

the EMU Newsletter

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

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Ken & Joan Jensen
Director

ALONG THE WAY . . .

Before getting into mission review and preview, on behalf of all of us with EMU International, I want to wish each of you a blessed Christmas season and a prosperous New Year. For some of us, the end of the year brings significant changes, and for others, contiguous continuity as 2017 empties into the wellspring of 2018. Whatever the Lord has planned for you, may you live in His grace and provision with the joy and peace of Jesus Christ.

For the past 30 years, I have written this column with the accompanying photo caption of “Director” under Joan’s and my names. This will be the last time. At the end of this year (2017), I will no longer be the Director of EMU. That title will belong to **Jeff Davis**, who has been training for that position for the past two years. I have actually looked forward to no longer being the Director for many years now – since the onset of my neurological disorder. Over the past nine years, I have stated in these EMU Newsletters that a younger, more energetic, insightful man needs to be the Director of EMU, and, finally, that time has come. Yet, this *is not* a “swan song.”

Please, please, please understand that **I am not retiring from EMU**; I am only stepping down as the Director. Sadly, even some of our EMU missionaries are under the impression that I am retiring from EMU! And, no doubt, for the next several years some folks will hear that I’m working in the office and will exclaim, “I thought you retired!” This is only a *position change*.

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THE “WING-ROVES”

by Ken Jensen

As the Third Millennium A.D. began, EMU International was continuing to grow, adding new missionaries and new countries to our mission family roster. The office work was becoming more demanding for Joan and me. At the same time, my parents, George and Marilyn Jensen, were not travelling in the US as much presenting the work of EMU in churches, and they were spending more time in Uruguay. Dad was well into his 70’s, and the dynamics of lining-up services with churches was changing rapidly – i.e. emailing and answering machines, both of which Dad never adjusted to. EMU desperately needed a Field Representative. In the 2001 January EMU Newsletter, I included a prayer request to our readers that the Lord would guide such a person to us.

A few weeks later, Mel Wingrove called me to ask about the position. He and his wife, Jan, had recently resigned from Flatwoods Baptist Church in Vanderbilt, PA, where Mel had pastored for 20 years. After several positive conversations and face-to-face meetings, Mel and Jan were accepted by the Board of Directors as Field Reps with EMU. From their mountain home in Leicester, NC, the Wingroves began contacting churches – those who already supported EMU and many who did not – and have represented the mission since 2001.

Another dynamic that changed in the new millennium, though this was common even before 2000, is the difficulty of a “non-field missionary” raising support – office workers, reps, administrative staff, etc. The Wingroves were never able to raise the support that the EMU home office set as their target, but the offerings from their services made up the difference to supply their needs.

In addition to doing rep-travel, Mel and Jan also visited many of our missionaries on their fields. I’ll probably miss some places, but they were with the Tom Chapmans in Chile, the Nuñezes in Mexico, the Crnkovics in Croatia, the Cambodia team, the Erkens in China, and all of our missionaries in Uruguay. Several of



Mel & Jan Wingrove

these were work trips to perform manual labor to help the missionaries.

A few years ago, Jan began to have some physical problems that went undiagnosed for a time. Eventually, it was determined that she has Parkinson’s Disease. Earlier this year, Mel talked to me about their decision to retire from EMU because of the difficulties Jan was having with the long trips and staying in different beds night-after-night. We agreed with the decision. This year for them has been taken up with paying final visits to their supporting churches. However, Mel and Jan will not remain idle during retirement. Because I do not yet have the details of the new office-based ministry the Wingroves hope to be doing for another organization beginning in 2018, I will let Mel inform those on his mailing list.

Mel would know how many miles travelled and how many States and foreign countries and churches visited, with a yearly breakdown. We have grown to love and appreciate this couple and will miss them. The surname Wingrove is a place name meaning “people of Wihthum, Buckinghamshire.” Their name can also be broken into the obvious words “win” and “grove.” But I like to think of them as “wing” and “rove”: They have been “on the wing” “roving” the US and beyond faithfully for the past 16-years. Thank you Mel and Jan, dear friends. †

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Jeff and I have done a lot of talking over the past couple of years discussing his coming role as Director and my coming role as “underling.” (At the last Board of Directors meeting, when Jeff was voted to become the Director on January 1, 2018, no new position was given to me, so, in January, Joan will even be my boss! Oh, how the mighty have fallen!) Jeff has asked me to continue in the office of EMU contributing wherever needed – generally doing what I am already doing. It is my goal to keep Jeff free to travel in the US, or visiting EMU missionaries, knowing that the monthly office work is going forward.

