



Dear Friends and Family,

It's hard to believe that we're already into our third year in Nicaragua! After a great summer in the U.S. we've once again settled into day-to-day life here. We were apart for almost 5 weeks at the end of the summer as Joel came back to start school and I (Lora) stayed in Michigan for work, weddings and to help three NCA graduates get settled into their freshman year at Calvin.

I returned to Michigan for two weeks in October to attend the Partners Worldwide Partnership Summit. During that time, Joel was diagnosed and hospitalized with Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever. While it was a scary experience, we were tremendously blessed by the outpouring of love, care and support that our network of friends here provided for Joel until I returned (and even after I was back). Thankfully, he received very good medical attention and he has now fully recovered. We know that many of you were praying for Joel while he was sick and we were so blessed by your thoughts, prayers, emails and calls. Thank you!

Now that we've gotten past the Dengue drama and since we're going to finally be together for a solid few months we wanted to send out an update and share a bit of life in Nicaragua with you.

During the previous two years we spent a lot of time trying to get our bearings, figuring out the ropes and building relationships here. This year has a very different feel to it, mostly because we are now deepening relationships rather than searching for them. We are very thankful to have found some couples friends as well as some Nicaraguan families that have embraced us into their homes and lives.

Wow, what a difference two years makes in teaching! This year has been incredible so far because the daily battle of learning new material, planning lessons, and creating activities has finally eased up in my third year. At NCA, I'm the only high school science teacher, so for the last two years I've had to prepare for new classes every single day. This year, I am finally able to repeat the classes I taught my first year and it has been great! While the teaching load has been lessened, I still enjoy the challenge of explaining Physics and refreshing my algebra skills in AP Calculus. This fall, I assisted in coaching the NCA soccer team, played on a local Nicaraguan soccer team, served as a leader in Youth Group, and started working with fellow NCA teachers in mentoring teachers at a local Nicaraguan public school. As the first semester comes to a close, I look forward to the many opportunities that await in the second half of the school year.

Joel

Other little life tidbits:

- I'm enjoying my second year as a Senior Advisor. I help in creating fundraisers, planning graduation, and chaperoning the senior trip in February.
- To improve our Spanish skills, Lora and I made a pact to only speak Spanish to each other on odd days of the month and English on even days.
- We continue to be blessed by our church with the beautiful music, freedom to worship, deepening friendships, and learning through sermons.

Work with Partners Worldwide has been going very well. The partnerships that I've been working with for the past three years are now stable enough that we can start looking at new ways to grow in the countries where we currently work and possibly consider expanding Partners Worldwide's work in new countries. The beginning of the New Year will be a very busy time for the Latin American partnerships. Some of the upcoming events are: Partnership meetings in Iowa (January), regional business conference in Managua (February), exploratory trip to Guatemala (February) and a training trip to Honduras (March).

Lora

Other little life tidbits:

- A blessing this year has been the two mentoring relationships I've established. One with a sophomore student at NCA and one with a Calvin senior, who did an internship with Partners Worldwide in Nicaragua last summer.
- I've found a new love for Nicaraguan cooking and have been working on learning a few signature dishes.
- Our neighborhood kids are eager for odd jobs. They diligently wash our car, help in the garden, and usually join us for dinner a few times a week, which is always a joy for us.

We are continually amazed by God's wonderful blessings and constant provision for our work and lives here. In the past 2.5 years we have learned so much about our Creator and also about the work, service, generosity, joy and relationships that we have the opportunity to take part in. Although it is often extremely challenging, we know that there are valuable lessons to be learned every day and through each experience. We greatly appreciate your support, prayers and communication. We love to hear from you so please feel free to get in touch with us! We also ask for your continued thoughts and prayers for the following things:

Health- We are so grateful for Joel's full recovery from Dengue and hope that we don't face anymore major health issues.

Work- Continued diligence, future vision and constant passion for our work with students and businesspeople.

Neighborhood- This year we have become more conscious of the poverty that surrounds us and our home every day. We desire to help alleviate this poverty in a healthy and sustainable way.

Commitments- For the last few years we've prayed for opportunities to serve and get involved. That prayer has definitely been answered! Now we need to find the best way to invest and balance our time.

Future- We are trying to discern what God's plan is for us at the end of this school year and for the upcoming years.

We are so grateful for your donations and monthly pledges in support of our work and life here in Nicaragua. If you feel led to make a donation to Partners Worldwide for our support, please use the enclosed envelope and reply card. Your financial generosity, constant encouragement and personal investment into our lives have been a tremendous blessing for both of us.

Please feel free to get in touch with us to update us on your lives. If you'll be in the west Michigan area during the holidays, we'd love to see you. We'll be there from Dec. 19- Jan. 4.

With Joy and Love,

Joel and Lora

For more updates and pictures check out: www.kleinsasser.blogspot.com

WE LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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Photos:

Ecuadorian Strawberry Farm- Lora during a trip to Ecuador in July with a partner Strawberry farmer (center) and Partners Worldwide Affiliate Administrator, Edwin (right), discussing this year's crop and also taste-testing some of the delicious *Frutillas*.

Isla de Ometepe with brother Ben- It was wonderful to have Ben here with us last semester. We miss him! So, we thought we'd sneak a picture of him in here. This was at the end of his semester when we visited Ometepe, the volcano island in Lake Nicaragua.

Joel and Lora- Merry Christmas from Nicaragua. ¡Feliz Navidad y Prospero 2010!

Physics Egg Drop- One of the highlights of Physics class for Joel (and the students too-he hopes!) is the Egg Drop. The students build light-weight contraptions out of straws and scotch tape to see if they can withstand drops from the 7 heights on Mr. K's drop-o-meter.

Youth Group Retreat- A huge blessing for us is to be able to invest in the lives of NCA students. We've had the opportunity to spend quality time with many of them during different events, trips and retreats. Here's Joel with the *Flaming Hot Fireballs* at the Youth group retreat.