



Phillips' Forum



Chip, Laurie, Reed, Caleb, Alison, Susanna, Julie Anne

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Planning Meeting Not as Planned

"The flight schedules changed again! How can we schedule the meeting?" Being flexible is one thing learned overseas. Many times we see how the Lord uses these "twists of fate" to further his kingdom.

Facing an irregular plane schedule, we realized that our planning meeting would not go as planned. It had been scheduled near the hospital so that we would lose few work days. But changing flight schedules made it unlikely that a mission administrator could attend. Now all the hospital team would travel to the capitol while Laurie and the children would stay alone at the hospital site and a local doctor covered patients.

However this trip to Manaus allowed Chip to meet with a businessman who will help us raise funds for the hospital as well as with a doctor in the state health department who is working on our ability to receive government funding. This schedule also allowed Chip to visit another mission work and see how the Lord was using medicine in that part of the Amazon.

The return trip to the hospital also had to be by boat. Five days on a boat at first seemed like a loss, but it allowed Chip to catch up on correspondence.

Field Address:

Dr. Gordon & Laurie Phillips
Est. São Salvador, 1086
Santo Antônio do Içá-AM 69680-000
Brasil

Email: gphillips@abwe.cc

A Pleasant Surprise

As we explored nursing training options, the Brazilian government surprised us by starting a FREE nursing program in our town. So far we have juggled schedules so all our nurses can study.

Perhaps the Lord allowed our last prayer letter to be delayed as he knew we would not need to fund this educational endeavor (Nursing Education- May 2004).

Dreams or Reality?

Each night we all dream. Dreams allow us to catalogue and characterize the events we encounter and they allow us to see things as they might be. In many respects our planning meeting was a dreaming session where we evaluated the status of the hospital ministry, considered how to make it more effective, and thought about varied possibilities for the future. But as we "awoke" at the end of the session to face the day to day reality of running of the hospital, we made concrete plans (see back) to use medicine in this region of the Amazon. We also decided that a trip to the US would be beneficial.

Praise

- Long-term planning session was productive.
- The hospital was approved as a nationally recognized social assistance agency
- Dr. Mark Thompson has received his Brazilian medical license.

Prayer

- Chip plans to visit the Chicago consulate and personally appeal for Emmy Lou's visa.
- Contacts for Hospital funding.
- Hospital to be included in the Brazilian "medicaid" system.
- Hospital's tax burden to be decreased.
- Sherry Skirrow's continued cancer treatments.
- Adjustments as Dr. Thompson returns to the field with his medical license.



Sending Churches:

First Baptist Church
of Willingboro, NJ
New Life Baptist Church
of Darby, PA

The Reality of the Dream

With so many medical needs it is difficult to decide which care should not be done. However, the whole medical team agreed that we should continue to function as a hospital since we have well trained staff and good infrastructure, as well as the hospital being the foundation for many of the needed health services in this area, e.g. deliveries, C-sections, emergency surgery, etc. However, as we looked at the cost of running the hospital, it is also more expensive than clinic based medicine. We also realized that with increased expenses over the past two years, Lord has provided nearly half of the hospital's funds through one time gifts on a month to month basis. This has made planning difficult.

We finished our meeting with two major goals. One is to continue to do the most with the resources that the Lord has provided. Since Dr. Thompson has received his Brazilian medical license we will be able to continue to offer inpatient and surgical services, an Eye clinic where people can be fitted with glasses, as well as starting to offer some elective deliveries.

The second goal is for the hospital to function smoothly and offer steady medical services. To meet this goal, the hospital needs a stronger financial base. We set the following in motion. 1) Continue to seek traditional missionary funding in Brazil and the US, 2) Seek funds from foundations, 3) Look for corporate sponsors in Brazil and the US, 4) Seek to lower taxes, 5) Seek Breazilian governmental funding.

URGENT NEEDS: 1) Coordinator for fund raising in the US and 2) contacts. It is very difficult for us to raise funds in the US while in Brazil. Our family will be traveling to the US this summer/fall to work on several fund raising options. How could the Lord use you to meet medical needs in the Amazon.

Parenting Classes Begin

Successful parenting is a key to strong families. Last year we participated in a "Growing Kid's God's Way" parenting class. This material stresses both Biblical parenting principles as well as parents' exemplifying Biblical behavior. This year, Pastor Jacó and his wife, and we began separate classes. Our has been a challenge as the class is made up of simpler, more shy people.

The are six (6) couples in the class include Tartaruga and his wife. As teachers, our challenge has been to draw them into the class and get them to share how they are doing in putting the studies into practice. Despite these difficulties, they appear to be understanding the materials. Please pray that we will see lasting fruit for God's kingdom as these couples raise their children according to Biblical principles.

More Visa Snags

Emmy Lou's visa was resubmitted to the Chicago consulate and encountered yet another snag. Since she will be formally linked to a Hospital, the Consulate asked that she have a letter from the regional medical board stating she could volunteer at the hospital. Chip requested this letter. The reply stated that volunteer service has nothing to do with the medical board...but they suggested that we also run it by the regional nursing board who has tied up the process for months.

Please continue to pray that this process will be approved. We know that this process is in the Lord's hands and perhaps, He knows that we will need a teacher more NEXT year than this year. Chip is planning to travel to Chicago while in the US to personally meet the people in Chicago consulate. Perhaps this will lay groundwork for smoother visa processes in the future.

Chip & Laurie Phillips

Mailed via Alpha Secretarial Services
RR1 Box 127-H
Susquehanna, PA 18847-9413

*Missionaries to BRAZIL with
ABWE
P.O. Box 8585
Harrisburg, PA 19175-8585*

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