

75 Years

EMU
INTERNATIONAL

1946-2021

Evangelical Mission to the Unreached

Evangelical Mission to Uruguay

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

Volume LXIV

September 2021

Number 9



Ken & Joan Jensen
Assistant Director

ALONG THE WAY . . .

It seems that now, every month, when I put the EMU Newsletter together, I end up having to leave things out because of lack of room! (Yet, also as often, about halfway through the month, I wonder if I'll have enough "new" mission news to fill up a newsletter. I don't recall ever coming up short on text!)

This month's articles are both encouraging and somber, as you will discover. Yet, all columns are filled with God's grace, provision, and guidance.

The Nuñezes were in Greenville, SC, for a few days in August for vacation to visit Marco's grandkids. We were able to get together with them a couple of times. When they returned to Cancun, Mexico, they learned that **Pastor Ciro Alvarado** of Santa Marta, Chiapas, was very ill with COVID. Ciro did not want to go to the hospital, which is hours away from his village, and feared being put on a ventilator. Marco paid for **Toño**, Ciro's son and Marco's youth pastor in Cancun, to fly to Chiapas and care for his dad. Toño was able to secure oxygen for Ciro for use at home. The last report is that Ciro seems to be recovering and over the worst.

One rather long bit of news is that the summer youth camp in Croatia that the **Crnkovics** help organize each year was a tremendous success. In looking over their report, I cannot do the blessings justice in this newsletter, so I hope to use the

(continued on page 4)

THE TRUE ALASKA EXPERIENCE

by Jeff Davis, Director of EMU International

Note: The following article is a summary of a much larger blog post (travel log) of my trip to Alaska, found at <https://pastorjeffdavis.com/alaska>. On that page, you will find links to places visited and a photo gallery of Jeff's trip. - JD

On July 22, I, along with what seemed like half of the population of the "lower 48" arrived at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. The baggage claim area was full as flights arrived from all over, bringing thousands of people to Alaska during the height of salmon running season. Coolers full of fruits and vegetables were brought with hopes of filling them with a bounty of fresh-caught fish upon their return.

Three years ago I was invited to participate in a pastors' conference in Alaska. I jumped at the chance knowing that this would be a great opportunity to connect with a handful of EMU's supporting churches. I immediately contacted several of them who support our Uruguayan missionaries John Mark and Deborah Steel, with hopes of connecting with the pastors, and Lord willing, scheduling a couple of meetings to share our ministry. Our meetings were planned for the Summer of 2020, but due to COVID-19, we had to move everything to 2021.

I told each of the pastors that I wanted the true Alaska experience. From the moment Pastor Andrew Miller and his wife Kristy picked me up at the airport, I knew I was in for the time of my life. Alaska has been called "America's Last Frontier." Many people live in remote areas across the vast landscapes in areas that are not reachable by a road system. I began to realize that I was just going to get a small taste of the Alaska experience, a very small taste.

As we left the city, we took Route 1 (there is only one highway) south along the Cook Inlet. We followed the highway around Turnagain Arm, making our way to the Kenai Peninsula, known as Alaska's

Playground. The name is well-deserved as just about any outdoor recreation activity you can imagine is available: kayaking, rafting, hiking, glacier viewing, fishing, horseback riding, dog sledding, bear viewing, etc.

It was fun to catch up with Andrew. Twenty-five years earlier, I was the youth pastor and he was a middle-school child at Grace Baptist Church in Muncie, Indiana. For four years, our families served alongside each other. It was great to hear how God had continued to work in Andrew's heart and had called him into vocational ministry and locationally called him to Alaska. After a two-and-a-half-hour drive, we arrived in Sterling, a small town where the Kenai and Moose Rivers converge.

