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Vilcabamba Loja – Ecuador

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Our condolences go out to our dear friend Marco Munoz & his family on the recent loss of their father.

Love and blessing to you & your family Marco

Sting Update many many weeks later and finally the sting sight has healed.

I have been combating the side effects of having 21 days worth of antibiotics injected into my butt. Basically the antibiotic killed all my good bacteria in my gut and I ended up with a case of thrush. So Kampuchea, probiotic yoghurt and some other natural remedies I know off and change in diet and I cleared it up. This was followed by a cold as the antibiotics weaken the immune system. So a month + later I am getting over the side effects of the antibiotics I had for the sting. All this because of one tiny little insect!

FIRE owe boy have we experienced fire here in Vilcabamba this last month. Where do I start There was a big one at the base of Mount Mandango that surrounded 4 homes and threatened to burn them down.

Now there is NO fire brigade here in Vilcabamba, nada, nothing, zilch, zero. The nearest truck is 45 minutes away in Loja.

Amazing through sheer man power and branches and water they put the fire out as it was within meters of these homes.

Then a few nights later our neighbor yells out to us at around 10 pm at night. We go out onto the top balcony and look over at the hill to the north, on which the other side is our property is, and on which a roaring fire could be seen along the ridge line.



Pierre put on his boots and took off with the car picking up a couple of workers along the way. The fire was on a neighbors land two farms away. But given how bloody dry it is here at the moment two farms away is still too close. The locals were there to 3 am fighting the fire. Again just using branches and beating the fire with the branches. To get an appreciation of the bravery of these guys this was done in the dark on rough steep terrain with bush all around them. Fortunately there wasn't a breath of wind that night. Otherwise the fire could have got into the bushes around them. Pierre stayed there till just after two. It was still smoldering the next day and they were dealing with hot spots.

Since then we have had some rain. Enough to ensure these two fire areas are finished off.

Funeral

I was able to attend Marco's dad's funeral in Loja. I was very grateful that we received the invite and I was able to go to support Marco if nothing else then through ones presence and energy. Unfortunately Pierre had commitments in Vilcabamba which made it impossible for him to attend. It was a beautiful service. The church was full of the smell of the flowers that adored every pew and the alter. The church was beautiful inside and it shone. Unfortunately my very limited Spanish meant I wasn't able to appreciate the words that were spoken. However, I still was able to feel the energy of the hymns and prayers. I went with Emily and Georgina. Georgina looks after our house and her father used to work for Dr Munoz for many many years. I am glad I was able to be there for Georgina too.

On the subject of death

Death is hard for most of us to deal with. Many of my readers like me will have experienced the death of a close loved one. It is our society and the 'death programs' that make it so hard to cope with it. It is a part of our life. Our bodies are constantly dyeing and being remade every day. There are many versions of the death programs all forms of religion have a take on it for example. However, after reading the series of books called 'The Ringing Ciders of Russia' I have found that there is another way to look at death. In this series of books they describe a different view on death.

Now all I have to do ☺ is re-program myself. No easy feat. Even though I haven't attended that much religion in my life I am still fully programmed into the main stream approach to death. To cry and greave the loss of the person. To have a large sad ceremony to farewell them. To beat yourself up afterwards for all the things you didn't say and do while they

were alive. To miss them for days, weeks, months, years, a life time after they have gone. To 'celebrate' in a sad way on the anniversary of their death.

I don't anticipate releasing myself of this program any time soon. I still cried at the funeral for the loss of Marco's dad and for the loss of my dad many years ago.

Travel

This month has seen me preoccupied with arrangements for Emily and my impending trip to NZ. There is a lot to organize at this end and in NZ. It has all come together very well.

Issues

Unfortunately since humans are everywhere on this planet so are their egos and issues. This month has seen Pierre and me deal with the not so nice side of humans. When I think about the events that went down I still scratch my head and ponder how the hell we ever got into the problems in the first place.

This leads me to a CD called **The 4 agreements** This is a 2 CD set that I personally endorse and recommend every human listen to many many times. Basically we live by agreements that we have made with ourselves or have had made for us by people like our parents, religious teachers, teachers etc.

The four agreements are: the integrity of your word - don't gossip - don't make assumptions -, always do the best you can.

If you live by these four agreements or try to and practice and aim for this then life will become heaven on earth.

Admittedly if people did live by these agreements none of the issues of the last few weeks would have come about. How simple life can be when summed up on a CD. ☺

Sex

Let's talk about sex in particular sexing chickens.

Folks do not try this at home with your kids!

Hold the baby chick under its head (where the head and the neck come together) don't hold too hard as you don't want to kill it and LIFT.

IF the legs of the baby chicken hang down (as in the photo below) then it's a female. IF the legs come up to its chest and it fights then it's a male. Like the baby chick we have here in our house, yes we have a roaster according to this method. We will let you know in 6 months once its feathers develop to the accuracy of this method. I but would say it is good as it's been used here in Ecuador for generations. Personally I found this technique very funny as you can see from the photo.



Having drinks and laughs with a group of locals we know very well. ☺



Nina's first encounter with a cat! As you can see she has grown somewhat from the puppy that used to sit cuddle up on my knee why I typed my journal. She's still a puppy – 6 months old.



Prickles is all that is needed to be said here.

I love this group of photos of Pierre and Emily



And this one .. what can one say... it looks like a scene from a horror movie based on parrots. The Headless Talking Parrot Returns! Head goes off to Pierre for taking this good shot.

Where's his head, where's the head, Polly's lost his head....

and the bug of the month is



Yes folks this is a spider here in Ecuador that Pierre caught on camera.

Personally it's not one I'd like to have a close encounter with.

If anyone out there can provide any information on the type of spider this is etc.. please drop me an email as I haven't been able to find out anything about it on the net.