Which brings me to another subject: many have asked if Jeff’s wife **Joanna** will take Joan’s job in the home office. For now, no. **Joan** is not retiring, and Jeff would like her to continue working in the office. She will continue as the office administrator for as long as needed. Also, the mission address and offices will continue to be at **209 Roberts Road, Taylors, SC**, for as long as Jeff and the Board desire it – or until Joan and I change the locks on the doors! Whichever comes first. Jeff has a very nice office in the basement of his house, and we have all decided that for now, it is more convenient to keep things as they are for the mail, phones, and office location. Joan and I love our missionary family and desire to continue serving them and you as long as we can, or are needed.

I don’t want to make this entire column a review of the past 30 years. Too much has taken place. The first Director, **Fred Dabold**, was the founder and developer of EMU. He and his wife, **Seva**, were known as Pa and Ma. We have the three-fold purpose now that he set up in the 1940’s. The second Director was my father, **George Jensen**. He put the mission on a sound financial basis and was an excellent Bible teacher and preacher in Uruguay. He is still known as Dr. Jensen, the Bible professor. **My tenure** has been most characterized by expansion into other countries. During the past 30 years we have added eight countries to the original two. Granted, that’s not many compared to some mission organizations, but for our little office, it has been a monumental task – but wonderfully thrilling! And the changes in office systems and procedures, and print and digital media have been phenomenal, but only accomplished with the help of many EMU friends.

A few of the changes in Uruguay I am most pleased with are: our EMU national pastors becoming either supported by their churches or on a fixed path to reaching that goal; the establishment of a Bible college in Uruguay, though it is not under the board of EMU; the goal of having our pastors owning their own homes; and the wonderful improvements at Camp Emmanuel – facilities and program. It is the Uruguayan missionaries whom I have known the longest, and being the Director of these outstanding Christians has been far more than I could have dreamed. Oh, and I’m known as “Ken” in Uruguay.

In the January EMU Newsletter, we hope to have a picture of the first graduates of **FEBU**,

the Uruguay Bible college. The graduation is not until the beginning of December, though the school year has already ended. Five young people will be receiving their degrees.

However, the **Dabold Bible Institute** had its graduation in November. There are several “video” branches of the school, as well as the Montevideo classroom setting. The only graduation that I have a photo of was in the



(l-r) Gabriel, Ovidio, Miguel, Sirley, & Rubito

city of Treinta y Tres (“33”), where **Rubito Rodriguez** is the pastor. The director of the Bible Institute, **Gabriel Gomez**, and **Ovidio Acevedo**, a teacher in the Institute, made the 3-hour drive to “33” for the graduation. The church in “33” also had two baptismal services in November. Closest to the church, one was held at the Rio Olimar Chico that runs through



(l-r) Nelson Mendez, Felipe Mendez, Carlos Mendez, Rubito, & Diego Perdomo

a part of the city. The other was about a 50-minute drive to the village of La Charqueada on the Rio Cebollati. This little branch church of the “33” mother church is where missionary **Julia Alvarez** ministers. Both of the baptisms were preceded by an Asado cookout.

In early November, **Kristine Espinel** travelled with baby Megan to Myrtle Beach, SC, where Kristine’s parents live. Her dad is not able to fly anymore, and this was a chance for the McCunes to see their newest granddaughter. When Kristine returned to Uruguay, the Espinel family embarked on a business/vacation tour to central Chile, where Matias visited a couple of Bible schools. The FEBU board continues to look for ways to improve their own Bible college, and Matias wanted to see these Chilean schools in session. The family also visited Bariloche, Chile, the same ski resort town that **Tom, Connie, David, and Kristin Chapman, with their kids**, toured in October, but from a different approach.

The Crowleys were in Greenville, SC, for a couple of weeks in November for the wedding of their youngest daughter **Jenna**. It was a simple but beautiful ceremony at Hampton



Jenna & Zach Richards

Park Baptist Church. **Zachery Richards** made a great catch – and so did Jenna. Interestingly, Zack’s parents, Lonnie and Margaret, work in the home office of Baptist Mid-Missions. It was fun to be with almost all the Crowley children and grandchildren again (minus Ethan Crowley’s family in Cambodia). And their families had good fellowship. JD, Kim, and Nate began their return trip to Cambodia on Tuesday, November 28.

Ted Allston had a successful sojourn and ministry in Hyderabad, India, for two weeks with Billy Judson. Ted and I have not had our debrief-breakfast (with our wives) yet, so I’m short on details about his trip. Ted’s next teaching appointment will be in the capital of Mongolia in January. **Tim Chevalier**, from Hampton Park Baptist, is scheduled to accompany him.

The Erkens family will also be travelling during January. They leave Beijing, China, mid-month for the States, first stopping in Texas to visit family and friends before coming to Taylors, SC. This mini-furlough will be for 5-weeks, and they hope to see as many of their supporters as possible. They are currently very involved in the Christmas program rehearsals at their church in addition to their teaching.

