

## Mission Volunteer Journey - update #6

Agua Viva Serves ([www.av.s.org](http://www.av.s.org)), Los Chiles, Costa Rica  
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**All thing Bright and Beautiful...** i'm waking at 5am at on the side of Volcán Tenorio in Bijagua to howlers' voices ringing, the moon shining through the tropical forest, and the birds' chorus welcoming the daylight while their silhouettes dart to and fro finding breakfast. A hummingbird hovers in the air as I sit gazing out the glass wall of Casita Tenorio "La Luna" breathing in the cool, humid air ...a sweet change of venue for our Anniversary/Birthday re-creation time!

**Navigating the transport system...** is not that difficult if you are willing to ask directions.

There are several different bus companies with regular schedules from nearly every city, even Los Chiles. Our 5am bus ride to Upala was 3 hours over mostly bumpy dirt road, that BTW the Chamber of Tourism has on their Top Ten list for improving access to some unique wildlife preserves and agri-tourism sites in the Los Chiles cánton. Then we hopped on three other buses to Cañas, Liberia, and the car rental office...~6 hours and \$20 later! Note: driving here requires 100% attention. With no shoulders before the drainage ditches on the roadsides, it's helpful to have a co-pilot scanning for hazards.



The landscape changes dramatically over that terrain from Los Chiles to Liberia: from water soaked lowlands with pasture and yucca fields to hilly pineapple plantations, to volcanic mountains with giant wind generators. Did you know Costa Rica has virtually 100% renewable electricity with wind, water, geothermal, and solar?!

This is one of Paul Eshelman's photos while we navigated the hairpin roads up and over the mountains....

## So many encounters, so much Joy!

### • Community Development Connections in Bijagua

- A dear friend of Pip and Donald's, Elliette, is a retired biology teacher She tells of helping the extremely impoverished families in the Alajuelita, a barrio in San José, find ways to come together to improve their community...and they developed the capacity so decades later they continue to realize their goals.
- Sylvia, the Peace Corps Volunteer, outlined the local farmers association's plan to improve organic practices, local market networks, and regional tourism opportunities... they are recruiting a 6-month volunteer intern to work with the farmers — interested?

### • Secrets of the Rainforest at Tirimbina Biological Reserve

- Paul is *super happy* with the 'Drink of the Gods' on the Chocolate Tour...and even more so with pure chocolate + cinnamon and sugar



• Barbara delights in learning about natural history and guides came through for us with lots of treasures, such as the tiny 'blue jean' poison dart frog with a little tadpole on it's back which will be carried up a tree to leaves that have water for the tadpole to develop and will continue to 'parent' this little one 'til fully developed

•Sightings:

- the Crested Caracara falcon...awesome!

- And at the Termales del Bosque near Ciudad Quesada of a trio of Scarlet Macaws. The life partners have one offspring at a time and the three fly together.

- **Surprise! We'll be Digging Dirt tomorrow!**

- The AVS team saved this job for us...so Paul and Barbara have been officially inaugurated and for sure showed stamina : ). The job of re-routing 45 meters of pipe was done in a day and a half!



We hope you'll also find *JOY* in both the ordinary and the unexpected encounters in life!

**Abrazos y bendiciones, n & G**



PS: apologies for being a week later than hoped....it just took awhile to climb out of the tree ; )