

## 2009: The Year in Review

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . .” You may recall this quote from the famous Dickens novel. I learned about this concept at a much younger age, from my dad. I can remember him presenting us kids with the option, “Do you want to hear the good news or the bad news first?” Inevitably, I would choose the bad news. I liked to end on a happy note!

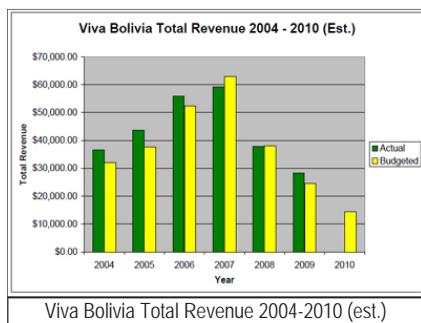


Juan and his father at his graduation in 2008.

This past January, Juan’s dad was killed in an accident. He was riding a bicycle and was struck by an pick-up. Of course, this shook his whole family as well as the Viva Bolivia family. Maria too has faced

difficulties in her family as both her parents have been in the hospital in recent months.

On a less serious note, but still important, Viva Bolivia had a dramatic drop in donations during 2009 (see graph). This was our lowest year since 2004 and caused us to reevaluate our commitments and options for future ministry. You will see that we are budgeting for significantly less in 2010, not because we don’t have needs, but simply to be realistic based on this past year’s donations.



On the bright side, we received some special gifts at the end of the year that helped us to make budget in 2009 and started us off in the black for 2010. Thank you to those who gave extra gifts this past Christmas. This was a great

encouragement to our whole team and the ministries we are serving!

Continuing with the good news, Juan and Maria are making great progress in Bolivia. Jonathan visited our office and the Cochabamba International



Maria and her family at their father's birthday party.

Church in October/November 2009 and was able to see first hand all the good work that is being accomplished. Additionally, thanks to our model of “teaching people to fish” we have been able to increase the number of work hours and the services that we provided even with the greatly reduced budget. Today, more than 90% of the consulting assistance we provide is being done by Juan and Maria. They are the ones helping projects, ministries and small to medium sized (SMEs) businesses operate more efficiently and build strong foundations for the future.

In 2008 Viva Bolivia Productos y Servicios SRL (VBPS) provided more than 4300 hours of paid

## Bolivia Trivia

Why does Maria’s dad have white stuff on his face in the photo above.

- A. Cream left on his face after surgery.
- B. Face paint as part of Bolivian tradition.
- C. Left over shaving cream.
- D. Birthday tradition (cake).

(See page two for the answer.)

employment. During 2009 we provided more than 5300 hours. Of these work hours, more than 3300 hours we in providing accounting, legal assistance and consulting to the groups we serve. This is up from 2800 hours in 2008. So, we are doing more with less and that is truly exciting!

One of the causalities of less donations is our ability to support education, leadership and development grants. This year we continued to provide for Alexandra's schooling (Roxana's daughter) as well as provided assistance for a number of other smaller grants, included a grant to SIAB.

### S.I.A.B. Brings Christmas to 225

For a number of years we have partnered with Servicio Integral Agropecuario Boliviano (SIAB) to bring Christmas to the children and families of the Challacollo neighborhood. This small town near Oruro, Bolivia is at an altitude of more than 12,000 feet. This year we were able to provide toys to 225 children who would otherwise not have received anything for Christmas. This project not only brings joy to these children and their parents, it also supports Nelson. He has a passion for helping those less fortunate and his organization works to help them raise better crops and increase their farm yields. We are honored to partner with Nelson as he reaches out to his fellow Bolivians in "teaching them how to fish."



Some of the 225 children who received gifts this past Christmas thank to SIAB.

### Life of Hope Network

Another exciting development is our partnership with Dr. Jorge Gareca of Red Vida de Esperanza (Life of Hope Network in English). We provide Web space for RVE as well as occasional grants to help with their projects. In 2009 we helped to

print some brochures for use with their supporters in Bolivia and to help get the word out about the good work they are doing.

We were also able to help fund some of the costs of trips made during 2009 and hope to continue with them in 2010. One example was in December of 2009 where Dr. Gareca and some other doctors donated their time and services to help the communities of Urmiri and Vacuyo in Potosí, Bolivia.



Agronomist giving instruction on planting of Quinoa.

His team is working to help improve the diet of the people living in their communities through better farming practices and by utilizing more robust crops (cereal crops in particular). In addition they provide medical care for children and try to catch critical diseases early while they can still be treated fairly successfully.

Dr. Gareca has an infectious personality and is passionate about helping these families cultivate Quinoa and other nutrient rich grains. And, about helping children who would otherwise go without medical care. Even more, he cares about the spiritual health of these people and encourages them in their personal lives as well. Jorge embodies our model of providing, "Leadership for today and hope for tomorrow."

Thank you for partnering with us as we work to support the good work Dr. Gareca and his team are doing. He is an example of the leaders we are eager to support and develop as they reach out to the Bolivian population. You can learn more about RVE at:

<http://www.redvidadeesperanza.org>.

### Bolivia Trivia Answer:

D. Birthday tradition (cake).

**Editors note:** Bolivia shares this tradition with a number of other countries as well, especially Columbia where they also like to crack an egg on your head and then throw flower at you to make you into a "human" birthday cake.