

A photograph of a sunset over a city and mountains. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the scene. The sky is filled with soft, golden light and scattered clouds. The city below is in silhouette, with some lights visible. The mountains in the distance are also in silhouette.

It's About The Journey

“It was very good, very bad... and in the end, the journey made it all worthwhile”

by Randy Berg

It's All About the Journey

It was very good, very bad... and in the end, the journey made it all worthwhile.

Randy Berg

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my wife Rhonda... my wife and my best friend.

Thank you for putting up with me on our journey.

And don't forget... I promised you that you would never be bored.

Thank you for all of it.

-Randy

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Preface

My name is Randy Berg. And quite candidly, if I had read about what I am going to tell you... I am not sure if I would even believe myself. But it's true. All of it.

My wife and I owned a small printing and copying company in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Over the years we had grown used to the daily grind of 10 to 12 hour days and the constant pressure of never really being able to "get ahead." We weren't broke... and of course, all of our friends and neighbors thought we were rich because we owned our own business but we certainly never got far enough ahead to have a five figure savings account or a stock account. We were lucky to be able to borrow enough to stay even because... with us... cash flow was the "name of the game."

Chapter 1 - Planning our Trip

Somewhere around the late 90s we took a vacation to Costa Rica and absolutely fell in love. I immediately started dreaming about “retiring” there even though we hadn’t set aside a penny for retirement and we weren’t even close to approaching Social Security age. But it didn’t stop the dreaming.

Every night was spent on the internet learning as much as possible about Costa Rica and “how much did it cost to live there?” and “how much did it cost to build a house?” and details about the everyday life. I had become a “Costa Rican junkie.”



My wife was the practical one and she just nodded her head every time I started talking about how “possible” it really was to retire to Costa Rica. Me? I kept dreaming and buying every single book on the market about life in Costa Rica.

I even had our location picked out... the Central Valley rather than the beach... because of the climate.

Never mind that our teenaged girls (three of them) were not out of the house yet... we would deal with that when the time came. They just kind of “rolled their eyes” too, whenever I talked about Costa Rica. They liked the life they had even if they all had to work part time in the print shop. It gave them a little spending money.

I honestly believed after a few months that I knew absolutely everything there was to know about Costa Rica, the people, the customs and the geography. The only thing I didn’t know yet was the language.

I admit that the infatuation died down a little over the next year or two but the dreams never did. I would fall asleep dreaming of a more peaceful life without stress and the everyday problems of running a business. And it didn’t hurt that the weather was infinitely better than in Minnesota!

Chapter 2 - The straw that broke the camel's back...

Then 9/11 hit... the "Twin Towers Tragedy". Like everyone else, I can still remember exactly where I was and what I was doing the moment it happened.



And that moment was an epiphany for us... a "wake up call".

It told us that life was too short not to be enjoyed.

And we really did move forward with at least "making the attempt" to see if we really could retire to Costa Rica.

And we really did make it happen.

Rhonda didn't think it was possible but I knew, somehow, that it was meant to be.

And we sold everything we had... the house, the business, and all of our possessions except what we gave to the kids.

The youngest... the only one with time left in high school... we gave the choice of coming with us... or staying with her Aunt or one sister who was already out of school. She chose her sister (naturally).

Chapter 3 - Welcome to paradise.

We landed in San Jose, Costa Rica almost a year after 9/11, each with two suitcases and our two dogs, Tubby and Beano.

This was it... at least for me... it was the moment I had been waiting for for what seemed an eternity... the “last chapter” of our lives.

Now... I have to say that a lot of what we were doing was on faith... because our “nest egg” and savings was nowhere near what anyone prudent would have done. We had enough to last us a few years (we thought) until Social Security kicked in for me and enough to build a house and “settle in.”

We did not enter Costa Rica with a lot of money.

And in retrospect, we probably shouldn't have done it... but we did.

“our last great adventure.” It was really happening.

We stayed just on the outskirts of San Jose and “suburbs” when we first arrived. Las Orchideas or “the orchids” a bed and breakfast which was old fashioned enough to be “real Costa Rican” and yet run and owned by a “gringo” (a non-Costa Rican from North America).