Tim Bixby wrote to let us know that the owners of the building that the Sarcelles congregation desires to buy should be presenting their offer to Tim and two other church men at the beginning of December. Donations and pledges for this project have not been sufficient to pay the down payment that was suggested in October. So, please pray that the hearts of the owners will be especially gracious towards Tim and the Sarcelles church.

The Coles moved to Bordeaux on November 20. We have not heard from them since their move, but we know they are extremely busy as they unpack, get the kids settled in the public schools, and begin pastoring the church.

Tim and Cheryl Chapman’s ministry in downtown Lima, Perú, has had a blessed Spring so far. In October, **Pastor Stephen Johns** from the States visited Lima to speak at a pastors’ conference that Tim organized. The conference was such a success with the pastors that they are hoping this will be an annual event. Then in November, Grace Baptist Church held its first baptismal service. Four ladies took this step of obedience to Christ,

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Harambee - "Let's All Pull Together!"

by Jeff Davis, assistant director of EMU

(Please visit <http://emuinternational.org/camp> to view a photo gallery containing a journal of our work trip to Uruguay. Use full address to access pictures!)

"Wow! That smells good!" exclaimed one of our team members as we approached the back porch of the dining hall at Camp Emmanuel in Guazuvirá, Uruguay. Carlos Alberti, the husband of our camp secretary, had "fired up the grill" for us. He was preparing *Asado*, a word that describes special grilled meat. *Asado* is not only a staple part of the Uruguayan diet, it is an expression of their cultural identity. The time preparing the meal affords a wonderful opportunity to just "hang out" together.

What a great way to start our trip. Immediately, our team was introduced to Uruguayan culture, and immediately, we fell in love with the people we would be working with for the next eleven days.

We had arrived at the Montevideo Carrasco International airport earlier that morning. We left on October 21, the day before, from Charlotte, NC. My wife, Joanna, drove me to Charlotte where I met up with the other five members of our team: Rick Jensen; his wife Kathy; and three other men from The Wilds Christian Camp – Paul Johnson, Ben Kashuba, and Joshua Woodfin. Paul works for The Wilds full-time on the maintenance staff. Ben and Josh are both part of The Wilds Camp Apprenticeship program.

After a nine-hour flight through the night, we arrived in Uruguay. We were welcomed by three of our missionaries. We quickly divided the luggage among the three vehicles and were on our way for the 45-minute drive to Camp Emmanuel. This was my third trip to Uruguay to visit the camp. The other two trips were to preach and to participate in the



"The brain trust" - Rick & Pedro



(sitting l-r) Valeria Gomez, Graciela Gomez, Beatriz Alberti, Jeff Davis
(standing l-r) Gaby Gomez, Nico Gomez, Paty, Pedro & Maxi Donze, Edgardo Olivera, Juan Gonzalez, Marcos Gomez, Carlos Alberti, Rick Jensen, Joshua Woodfin, Paul Johnson, & Ben Kashuba (Kathy Jensen took the picture.)
(These are not all the folks who worked at camp during those 10 days.)

camp program. This trip had a different focus. For over a decade now, work trips have been organized, usually in the Fall, for the purpose of improving the facilities and grounds of our mission properties, primarily Camp Emmanuel. These trips have come to be called "Rick Trips," after Rick Jensen, the brother of our current director. Rick, as best as he can recall, has made 13 of these work trips.

For the other three men from The Wilds, this was their first trip to Uruguay. Each of them was impressed with the facilities and with the philosophy of the ministry. In a way, they felt right at home. As we made our way to the dining hall, we met several of the other missionaries who were joining us for the week. Immediately, our newbies were introduced to the Uruguayan custom of greeting each other with a big hug and a "holy kiss." They also were introduced to the jovial nature of the Uruguayan believers. Their personalities exude the joy of the Lord.



Chicha & Ben
Quite the contrast!

Shortly after lunch, Ovidio Acevedo drove the three men from The Wilds and me to his church in El Cerro de Montevideo. Chicha Rodriguez joined us so that she could be our interpreter. Paul, Ben, and Josh shared testimonies, and then I preached from *Galatians 6:1-5* on "Mending a Broken Body." Following the message, the church hosted a special fellowship time to celebrate Ovidio's birthday.

We began Monday morning like we would each day for the next six days. Breakfast each day was at 7:30 a.m., followed by a brief

organizational meeting to give assignments for the day. Pedro had placed a whiteboard in the dining hall that listed each of the tasks. Each task had a little box beside it so we could check it off after the task was completed. Next to each task was a list of the assigned workers, although most of us floated between the different jobs. The board listed 18 different Uruguayans who would join us for all or part of our time there. We also had six different ladies who worked in the kitchen to prepare our meals.

