



April 2023

# QUÉ PASA

What's Happening

A Publication of International Children's Care  
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## Serving Faithfully through the Pandemic

For nearly a decade, we have presented in the pages of the Que Pasa the story and testimonies of Silvia and Ana Herrera. We are pleased to yet again share another update, this time from Silvia, where she testifies how God worked through her and protected her as a front-line worker in the battle against COVID. She is paying forward the support that ICC donors like you provided to her when she was a child.



Silvia, center, came to El Oasis in 2001 with her brother Luis (left) and sister Ana (right). Thanks to you, Silvia now works as a respiratory therapist, taking care of others in times of great need.

**M**y name is Silvia Maria Herrera from Guatemala. I am a respiratory therapist working at the national hospital: San Juan De Dios General Hospital. I

love my career; I love my job and I love what I do.

During the pandemic our country was greatly affected. Hospitals were overflowing and there were not enough beds for so many people. I was working with young adult patients and some elderly ones. There were many sad, desperate moments of deep concern.

Many people lost the battle against Coronavirus. Yet, through that there were moments when we saw the hand of God so real and near as well as hard, painful moments like when the patient asked for a video call to say goodbye to his family for the last time.

During so much pain, crying and anguish, I had the opportunity to speak to all those patients and their family members about God's love. Many times, I had the chance to take them by the hand and say a prayer, sometimes giving words of encouragement and hope even through the darkness. Many times, I was filled with sadness when I saw the seriousness of the disease and without knowing what to do. But I knew that God had placed me



As a respiratory therapist during the COVID-19 pandemic, Silvia got to pay forward the gift of love you helped to provide by telling her patients about God's love.

there to help and serve as many people as possible.

I thank God that, despite the exposure to coronavirus I had as a health personnel, I did not get sick. Even though I grew up an orphan I know that I am a daughter of God, and He protects His children. He has always taken care of me, and I know He will continue to do so.

There were hard times where I often could not even drink a glass of water or eat food due to the restrictions of the protective suit I had to wear in the hospital or the fear of contaminating myself. But

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# The Blessing of the Harvest!

By Doug Congleton

## God is good – ALWAYS

A perfect example of this is being able to write and tell you of the latest blessings of the harvest on the El Oasis farm this past year. We have tallied up all of the numbers of poundage from our harvests throughout 2022 and the numbers are truly amazing blessings from God!

Last year, we made the decision to “rest” about 35 acres of our farmland and to lease some property next to us for growing. We used the rest of our land as well as the leased property for one season to plant. We rejoice in the harvests that we experienced! The following is a report on each one of the fruits and vegetables that we planted.

**Jalapeño Peppers:** 24.7 acres planted – 833,697 lbs. harvested and sold

**Serrano Peppers:** 7.5 acres planted – 187,359 lbs. harvested and sold

**Watermelon:** 2.5 acres planted – 80,578 lbs. harvested and sold

**Tomatillos:** 7.5 acres planted – 170,946 lbs. harvested and sold

**In total, the El Oasis farm produced over 1.2 MILLION lbs. of products in 2022!**

This is something that the El Oasis project always turns over to God at the start of each growing season and continues to give Him all of the credit for every ounce of harvest. God has blessed this past

year as you can see from the above numbers! The profits from the sale of the peppers provided a tremendous boost in meeting the needs of caring for the children of El Oasis.

This farm is doing more than producing agricultural products, far more. Every morning our farm manager meets with the workers, and they worship and pray together before starting their workday. When other farmers in the local area ask our people about our farm



Your support enables the El Oasis Farm to produce a bountiful crop of peppers, watermelon, and tomatillos. This helps to stretch your donations even farther to impact the lives of the children.

and why it has done so well, our people give all the credit to God and talk of the dedication of the land to God before the start of each year. Through their employment, this farm provides financial income for people in that valley who otherwise might not have an income. All these things are happening because this is truly God's Farm. This is His land, His children, His harvests. This will always be this way.

There are numerous donors who have given each year for special

needs on the farm like seeds, fertilizers, equipment, irrigation lines and other things. I want you to know that your funds have been invested wisely and according to sound farming principals. You can obviously see the results.

These are the blessings of the harvest that I love to see happening for His kids! Please feel free to contact our office if you have any questions about the El Oasis Farm or if you would like to help finance the growth of this amazing effort.

## Negotiations Underway to Expand El Oasis Farm

At the time of this writing negotiations are underway to purchase an additional 99 acres (40 hectares) to expand the farm's capacity to bless ICC children. A wealthy land owner has taken an interest in the El Oasis project and what it is doing for orphan and vulnerable children. He has a piece of property that he's willing to sell at half of the going rate for farmland in the area. Terms are being discussed, including the length of time we would have to raise the necessary funds to make the payment in full. The terms will also include using some of the profits from the land once we can take possession of it in January 2024. We will be sharing more information about this opportunity soon. However, if you'd like more details or would like to pledge your support to this project, please contact Brian at the ICC office at 800-422-7729.

# HELPING TO PROVIDE "Water for Life"

When Gary and Angie Bartholomew adopted their daughter through ICC, little did they realize that God would use their connection with ICC years later to be the catalyst for starting their own ministry in Guatemala. Here is the story.

Many years ago, ICC operated an international adoption program. At times, ICC placed notices in the *Adventist Review* magazine encouraging families to provide a home to "hard to adopt children." It took awhile for Angie to convince Gary that they should do this. They already had two boys of their own. Eventually, Gary agreed, and they set about having their home study completed.

