



The Ministry Newsletter
of Ron & Peg Smith
June, 2002

The Smiths In Costa Rica!

With thanksgiving to God for His timing and His provision, we are passing along the news we know you have been waiting to hear. The Smiths have made it to Costa Rica, and will be making our home in San José for the next nine months. We are here for concentrated language training – “concentrated” in the sense that we have nothing expected of us *except* to learn Spanish. Now, if *we* can only concentrate. . . . hey! Look at that pretty bird!

We arrived in San José on Tuesday evening, May 21st. Guayaquil teammates Robin and Mike McMahan met us at the airport and hauled us and all our stuff over to their house where we “camped out” for a few days. The McMahans had just finished their language study and were getting ready to leave.

We moved to our own apartment on Friday the 24th of May. Since then we have been getting the house in order and our things put away.

New student orientation just ended, and the quarter has begun. The school gave us oral and written assessments to decide at what level we should begin our language study. As expected, Peg and Ron are in different classes.

During the “Summer” session, Benjamin and Allison will be involved in a type of “summer camp” program with the kids of other students. Much of the day will involve learning Spanish, and we hope they will pick up a fair amount of Spanish by the end of the Summer quarter.

First Impressions of San José

The differences between life in Costa Rica and life in the USA are pretty obvious. But life for us here is different from the way we lived in Guayaquil. For example, we do a lot more walking here than we ever did in Guayaquil. This has its advantages and its disadvantages. On the up side, we’re getting a lot more exercise. On the downside, it’s the rainy season here, and we frequently have to walk in the rain.

Our second mode of transportation (after “feet”) is by bus. We can get just about anywhere on the multitude of bus routes that pass through our part of town. However, if we need to go somewhere directly, we just flag down a passing taxi.

The climate here is cooler than it is in Guayaquil. We enjoy fresh breezes through our home every day. Homes are neither heated nor air conditioned. If you’re warm, open the window; if you’re cool, close it. In the afternoon the high temperature reaches the 80’s, but then the rains come and cool things off again. **(please turn to page two)**



Here’s where we learn Spanish

(continued from page one)

On our first trip downtown we discovered that for the most part, the streets of San Jose are narrower than those of Guayaquil. San José also lacks the skyscrapers and the “business bustle” that distinguishes Guayaquil, but it does have the familiar “mom & pop” stores. There are lots of little stores in our neighborhood, too, selling everything from plumbing supplies to baby diapers (there is a store nearby that exclusively sells diapers!). Shopping malls and major supermarkets are minutes away by taxi.

The people here are friendly towards Americans and try very hard to understand us when we “speak Spanish.” We were surprised to discover how many Americans live in our part of town. Besides the 100+ students at the language school, there are many other Missionary families serving with many different missions organizations. In fact, we will have to “work at it” if we want to make friends with the Ticos (Costa Ricans).

We hope that our letter has given you a picture of what our lives will be like for the next nine months. We’ll fill in some details as time goes on.



We live in the bottom floor apartment.

It's Not Wrong; It's Just Different!

How do you like l-o-o-o-n-g Summer days, when daylight lasts long into the evening hours? And those “extra” hours of daylight for neighborhood or backyard activities . . . Well, we don’t have any of that here in Costa Rica. In fact, it gets dark before six in the evening. But boy, do we make up for it on the other end of the day! The first light of day comes around five in the morning; and by a quarter to six, the business of the day is beginning.

Before we left Florida, Peg was worried that we wouldn’t be able to wake up early enough to get things together and head for school. Needless to say, that has not been a problem – not with sunrise and sunset coming so early. For the first two weeks we were waking up so early that we were ready for lunch by 10:30 a.m. and ready for bed by eight at night! Now that we have become “adjusted,” we can usually stay up until nine.

We’ve asked a few Americans (who’ve been here a while) why the Costa Ricans keep to this “funny” time rather than shift the daylight to the end of the day. We haven’t gotten a definitive answer, but it seems that only the North Americans notice “the difference.”

Here's Our Address . . .



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. . . we really want to hear from you!

Pray With Us . . .

- . . . that the Lord will lead us to a church where we can worship together
- . . . that God would give us an ability to speak Spanish
- . . . that Benjamin and Allison will make friends with Ticos as well as Gringos
- . . . that Ron and Peg will form friendships that will stimulate us both spiritually and culturally