We normally would break at noon for lunch and then at 5:00 p.m. for tea. We would gather again for supper each evening at 8:30 p.m.

Over the next couple of days, we were able to finish the work on the new water heaters in the cabin areas, and we were able **to remove the old roof and begin installing the new roof panels on the dining hall**. The new panels are much sturdier and are backed with Styrofoam insulation. We also flashed the edges and applied caulk and cement to prevent any leaks.



(top) Off with the old
(bottom) On with the new



Our plans for the base of the **two 10,000-liter water tanks** changed when it was discovered that the cinder blocks that we had planned to use for the pillars were very brittle. This necessitated us building forms for pillars that we filled with concrete. That meant we needed more rebar. The first few days several of us spent a lot of time bending and tying rebar.

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and one of the candidates was the Chapmans' youngest daughter, **Abby**. On December 10, the church will be voting on a constitution, at which time the eligible attenders will become official members of Iglesia Bautista Gracia!



Abby & Tim Chapman

Finally, please pray for all of our ministries as they have extra opportunities to share about Jesus Christ during this Christmas season. Many of the churches are preparing for **Christmas programs** and will have visitors in these services.

As we enter this period of unusually busy weeks known as the Christmas season, I trust that you will seriously take time to reflect on the Incarnation of God. The wonder of Christmas is not a baby, but the whole person of Jesus the Messiah – from conception to ascension. And in light of the Father giving His Son, how can we withhold any part of our lives and substance from Him. Thank you for your part with prayers and offerings to help EMU International missionaries fulfill their labor for the Kingdom. And let us look forward together to what the Lord will do in 2018. †



Harambee - "Let's All Pull Together"

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We, also, needed to build a platform for the water tanks because they needed to be higher than the pumps. When full, each tank will weigh over 22,000 pounds. It took us about three days to build and fill the forms, and then came the construction of the platform. That meant even more rebar.

Supper each evening was especially fun. As I mentioned above, meals for the Uruguayans are an event. They are not only an opportunity to feed the body, but also to nourish the soul. We enjoyed laughing together, and even playing games, like Uno. Rick took several puzzles that we all had fun trying to conquer. We also gathered around my iPad and watched my daughter play soccer for the BJU Bruins through their Livestream broadcast.

When Saturday came, it was all hands on deck as we mixed and poured the platform for the tanks. We also were able to make considerable progress on the **swinging bridge in the teen area**. Several of us worked in the shop cutting and routing wood for the **bunk bed repairs**. Saturday was a very profitable day, and we were starting to check projects off the whiteboard.

On Sunday, our group from the United States enjoyed a trip up the coast to do a little bit of sightseeing. We returned to camp for a brief time to rest, and then we visited two different churches. Rick and Kathy, along with Ben and Josh, drove to Carlos Olivera's church in Pando, where they each shared their testimonies. Paul and I traveled with Pedro Donz  to Gethsemani Church, pastored by Gaby Gomez. Paul shared his testimony, and I preached from *Matthew 9:35-38* on "A Plentiful Harvest."

Monday and Tuesday were spent finishing the projects that we had begun so we could check as many of the boxes on the whiteboard as possible. Tuesday morning, right after breakfast, it was again all hands on deck for the water tanks. This time we had to move

the 250-pound tanks and place them on the platforms. Each of the tanks are 8-feet in diameter and very awkward to move. Rick spent the rest of the morning and early afternoon hooking up the plumbing for the tanks. The rest of us finished working on the bunk beds, the bridge, and **replacing lights in the chapel and around the camp sight**. We finished in time to get everything packed and our cabins cleaned so we could depart for the airport at 5:00 p.m.

As we traveled to the airport, I asked the guys for lessons that they had learned from the trip. It seems that all of us were impressed by the great love the Uruguayan believers have for each other and for us. Their love is not put on; they truly love each other. We were impressed that we had men, including pastors, from five different churches. They all came and worked for a common cause, and as a result, much was accomplished for God's glory.

I am reminded of a word that we read on the Kenyan Coat of Arms. It is the motto for that country, "Harambee." It is a Swahili word which means, "let us all pull together." Picture a group of men pulling on a rope in the same direction. What direction? *Romans 5:6* says we are to focus on God's glory. Picture a group of men from different churches coming together for the same purpose; a purpose that is stated on the walls of the dining hall at Camp Emanuel, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31)

We want to thank each of you who prayed for us and also those who contributed to make this trip possible. EMU received \$28,745 for this Fall's camp projects. As in any ministry, there is always more work to do, and more work means more expenses. Please continue to pray for EMU's ministries in Uruguay and also EMU's missionaries serving around the world. †

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