

Thank God, I now have a new job serving the people of Guatemala full-time; I am replacing my friend Hector as Porch de Salomon's Humanitarian Relief Director. I told Melanie "the prodigal son has returned." I believe God has a purpose for each of us. While, in some ways, I cannot replace Hector, God will help me do the right thing.

Hector has been training me these past two months working and meeting all the people that Porch de Solomon helps, with scholarships, medicine, food and more. It's been very emotional to see the work being done; the impact the houses and help have on indigenous families moves me. I am so happy to be part of this ministry and to be able to support my family through this work.

To our mission partners and teams, I invite you to continue trusting and helping us serve many. Thanks for helping this beautiful country and for giving your time and hope to those in need. God bless you all.



Hector, Noe and Nik (their ass't)



(Above) Hotel San Sebastian will soon become Hotel California. A bit whimsical, for sure....but this song is the most-requested rock tune by Ladinos here. Rolling Stone magazine's #49 greatest ever, this tune decries American materialism, excess and decadence. That will "preach" in Pana and elsewhere!

My Changes

by Yamil Naf

I met the Monroe family in 2005 when Daniel and Asa joined our school in Panajachel. They broke our stereotype of what we thought Christians were and became part of the Panajachel community so quickly; it just felt right having the Monroe's in our town.

My mother Estrella and I were always Christ-followers but could not fit into the extremely conservative and strict Guatemalan churches. The first time we attended a Solomon's Porch worship gathering we were in shock at how great it was. It was fun, insightful, captivating and inclusive. Ever since then, our faith kept growing and growing thanks to what we have learned there and tried to live out. Melanie is like my second mom and Lloyd became a father figure to me.

I write this article from my freshman dorm at the University of North Florida. Without my extended Porch family's help and support I would never be where I am right now. What they have given me and the people of Guatemala is something more than just support-- it's unconditional love.

I am so proud to be a part of the Porch de Salomon family. The Monroe's gave up their lives in Florida to serve God and the people of Guatemala and they have done it well; I am a witness to this. I thank them, and many of you, for everything you have done for me and for the people of my country.

All my love, *Yamil*

Yamil has worked hard (and received well-deserved help) to move stateside and attend university. We are proud of him and, along with his mother, will miss his positive presence in Pana. Melanie and Lloyd





Edwin (featured in our last newsletter) and his mother's lives have been changed by his wheelchair and ramp; She used to haul him up steps on her back!

CONSTANTS

Our high-impact humanitarian relief work happens 52 weeks a year. There is so much need...and US dollars, sometimes even modest amounts, make a real difference. We thank Hector, Noe, Nik, the ladies listed below and others for making this happen.

Our local team's steadfast work is *a constant*. In addition to Noe and Nik:

- Mirna's handling of the hotel negotiations and take-over (she has operated it since January 4). A major confidence builder for us was her past experience as a manager of one of Pana's swank tourist hotels. She will manage the hotel and Solomon's Porch café.
- Birma, Carmen, Marci, Veronica and Gaby's work in the café, and now the hotel, is a blessing.
- It is great that our folks are honest. That is not always the case here.

(Below) We were pleased that all eleven 2013 house families were in their new houses by year's end. Our construction guys in the field are awesome!

THE WORD

I was in the midst of details and some worry about purchasing the hotel on January 18. That day, our sister church's pastor from Cuba, who knew nothing about that, emailed me this verse: *God will order a blessing on your barns and workplaces; he'll bless you.... Deuteronomy 28:8 (MSJ)*

Wow... (a coincidence?!). Our encouraging one another, sometimes using truth from the Bible, should be a constant in our lives. *Lloyd*

#10—Elizabeth's family



#11—Juana and Martin's family



#9—Jenaro and Lucinda's family

PRAISES:

- * Discovering New Life Internat'l and our fledgling partnership
- * The changes, and the constants, noted in this edition
- * Our encouragers and the great I AM's favor and resourcing
- * Super-generous donors whose past facility donations funded our hotel down payment

Please PRAY FOR: Our February Teams--

- * Feb. 2-9: Brandon/Roper/Shalley – house construction
- * Feb. 9-16: Tall. Heights UMC- construction, medical clinics
- * Feb. 17-25: Team Gina (CA)--construction and Bible school
- * Feb. 24-Mar.2: Canadian Mennonite Un.(34!)—house build
- * The changes and challenges noted in this edition
- * Team co-leader Jayne Mittan (Tallahassee FL); her husband Barry died in an auto accident
- * Moving Solomon's Porch café to the new building this month

Four-year old Abra Deeds (L) made fast friends with Gloria at a groundbreaking ceremony for the latter's new house



2013 Beca Scholarship Update

Education is a key to breaking the cycle of poverty that grips Guatemala. Without money, many children never attend school or attend for two or three years. We're pleased to report that generous donors have again provided enough money to send over 50 children to school this 2013 term (which began in January). We thank all our Beca partners/donors!

We have more candidates than we can currently fund. We are still accepting donations; \$220, per year, is the cost of this life-changing gift. Please contact lloyd@porchdesalomon.org or Rex 850.933.0344 to get involved.

One of our new candidates is Maria Bocel, an indigenous 20 year-old from El Tablon. She is one of 11 children; sadly, her family believes educating females is a waste. With great determination, Maria has put herself through sixth grade with part of the \$20 per week she earns as a maid. A Porch "beca" will allow her to attend a weekend school at the next level.



Maria

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and on 

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