Friday morning, Pastor Andrew had arranged for me to go fishing with Scott Peek. This gentle giant stands nearly 7 feet tall. His wife is the church secretary. Every summer, fishing fanatics from across the world heed the siren call of the spectacular Kenai. It has been said that the Kenai River is to salmon fishing what the Klondike was to gold. I was there when the Red (Sockeye) Salmon were running. We fished for several hours and got our limit, but I couldn't keep a hook in them. We weren't trying to get the fish to bite. It is called flossing when you throw out the weighted hook and let it bounce with the current and

(continued on page 3)



Pastor Andrew Miller & Jeff Davis

A Friend and Benefactor to Many

by Ken Jensen

On August 6, 2021, the missionaries of EMU International lost a friend and benefactor, one who has been [over the past three decades] a blessing to our lives in a myriad of ways. William Douglas Williams – we all knew him as Doug – was born in Emporia, KS, halfway between Kansas City and Wichita, but he was raised in the rural town of Waverly, KS, 36 miles due east of his birthplace. This is where the second director of EMU first met Doug and Donna Williams. In the late 1980's, my father, George Jensen, was speaking at a pastors' conference in Kansas, and one of the men in attendance was the pastor of a small church in Waverly. He invited Dad to present EMU at his church for a Wednesday night service, which he did. The Williams were members of that church, and a friendship was born.

Though a trained accountant, Doug wanted his two children, Darin and Denise, to have the same country upbringing he had experienced. Doug commuted from Waverly to Topeka, KS, (about an hour drive one way) for twenty years. Eventually, in 1999, he began his own business – Financial Management Services – offering financial services to banks. Soon after meeting, my folks helped the Williams connect with The Wilds Christian Camp in Brevard, NC. The CIT program at The Wilds was a great blessing to the Williams family, so much so that Doug and Donna made it financially possible for Joan and me to send our three kids to CIT years later. Darin and Denise also attended Bob Jones University, another institution highly touted by my folks.



Donna & Doug Williams with grandson, Shane Lott, at Dunkin' Donuts in July

The Williams became generous supporters of various ministries in Uruguay, with Camp Emmanuel being the main benefactor of their generosity. In May 2006, we dedicated the camp's chapel which was funded by the Williams. Other projects were the construction of the large workshop, two staff cabins, and a tractor to facilitate grounds maintenance. They have also participated in the yearly Christmas Fund offering for many years that has benefited all of our Uruguay missionaries. In addition, they have helped with countless other needs especially among our missionaries in Uruguay.

Because of health difficulties, Doug and Donna never availed themselves of our invitation to visit Uruguay. However, several of our missionaries have visited the Williams' "farm" in Waverly, KS. In 2019, Jeff Davis took Pedro and Pati Donzé (Camp Emmanuel's director) and Beatriz and Carlos Alberti (she is the camp secretary) to spend a few days in Waverly. And over the years several other of us EMUers have

stayed at the Williams' house while on trips to the mid-west.

The Williams would also stop by our house on their way to visit Denise and her family, who live in Charlotte, NC. In June of this year, Joan and I drove to Gaffney, SC, for the afternoon where Doug and Donna were parked at a KOA campground while driving their "new" pull-behind travel trailer to Charlotte. Then, mid-July, Doug and Donna both caught COVID. Donna recovered, but Doug did not. Thankfully, Darin and his wife live close to Donna in Waverly.

When Doug would talk about bank finances, I understood little of what he said – though Joan was much more comprehending. (During those conversations, Donna and I were in dialogue!) On all other subjects, it was always a joy to converse with Doug, whether in person or by phone. He was kind, thoughtful, engaging, intelligent, and godly. (Although this is a tribute to Doug, I can use all of these adjectives for Donna, as well. It is foreign to think of one without the other!)

Those of us with EMU who knew Doug personally miss him greatly. But even those with EMU who never met Doug mourn his passing. Please pray for Donna, her children, and their families as they adjust to the absence of husband, father, and grandfather. Doug's seventy-three years on earth reaped, and continue to reap, eternal rewards for him and Donna. May the same be able to be said about each of us! †

Update on the Rick Projects Fund-raiser for Camp Emmanuel

by Ken Jensen

In September, major work will begin on the special projects at Camp Emmanuel in Uruguay that were presented in the last EMU Newsletter.

In August, several donations came into the home office designated to take care of certain of these projects. Here is an update of what projects have been funded and which ones still need financial backing.

