

Land for Life

Fundación Refugio

Circular No. 42 July 2017

Dear Friends,

These past couple of months have been pretty busy with work and travel; things never quite seem to slow down! We have had to learn to say no to certain things we are invited to do work-wise and that's not always easy. Andrew has clocked up a few miles since January, both on land, with trips to the Chaco, and in the air with trips for Compassion International. We aim to take a few days break in August, but in the meantime give thanks for the fact that we have the energy to keep going. As ever, we share a brief account of what we have been up to recently.

...more book work

Andrew undertook several presentations of the book *Deforestación del Chaco Salteño*. These included presentations at Salta's national university (1) and its regional campus in Orán (2); a meeting with indigenous community leaders in Rivadavia Banda Sur (3); a lengthy interview and discussion on a local radio programme for campesinos (criollos) in Rivadavia (4), a talk to group of youth from some of Salta's wealthiest families (5) and with the leader of Salta's legislature (6). We still hope to conduct further presentations in the Chaco as and when the opportunity arises.



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)

Bulldozer on silence ...

We are once again witnessing a lull in approval of deforestation permits. We have only registered 2 so far for 2017. These affect relatively small remnants of forest in already deforested landscapes. Our dialogue with the government has all but fizzled out for the time being so we have little to no idea about what's going on. We remain sceptical about what may be going on behind the scenes, and will continue to be vigilant.

ACEN – La Caldera

The ACEN regional meeting with Bishops of the southern cone has been confirmed for the 14th - 16th October, here in Salta. Andrew is engaged in coordinating the event, which will be addressed by the Anglican Communion observer at the UN for Environment and Sustainable Development.

After a couple of failed bank transfers, we have finally received the first tranche of funding we have raised so far for revamping dormitories in the Diocesan retreat house in La Caldera. We are now inviting tenders for the building work and hope to see that starting soon.

Talking of transfers, Land for Life (Fundación Refugio) finally has a bank account! We can even receive international transfers, how about that?

Compassion International

Andrew undertook further field-work looking at disaster response by local churches in the Philippines. This included visits to Manila, Tacloban and Cebu in the south of the archipelago, all of which have experienced significant damage from typhoons and flooding. A planned trip to Mindanao was cancelled due to the recent and ongoing military operations in the city of Marawi.

It has been a real privilege to learn with and from other Christians who have, sadly, so much first-hand experience in enabling their communities to cope and deal with the natural disasters. Next trip is to Ethiopia, in August.



Family

The family is well, all doing their various “things”. Nothing much to report on the university front other than that all three kids are doing well. Both Cecilia and Tomás continue to combine study with part-time paid work. Carolina is currently home on her winter break.

We had a visit from Rev Ross and Jacqui Moughtin, who lead Christchurch in Aughton, one of our link churches in the UK. They were in Salta during May, and it gave us a good chance to share some of our work. We valued their pastoral insights on how our work fits into the broader ministry of the church. We also enjoyed a brief trip to Cafayate. They went on to enjoy visiting the Iguazu falls, a quick skip over the border into Brazil, and then a few days Buenos Aires.

On the all-important dog side of life, we have adopted yet another hound (seven in all!). This one was abandoned by its owners on our street, and we could not bear driving past it each day, for several weeks, seeing it get thinner and thinner. Maria is attending dog-training classes in order to keep them all under control!



Prayer Pointers

We value your support, and ask that you pray for the following points:

- Continue to pray for the meeting with Bishops – that it may yield concrete results and actions.
- Pray that we find the right builder for the right budget for the work in La Caldera.
- Pray for safety in our many “comings and goings”.