

CONDÉ TAN

Traveller



Tan Newsletter May 2005



Sending you on the journey of a lifetime

And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?

Romans 10:14-15

Neal Pirolo wrote a classic book in 1991 called "Serving as Senders". He points out that while some are called to go, others are called to send. He says: "In a secular war, for every one person on the battle front, there are nine others backing him up ..." For missionary work, we think nine senders is a gross underestimate!!

We've been so grateful to be blessed by so many faithful senders during this home assignment that we'd like to introduce you to some of them. We won't mention any names so as not to embarrass you, but you know who you are! Pirolo mentions six ways senders can care for missionaries:

1. Moral Support

It's been great to have people encourage us by listening, by asking

probing questions, by sharpening and expanding our minds with new ideas, by challenging us with old truths and priorities from the Bible. One Christian musician encouraged us by sending over a bunch of CDs that our kids have listened to every day, or more often if we let them! Other friends have met us for coffee and talked about pastoral issues, or lent us good Christian books. Many have been concerned for the kids settling in and schooling. Others have asked hard questions and checked that we are being accountable. It's been really good meeting up with other missionaries with whom we can share common experiences and complaints!

2. Logistics

People have been generous with their time organising school uniforms for the girls before we arrived, enrolling them in school, organising for our house to be vacated and for a work team to help paint and clean up. People have lent us cars and furniture, TVs, toys and clothing. Christian professionals have cared for our bodies, our souls, our eyes and

our teeth. One sender who is a licensed electrician fixed the power points. Another sender wrote a computer program for us and downloads software for free. And now in reverse we are relying on senders to help us pack, move out, clean up, get to the airport and look after our house and other affairs while we're away.

3. Finance

We thank God for our senders who have been generously sharing what God has given them, for those behind the scenes who work out church missionary budgets and do the publicity and fundraising, and for those who have networked with others who have been interested in giving. Others have generously passed on skills, medical books and equipment such as an ECG machine, GPS device and designed a solar energy system for us.

4. Prayer

This is the real front-line of battle where our senders have been doing hand-to-hand combat with the enemy

on their knees. It's totally humbling to meet faithful warriors who pray for us daily and still remember details they have prayed for years ago. Some only know us from the prayer card on their fridge, or the photo projected in church on Sundays. We know God is most pleased with the fragrance arising from the "golden bowls of incense, which are the prayers of the saints".

5. Communications

Many of our senders comment on the fantastic job Jeremy and Cian do with our newsletters. One even uses it as his favourite bathroom reading material. Other senders have lent us mobile phones or keep in touch by email. We are sorry we haven't been able to make contact with all of you face-to-face during this home assignment but know that you are all close to our hearts.

6. Re-entry

We've been overwhelmed with hospitality and have been very well-fed by our senders. Some even bring food and cook it at our place, being aware that it's hard to go out too frequently with young kids in the family. We're grateful also to the girls and guy on the babysitting team who have freed us for evening meetings. One couple lent us their beachside holiday house, others updated us on all the pop culture that we've missed out on since we've been away. We sometimes feel we need a queer eye makeover to fit in with Australian culture and fashion again. Christian medical colleagues have been generous in allowing Lawrence to learn and upskill from them, to have a space in which to be a doctor again for a few hours a week, and he even has a personal librarian at the UNSW Biomed library to help him with his assignments. Other senders have taught Liling about cleaning products and video editing tips.

We thank the Lord for the great team of senders we have behind us. Some are family and friends, others have an official role through the SIM office and council. People like you serving us

enable us to keep on serving the Quechua people in Bolivia.

Home Assignment Highlights

People often ask us what were the highlights and lowlights of our time in Bolivia. This time Alex, Maddie and Anneka would like to tell you about their highlights and lowlights of being back in Australia on Home Assignment.



Alex

- ☺ Friends
- ☺ Church camp
- ☺ Meeting Colin Buchanan
- ☹ There's no real countryside – I miss the rocks and donkey poo



Maddie

- ☺ Going shopping with grandma
- ☺ I like rolling in the sand and the waves at the beach
- ☺ I like our pink house and having my own purple room
- ☹ Having to wear seatbelts whenever we get in the car

Annie

- ☺ Hugging Popo (Liling's mum)
- ☺ Playing in parks

- ☺ Playing with my cousins
- ☹ I dunno!

Tan Van plans

The Lord has encouraged us with lots of enthusiasm and interest from many people as we have shared about our vision for training Bolivian doctors and supporting church leaders in country towns. Praise God that by the time we leave we will have enough finances to begin the project, and will just need funds for ongoing expenses for the next four years. We will be doing a Quechua language refresher course in Cochabamba when we return to Bolivia and meanwhile will be shopping for a second-hand bus, outfitting it and coordinating proposed trips to rural areas with the State Health Department and church denominational leaders. We will aim to start travelling when the rainy season finishes in February.

We'd love to see you at West Sydney Chinese Christian Church (90 Homebush Road, Strathfield) for a potluck lunch at 12:30 followed by our Recommissioning Service at 2pm on 10 July. We're booked to fly out of Sydney on 29 July.

Prayer

- Thank the Lord for the many faithful senders we have met in Australia.
- Thank God for new skills, ideas and spiritual refreshment we have received while on home assignment.
- Praise God for providing for our needs and for generous funding so far for Project Walkabout.
- Pray that the Lord will strengthen us through a busy time of packing, moving and farewelling friends and family.
- Pray for some time for ourselves as a family before we start hitting the road again.

SIM
Serving In Mission

Sending in Mission