- New sidewalks around the perimeters of the cabins - \$8,209
- Repair the floors in the girls' cabins - \$3,840
- Gutters for the chapel - \$1,220
- Security Cameras - \$6,760
- Fencing for the front of the camp - \$2,956
- Concrete/stone tables and benches for the camp site - 268 x 10 - (8 tables and

benches have been purchased, and 2 more need funding)

- ~~Replace the kitchen ceiling and exhaust fans - \$2,04~~
- ~~Fencing around the water tanks - \$910~~
- ~~Maintenance of the children's play area - \$975~~
- ~~Repair of the dining room fireplace - \$2,266~~
- ~~Remodeling the back porch/open-fire-grill area - \$12,054~~

In addition, as of the end of August, there is also about \$4,700 toward whichever projects the Uruguay camp board deems most important.

Obviously, though a sizable amount of money has been given thus far, much more is needed if the remainder of the projects on the list are to be completed.

In August, the last of three individual workdays was held at the camp. Several men and women helped with repairing the bathroom dividers and installing some new outdoor lighting in the soccer field area.



Repairing & painting the bathroom dividers

If you can help with the funding of any of the projects we would appreciate it. Uruguayans from our churches will be donating most of the labor for these undertakings. †

The True Alaska Experience (continued from page 1)

then jerk the line to snag the fish as he is swimming upstream. I just couldn't get the feel of it, but as the saying goes, "A bad day on the water is better than a good day at the office." Even though I toiled all night and took nothing, I could get hooked on fishing like this.

On Saturday late morning, Pastor Andrew and I enjoyed a beneficial time of fellowship and discussion over a delicious brunch. One of the joys that I have of traveling and sitting down with pastors is listening to their stories and learning about their vision for ministry. Having pastored for twenty-five years, I often find myself shepherding shepherds as I listen and praying with these amazing servants. Ministry in Alaska is not without its challenges. Like any other mission field, the people of Alaska have deep spiritual needs. Every region of the state is affected by drugs, homelessness, poverty, and alcoholism. During the long Winters, the sun barely rises above the horizon. The many hours of darkness take a great toll on Alaskans. Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.), also known as Cabin Fever, is very real.

Sunday morning, I had the privilege of preaching and presenting the ministry of EMU International at Sterling Baptist Church. The people were very kind and receptive to the message. Pastor Andrew and his wife Kristy moved to the Kenai Peninsula in the spring of 2016. In the short time that he has served as pastor, it is evident that he has intentionally inserted himself into the community, deliberately looking to build redemptive relationships. On Sunday evening, we had "Church in the Park." There was no preaching, just life-on-life as we sought to connect with the people in the Sterling and Soldotna communities.

Monday morning, Andrew, along with three of his boys, drove me back to Anchorage to the airport. I was scheduled to speak later that evening in Fairbanks. It would have been a ten-hour drive, so the two-and-a-half-hour drive, followed by a \$100 one-way flight, was well worth it.

Our plane landed in Fairbanks, the heart of the interior of Alaska, also known as the Gateway to the Arctic. I was greeted by Pastor Bruce Hamilton. His church, Hamilton Acres Baptist Church, also supports the Steels. They were the host church for the Foundations Baptist Fellowship Alaska Regional Conference where I preached over the next three days. It was great to get to know Pastor Bruce and hear his story.

Since 1968, when he was 9 years old, his family has lived in Alaska. His ministry trek took him to Bible college in Tennessee, followed by a time as youth director and Christian school teacher. Following that, he and his wife Lena traveled in itinerant

ministry throughout Alaska and the contiguous states of Canada and Russia, preaching evangelistic meetings, youth camps, and sportsman's banquets. Their ministry of teaching and preaching the Word of God became more stationary once the church installed Bruce as senior pastor. He is a true outdoorsman and has chronicled many of his stories in a couple of fictional books, "God of the Brooks" and "God of the Gold," that highlight God's providence in the rough and rugged rawness of the Alaska wilderness. They are real page-turners and I highly recommend them.

