

The first half of September we will be in Argentina at the largest youth ministry conference on the continent—3,000 youth leaders from 18 countries. This is the sixth time we've taught there, but this year something is different. Before this we've been visitors, guests, like distant relatives at a family reunion. But now that we're planning to move to Argentina in February, we see things differently, as though our senses are heightened.

It used to be that our contact with youth leaders before and after an event was through the ParaLideres.org Web site or via e-mail or chat. But now some of these very leaders will be students who we will mentor—sharing dreams, meals, and a year of life—at the youth ministry institutes we're helping found.

It used to be that we felt self-conscious about adding any Argentine words to our Mexican Spanish. But now we face the challenge of learning Argentinean, with its Italian lilt and unique vocabulary. And we've begun the tedious visa process that will allow us to live and work in Argentina.

This is just the tip of the iceberg of the changes we're in for in the coming months, so we appreciate your prayers as we move into our new community.

Niels got back from Africa last night and called us this morning. He's a world traveler but this was his first mission trip. Unfortunately it was marred by what he saw as wasted time and money along with cultural missteps that frustrated and embarrassed him.

He told me: "It was incredible. I'm still processing the whole experience. There was gross mismanagement of resources—our van rental insurance costs could have paid for many students' tuitions for years—but there were also beautiful, pure, terribly poor orphans who we were able to show love to."

Since Neils called our cell phone, he didn't realize that I was talking to him from Colorado where Annette and I are receiving two weeks of job training that our organization requires us to go through every four years ... training intended to help us avoid the very mistakes he was recounting.

As we move forward into our next phase of ministry, we want to remind you that OC is a charter member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability and that our annual ministry objectives and related budget must be reviewed and approved by our team leader, Daryl Platt, and then by OC's board of directors, and we are held accountable for them.

Living in an age of decentralization, it is natural to bemoan the cost of an organizational structure and lose sight of its value. Neils helped remind us of why we need and appreciate OC.



Tim & Annette

Since late '94 we've mailed monthly letters out to over 400 friends and family who at some point said, "Sign me up." But 13 years later we have no clue if you actually want to keep receiving them. A few friends have admitted that they stopped reading our notes years ago; others have simply switched by subscribing to our blog, which is updated more frequently with shorter stories, up-to-the-minute prayer requests, and color photos. In an attempt to be good stewards of the resources we've been entrusted with, we've come up with the following three options: **A)** If you want to stop receiving our letters, do nothing. **B)** If you prefer to receive our updates via e-mail or online, simply subscribe at our blog (www.4loves.com/mexitext). **C)** If you want to keep receiving the *paper version* of our monthly prayer letters let us know by postal mail, e-mail (below right), or phone (407-443-0116). Thank you for your help with this.