

## **Brazil: Rio, Rainforest, Carnaval, and Chiropractic!**

SAO PAULO, Brazil -- An undulating sea of concrete pillars of varying heights and widths filled my field of vision completely as the plane made its final approach to Sao Paulo's Guarulhos International Airport. Living within this immense concrete labyrinth below are more than 17 million people, making Sao Paulo one of the world's largest cities. This swell of humanity comes from the descendants of Japan, Africa, Europe, Asia, and indigenous America.

As I stepped off the plane, I was struck by the timeliness of this first meeting of the Brazilian Chiropractic Association. As chiropractic is gaining stature within the international community of the industrialized world, the time had come to allow access to care in the developing world as well. What better a place for this to occur than Brazil: the huge melting pot of the Southern Hemisphere.

I had been invited to attend an historic meeting. This gathering, November 6-7, 1992, represented the culmination of over 70 years of chiropractic struggle and the heroic work of a small, dispersed group of dedicated doctors. The history dated back to the early 1920s, when Dr. Henry Young, a North American chiropractor, came to Sao Paulo. The momentum has never been lost since that beginning. At our encounter, the groundwork was laid for the future growth of chiropractic in this land of over 150 million inhabitants. The meetings were spirited, serious, fun, and full of promise for those in attendance who had worked alone for so long.

Dr. Matheus de Souza is a chiropractic pioneer and a 1964 graduate of the University of Natural Healing Arts (originally Carver's Colorado Chiropractic University). He has moved his practice from town to town to avoid persecution by repressive health authorities, has gone to jail for his profession, and has fought protracted court battles to secure his right to practice and the right of patients to receive chiropractic care. His office is located in Sao Paulo.

Dr. Marino Schuler is a graduate of Cleveland College, has practiced in the U.S., and currently is in Porto Alegre in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul.

Dr. Mitsuyoshi Nagaya is a graduate of the Japanese College of Chiropractic and has been practicing for 10 years in Sao Paulo along with three other Japanese DCs.

Dr. Sira Borges is a 1990 Palmer graduate with 20 years of prior medical practice. My business partner, Dr. Ross Royster, and I met Dr. Borges while serving in the Peace Corps during the early 1970s. As a young medical doctor, she assisted us with various health programs we were involved with. She practices in the coastal town of Ilheus in the northeastern state of Bahia.

"I am so excited by this work," said Dr. Broges during the meeting, "And I am completely overwhelmed by the clinical results I am seeing in my clinic." Dr. Broges has her own clinic and an exclusively chiropractic practice in the state hospital as well. "I have patients flying in from Brasilia and other major cities for care. I can't believe how many patients I've been able to help who were diagnosed with disc herniations and slated for surgery. We need more chiropractors here to help meet the tremendous need we are finding!"

Dr. Matheus de Souza lamented, "I've had to stop lecturing on chiropractic simply because there is no way I can meet the demand for care following these lectures. Currently, the earliest I can schedule new patients is four months from now!"

As a result of this first meeting, a charter membership application with the World Federation of Chiropractic (WFC) was completed and a series of objectives and goals were created. One major goal is to bring 10 additional DCs to Brazil within the next year. Doctors are being sought who are willing to make a serious commitment of at least one year. The language in Brazil is Portuguese; some language skills would be helpful, but not essential.

Scholarships are being sought so that Brazilian students may study chiropractic. A goal of four Brazilian students entering college is set for the next year.

I found it personally exhilarating and rewarding to practice for a few days in Brazil. It is quite refreshing to care for patients without the burdens that come from a society of third-party payers and litigation. The patients' well-being is the total focus of care. I see Brazil becoming a real model for chiropractic in the developing world, where resources for expensive health technology are scarce. Chiropractic's a natural, since our profession can deliver so much health care simply with our hands and our knowledge.

Anyone seriously interested in practicing in Brazil may contact our office. Chiropractic textbooks, literature, research studies, and audio visual materials are sorely needed to help create a resource library for the Brazilian Chiropractic Association, so any donations would be a terrific help. The next meeting of the Brazilian Chiropractic Association is tentatively set for April 3-5, 1993. DCs willing to present a continuing education program at the gathering are being sought. Please direct any inquiries to:

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