As we made our way to my hosts John and Tammy Rowe's house, he told me about a third book that he is writing that will be a part of his "God of Alaska" series. The book is titled, "God of the Aurora: The Holy Spirit's Call to the Asian People." It chronicles the truly miraculous story of God's work in Fairbanks among the Asian community, which began with a seat assignment change on a flight from Seattle to Fairbanks. The first chapter of the book is called, "The Story of Row 6." God had providentially changed Bruce's seat, and he ended up sitting next to a couple of Chinese girls. As they talked, he showed them photos of Fairbanks, of Alaskan wildlife, and of his wife, Lena. One of them said that she was very beautiful and that she would love to meet her. He invited the girls to their Easter service that weekend. They were blown away by the celebration. This chance encounter began a relationship that has now grown to a seven-day-a-week one-on-one ministry. They now have monthly gatherings in homes for worship. As God continues to open doors for ministry, a church plant seems to be in the future. Many of the Chinese people visit Fairbanks to see the majestic Aurora Borealis, the colorful lights that dance unpredictably through the Arctic night during Fall and Winter. He told me that Asian people of all kinds are drawn to the Aurora. For many, it is the number one thing on their bucket list. Some of the tour guides have come to know the Lord. They share Bibles and talk about the God of the Aurora. They are now working with over one hundred Asian people. In addition, Bruce has made several trips to Mainland China where he works with 150-200 people directly connected through the Holy Spirit's work in Alaska. For the past five years, they have been introduced to a new person every three weeks, all as a ripple effect of Row 6.

Joining me in the conference as speakers were Bud Steadman, director of Baptist World Mission, and Larry Ball, director of International Baptist Missions. Not only were we challenged by good preaching, but the organic times of fellowship provided wonderful opportunities to strengthen one another.

On a clear Thursday morning, Pastor Jon Craven and his wife Becky met me at the church where we loaded up their van for the ten-hour drive back to the Kenai Peninsula.

As we drove, Jon told me his story and how the Lord led his family to Soldotna Baptist Church, a church that was started by Paul and Esther Weimer, missionaries with Baptist Mid-Missions, in 1958. Jon was called to be the Youth Pastor in 1996. He later became the director of Higher Ground Baptist Bible Camp in Sterling. In May of 2016, the church called Jon to be the Senior Pastor.

Saturday morning we had a men's prayer meeting. Jeremiah Cates, my host, and I then visited the Higher Ground Baptist Camp where his son Evan and the Craven boys had just returned from a weeklong Canoe Camp led by the camp director, Eric Locker. The boys had enjoyed a week of camping and fishing as they canoed down a river north of Anchorage.

Sunday was a great day as I had the opportunity to preach at Soldotna Baptist Church, another congregation that supports the Steels. Afterward, we enjoyed a delicious potluck lunch, followed by a Communion Service. I then shared the ministry of EMU International.

Monday morning, I packed my bags, said goodbye to my new friends, and drove with



*Becky & Jon Craven
of Soldotna Baptist Church*

Jon and Becky for one more morning of exploring before heading to Anchorage for my return flight. One thing that impressed me about Alaska is its immense size, but at the same time, it seems small, because everyone is so friendly and seems to know everyone else. I had told each of the pastors that I wanted the true Alaska experience. I came to realize that it can't be done in twelve days

Robert Service, in his poem, "The Spell of the Yukon," expresses my sentiments about Alaska, "There's a land—oh, it beckons and beckons, and I want to go back—and I will." John Mark Steel left me a voice message saying that he would help me move the EMU office to Alaska. It probably won't happen, but I could see the draw for Alaska, at least in July. †

Page 4

ALONG THE WAY...

(continued from page 1)

Crnkovics' prayer letter in the October newsletter.

I also hope to have an update report in the October newsletter on the **Rick Projects at Camp Emmanuel**, taking place in September. During the winter months in Uruguay, three churches had one-day youth camps, one each for Emmanuel Church of El Cerro, Siloé Church, and Bethel Church of Pando. It is so good to see the camp being utilized again after so many months of no camps due to COVID.