Once the home study was finished, Gary and Angie made the trip to Vancouver, Washington from their home in Spokane. They wanted to speak directly to Alcyon Fleck, ICC's founder. Upon arriving, Alcyon told them that there were two older girls in Guatemala from which they could choose. Gary said it didn't seem right for them to choose, so they asked Alcyon to choose for them. And that is how in January of 1985, Gary and Angie became the proud parents of little Rosie.

Fast forward 12 years and Angie heard from her uncle, Ottis Edwards, that he was going to the ICAP secondary school to do some cleanup work on the campus. He invited her to go with him. When Angie heard that the school was affiliated with ICC, she jumped at the chance to join him. Angie was asked to carry along an antenna for

what was the first phone the school would have. While she was there, the first ever phone call was made to the ICC home office. According to Gary, "It's so different now. Everyone has a cell phone in their pocket." But communication was difficult back in the early days of ICC.

The next couple of years, Angie returned to Guatemala. But she was not alone. Gary joined her. They realized that they enjoyed these trips better than going on vacation.

One year it dawned on Gary that the Los Pinos Children's Village and ICAP school were pumping water out of the river to drink. It was causing problems. People were getting sick. It wasn't safe for volunteers who came to visit and to work. With about 700 inhabitants on both campuses, this was a big problem. Gary thought, "There's got to be a way for getting safe water here for the campus of the school and Los Pinos."

While other needs took priority at that time, Gary did not give up on the idea of securing safe drinking water for the children at Los Pinos and ICAP.

Eventually, the time came when it would become the highest priority.

**To continue reading how God worked miraculously to supply Los Pinos and ICAP with abundance of clean water and how He led Gary and Angie to start their own ministry, use your phone's camera to activate the QR code, use the following web address [ForHisKids.org/WaterforLife](http://ForHisKids.org/WaterforLife), or call the ICC office 800-422-7729 for a printed copy.**



Pictured, Gary and Angie Bartholomew at the Spokane airport with their sons and their adopted daughter Rosie.

## Serving Faithfully through the Pandemic

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I am grateful to God for sustaining me and allowing me to help others who were in need. And thank God in Guatemala the coronavirus cases have decreased remarkably.

The pandemic taught us to value things that we thought were small. Such as breathing feely, being with friends, valuing our loved ones and, above all, to depend on a God who is above all.

Thank you for your support of His kids to grow up to serve Him fully in their home countries and communities.

*To read previous updates from these sisters, scan the QR code or use the following link.*



*[www.ForHisKids.org/Herrera](http://www.ForHisKids.org/Herrera)*

# Old Wooden Chair By Lorinda Manley



To many ICC children, a sturdy wooden chair represents a life of security, safety, and love. It's dependable and strong, just like the home your donations help to support.

Memories of our childhood are often related to one of our five senses. An odor, a texture, a certain color, taste or sound can bring back a memory long forgotten. Most researchers agree that emotion can have a powerful effect on how humans create memories. Do you have an object that reminds you of your childhood?

Children on the campus of the Hogar Los Pinos in Guatemala have such an item. Come with me as I share a story about how a small household item, seemingly insignificant to most, can represent an important memory for a child.

We enter the administration building, just past the main entrance gate. Its walls are brightly painted with small images of colorful native birds, happy children, and nature. There is a large table surrounded by 14 very sturdy but worn wooden chairs. As I touch one of the chairs, Joel Carpio, the administrator's face breaks into a smile. "Do you like that chair?" he asks. "You aren't the first to like it..."

He explained that those chairs dated back to earlier times at

Hogar Los Pinos when Alcyon and Ken Fleck were planning all the details of the children's village. They knew that sturdier furniture, including chairs, would serve the children's needs better. These particular chairs were purchased and sent to the campus where they were used in children's homes for several decades.

Over the years the children within Los Pinos have grown from a life of distrust, fear, and abuse toward a future where trust, love and emotional healing were possible. Each day, they would enter the living area where these chairs sat. They would move the heavy wooden chairs to sweep the floors. They would sit in the chairs for each mealtime shared around the family table. If these chairs could speak, they would share with us stories of joy and sorrows, tears and laughter, the yelling and whisperings of a house full of children learning to live their best lives. And without the children knowing it, these chairs began to represent to them security, safety, and love.

As with every ICC project, there are times when children must move homes within the campus, to ensure the continued growth, safety, and wellbeing of all members of the family. These transitional times are difficult on the administration, as well as on the individual child. As Joel finished up his story of the chairs, his hand securely and lovingly clutching the wood of the chair in front of him, he wistfully shared, "When the children from the homes with these chairs would need to move, they would go take their chair and beg for it to move with them." I

asked, "Did you allow them to take it with them to their new house?" "Of course!" He replied, "It contains all their memories."

**The old wooden chairs are your chairs, too. As part of the family of ICC, your support has helped form the transformed lives of children connected to those sturdy, wooden chairs.**

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Now, more than ever...

ICC children in Guatemala and around the world need your prayers and financial support. The first three months of the year have been challenging as expenses have been greater than donations. Budgets are stretched thin. And the children have nowhere else to turn for support other than to their ICC family – to you.

Thank you for being part of God's plan to care for these vulnerable children in meaningful ways. Your support is needed - now more than ever.



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(800) 422-7729

[RickBowes@ForHisKids.org](mailto:RickBowes@ForHisKids.org)

When soliciting funds for a specific need, we occasionally receive more in donations than requested. In those instances when we do receive more money than solicited, those extra funds are placed in "Alcyon's Angel Fund." To protect the privacy of our children, ICC uses fictitious names in the Que Pasa when referring to minor children.