

January 2011

# Happy New Year!



## Praises:

- On December 11, 2010 Melvin and I were married in Coco Beach. It was a blessing to share this long awaited moment with family and friends.

- We enjoyed a week here with my entire immediate family. My nieces and nephews loved Costa Rica and everyone enjoyed getting to know Uncle Mel.

- I found out that through marriage to a Costa Rican I am now eligible for permanent residency. Please pray for this to be a quick and easy process, as I have been struggling with trying to get residency for years now.

- We had a great year end to ministry, celebrating Christ's birth and are looking forward to another full year with new programs, opportunities and challenges.

## Prayer Requests:

- New ideas/focus for kids' club and girls group.

- We hope to open up the community center for internet use to help facilitate computer knowledge and homework requirements.

- We are in constant and desperate need of volunteers and additional missionaries to carry out all that is needed/planned for well-rounded ministry.



A week before the wedding my parents, siblings and all my nieces and nephews came down to spend some time with us in Costa Rica. The kids really took to Uncle Melvin! Despite the language difficulties everyone was able to get to know him a little better and he really felt accepted as part of the family.



Yes, Melvin surprised me with the traditional serenata a couple days before the wedding. I truly wasn't expecting it as Erika took me out for dinner and I thought the big surprise was a wedding shower until Melvin showed up with some friends and then in walked my parents and brother and sister. What a night!



As many of you know, we had a beautiful wedding ceremony at sunset on the beach with a wedding reception following at the Beach Club Pacífico. It was a wonderful celebration of our union in Christ that we had the opportunity to share with a few close friends and family. It was an unforgettable day, almost seems like a dream. However, we do wish more of you had been able to experience this special moment with us. Our photographer was kind enough to put a majority of our pictures on a video in youtube. So if you haven't seen the pictures yet and are interested you can go to the following link – [www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0J7AofuwkM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0J7AofuwkM)

- This year we will begin the process of recruiting board members and meeting other requirements to affiliate as an association to increase funding possibilities.

- We are in the beginning stages of developing a similar ministry and offering services in a larger, closer, very problematic community – San Martin de Nicoya.

- Erika and I feel called to stay true to our callings and giftings so that we don't become spread too thin. Erika would like to focus more on evangelism, bible teaching and discipleship and I would like to focus more on counseling and inner healing with individuals and families. Please pray that others will fill in the gaps so we can stay focused.

**Culture/Español:**

*"Lavaplatos"*- Dishwasher  
 Yes, that's right, after 5 years of washing dishes by hand we were able to purchase a dishwasher with wedding money! Although a necessity in the US, it is considered a luxury and a non-needed item here. Everyone washes dishes one dish at a time with cold water and a special cream-like soap. Sometimes I feel like I spend all day washing dishes, it will definitely get good use, what a blessing!

*"What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."*  
 (Matthew 19:6b)



Our honeymoon on the other hand was right out of a movie. We went from beautiful Costa Rica to the center of a hurricane on a remote island in Panama. It was an absolute paradise but unfortunately we weren't able to really enjoy it or do any of the planned tours. What an adventure!



We had our annual Christmas party with the kids club and they all made ornaments with styrofoam balls and scraps of fabric. We focused on it being Jesus' birthday and even had cake and sang Happy Birthday to Jesus. We all helped blow out the candles. 😊



We also finished off our first year of the girls' group with a Christmas party. We shared a snack, short devotional and prayer and then made these wreaths out of cardstock, ribbon and pieces of wrapping paper. They were a lot of work but turned out really nice. Melvin went along for the Christmas parties and everyone was excited to meet him, although they were all very disappointed that they weren't invited to the wedding.

In Him, Erin Nichole Byker- Mora 🖐️



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