FEBU and the **MEU Bible Institute** have started their second semesters. One of the guest professors, teaching a Monday evening class on the philosophy of education, is **Dr. Nick Uwarow**, who taught similar material many years ago when FEBU was just getting started. Back then, Nick was actually in Montevideo, Uruguay, to teach. This time, travel restrictions necessitated virtual classes. Dr. Uwarow is a retired professor from BJU's education department, and he speaks fluent Spanish. Many thanks to Nick for his part in this ministry!

Another virtual presenter in August was **Bill Hill of Equipping Nationals Worldwide**. Bill has been ministering to our Uruguayan missionaries and churches for many years now and has made several trips to and

around Uruguay. In the picture below, Bill is teaching with the aid of a translator. (Sorry, I do not know his name.) On the left are those who logged into the conference. The recorded classes were held for one week, between 2:00 & 6:00 PM. In looking closely at the cluster of faces, I see that folks from other mission organizations and ministries also availed themselves of this opportunity. We greatly appreciate Bill's time, effort, and expense of putting these courses together.

Tom and Connie Chapman have been Stateside since Connie's mom passed away in June. Their time has mainly been spent in West Virginia and Pennsylvania with family. But in mid-August they came to Greenville, SC, for a few weeks, both to visit with several of their kids and grandkids who were here for various reasons, and for Tom to get checked out by a specialist concerning his physical problems. We were able to spend a few hours with them here for supper, and they seem to be doing fine. They are encouraged by the doctor's diagnosis and prognosis. They hope to return to Chile in a few weeks if the Chilean travel regulations permit.

Tim and Cheryl Chapman's family was in the Greenville, SC, area, too. Tim was one of the main speakers at The Wilds MK Camp the week of August 16. Eight Chapman MK cousins attended from Peru and Mexico. The next week, **Lauren**,

Tim's oldest, checked into BJU for her first semester of college. Joan and I were privileged to have this dear family for lunch one day. They return to Lima, Peru, on September 9.

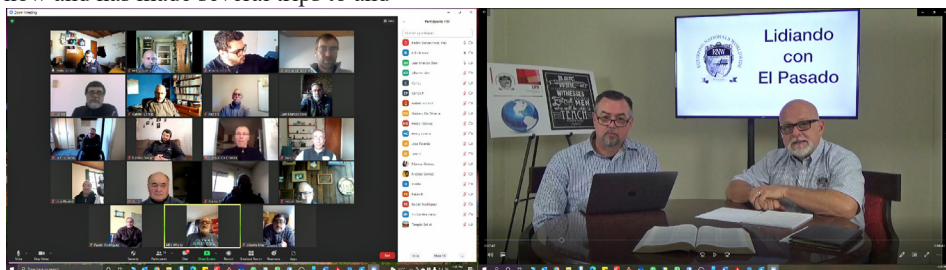


Tim Chapman (back row, 2nd from rt.) spoke at the MK Camp at the Wilds in August. The other speaker was Matt Jones (front row, far rt.), missionary in Thailand.

Though I'll have more to say about this subject in next month's newsletter, **Michael Cole** left for France on August 31, with **Liz** and the kids to join him on September 23. Three men from their sending church in Spartanburg, SC, will be helping Michael get the Cole's house ready for sale. The Cole family plans to return to the States again on October 26.

A final prayer request: **Docila Torres**, one of our widowed, retired missionaries in Uruguay, just had major cancer surgery in Montevideo. She is home and seems to be recovering well. She and her daughter are members of Bethel Church in Pando.

It is nice to be on the slide down towards cooler weather now that September has started and Fall begins soon. We trust the Lord for His blessing on EMU and you, our prayer and financial supporters. We very much appreciate you standing with us in this ministry for Christ. †



The video conference with Bill Hill (far right) with his translator in the USA, and the group of pastors & missionaries watching from Uruguay. "Lidiando con El Pasado" means "dealing with the past," the theme of this conference.

Email: office@emuinternational.org
Website: www.emuinternational.org
Phone: (864) 268-9267