

February 2004 Adventures

One more time, it's still HOT! We are still seeing temperatures of 110°+, but enough said on that subject. Now for the rest of the radiator story – after being towed back to Santaní at the end of a rope, we tried to find someone local who could fix our radiator. Finding no one, Ed took it out of the truck and off to Asunción for repairs we went – by bus. A new radiator would have been \$500, but the repair was only \$20. So, repair we did. The interesting part of the story is what happened on our way back to Santaní. We were standing at the bus, having the driver load our radiator into the luggage compartment. The radiator was wrapped in black plastic, so you couldn't really see what it was. However, the driver said, "is this a radiator?", in which case he would not load any baggage on top of it. Now doesn't this question imply that it is very common to travel with one's radiator? Only here in Paraguay!

By the first Thursday in February, we were off again to Ara Pyahú. One of the many things we had with us is a new sign for the church. Now, all the churches in the Northern District have a prominent sign in front of their church. Here is a photo of the front of the church at Ara Pyahú, with Pastor German and his wife and daughter.



We both get to share in the ministries of the local churches when we are working. This month, Ed was able to preach – but under a different light. Most local churches use florescent lighting, which never really works. Not to let the devil have his way, Ed preached using our small book lights we were given for Christmas! The folks had never seen this type of light. Linda was able to participate in a local women's group. These women pray, on their knees, for what seems like an eternity, or maybe it's just **for** an eternity!



We did finish with the actual drilling of the well. It is 91.2 meters deep – that's 300 ft.!!! We used every drilling rod we had in the truck. On the left is a photo of the guys putting on the last rod. That's the easy part. Pulling them out of the ground is the hard part. On the right is another photo of the general layout of the drilling site with all the casing that went in the well.



The project is still in the on-going phase. The well is finished, but with it being that deep, cleaning out the drilling mud is going to be a process. We started the cleaning, but still have work to do. After we finish, a local Paraguayan team will continue with construction of the sanitary components of this site.

A month in Paraguay wouldn't be complete without lots of driving. After the above effort, we had 2 commitments – unfortunately on opposite sides of the country. Puerto Indio, which we finished in May, 2003, had a dedication of their well combined with a 4th year anniversary. As always, many folks needed a ride to the celebration. We had an all time record as 26 people sat & stood in our truck!

The next night, we were headed back to Ara Pyahú to celebrate their 2nd year as a congregation. The brothers & sisters of the church combined efforts to pay for the festival. They raised cotton to sell in order to buy a cow, yes a whole cow, to feed the estimated 200 folks attending. Food was great, and the weather was even a bit cool – what a blessing for all. We added another 900 kilometers or about 600 miles to our trusty Toyota in just 2 days.



Every last week of February is our General Conference. We had a week of final meetings leading up to the actual Asamblea on Friday. We did our ministry presentation by showing our PowerPoint slide show of all the wells. It was fun to share these photos with the pastors and missionaries. Most of the pastors never get a chance to visit other churches in Paraguay. This was a good “visit” with churches, pastors, and families. At the Asamblea, 2 of the Northern District pastors graduated, Pastor German from Ara Pyahú; and Pastor Felix from Quinta Linea. Linda will continue her national role as part of the audit team for the national treasurer. Ed will continue as District Superintendent, with the added responsibility of performing Holy Communion and Baptisms at one of our local churches.



We ended February trying to breath through hot, dry air. Some parts of Paraguay haven't had a drop of rain in over 2 months. Many of the local crops such as sesame, cotton, and soy have had to be plowed under due to the draught. We hope our efforts will, in some way, help better the lives of the people in Paraguay.

*In His Service,
Ed & Linda Baker*