I have to interject at this point and tell you that our middle daughter had (in the meantime) married a young man from Costa Rica. And no, she had already been to Costa Rica, ostensibly to study Spanish, fallen in love and eventually got married to him. So... they were the only people that we really “knew” in the entire country (with only a little over 4 million in population).

Rodrigo's family (our daughter's husband) was a great help and showed us around much of the Central Valley and even accompanied us to the beaches. After all we didn't

speak any Spanish, didn't have a car and didn't have a clue where anything was... and no, there wasn't GPS yet either.

We were new and everything was strange and different. But Rhonda loved everything... the flowers, the views, geography, the people... absolutely everything about the country. Me... I was more practical and looking for a place to live... and trying to calculate how much things really cost in Costa Rica.

We started looking at houses.



First off, it was difficult to find realtors because the only real sources were on the internet. And most, quite frankly, did not return phone calls or emails. And those that did... well, let's just say that customer relations were not talents that most possessed.

The places we saw... in our price range... were complete dumps.

They shouldn't have been ... based upon everything I had read and seen... but they were. Completely misrepresented.

And after a few weeks it became apparent that, if we wanted to live in anything close to what we wanted... we were going to have to build it ourselves.

The other thing we discovered... almost everything we learned on the internet was false. That was discouraging. Not overwhelming... because we were still new and naive. It was a minor obstacle.

We found land... which was not easy ... because where we were looking... there were no "gringo" realtors or even locals that spoke English. We did a lot of driving around with a local "tour guide" who had lived in the States a few years previous and knew his way around the area we were interested in.

It was two acres in the mountains overlooking a small coffee growing town about an hour outside of San Jose. It had a fair amount of coffee plants, was just off the “beaten path” and had a river at the foot of the property.

Chapter 4 - It was heaven.

Wady, our tour guide/realtor helped us negotiate the price on the property and helped us find a builder... a school mate named Arturo, a Venezuelan who was married to a Tica (a Costa Rican).

We started to build...

Now keep in mind that we knew nothing about the customs, the traditions and the laws of Costa Rica. But we managed to muddle through.

Rhonda handled the building and construction. I found I didn't have the patience for it. Things didn't seem to be moving and it didn't help that no one could speak English (or I couldn't speak Spanish).



Now, I haven't been around too many construction sites, either in the States or elsewhere... but Costa Rica was like turning the clock back 75 years or more.

Virtually everything was done by hand... sure, there was a cement mixer but all of the gravel and sand was sifted and then mixed by hand with an assist from the mixer. And each worker had a specific function... concrete, block, framing, roofing, woodwork, and then of course, plumbing, electrical and finishing. There was a guard on the premise 24 hours a day to make certain that nothing was stolen... and if the site was remote... the workers stayed on site except for a trip home every week or ten days.

It took about six months to build our first home... two level , three bedrooms, two baths, large living room and dining area, kitchen and balcony for our morning coffee. About 1600 sq. feet... oh, and also a covered garage area, kind of a tuck under. Total cost for the home was less than \$40,000... remember that was about 12 years ago... cost today would be almost three times as much.

We were lucky... we had a minimum of problems and continued to use and recommend Arturo, our builder. Others... they had significant problems mostly with

theft and construction foremen and managers who simply took advantage of unknowing and unsuspecting gringos simply trusted everyone in paradise.

By then... I could see that... even with us saving money over what our estimates were for construction... that our "nest egg" was not going to last as long as projected.

Chapter 5 - New country... New business.

The first thing I tried was growing produce in a greenhouse that we constructed on our property. And we planted and grew chiles... (peppers). We contracted with a local neighbor who supposedly had experience but he neglected to tell us that we needed to finance some of the buyers ... and that the prime buying season was around the holidays... so our first crop was totally wasted as it was not holiday season. And after a short time, our neighbors simply tired of taking care of the peppers because the agreement we had called only for them to be paid out of profits... and there weren't any. So our first venture... kaput!

Then, on our normal day, into town for our morning coffee... I noticed that there were an awful lot of "gringos" in town. I asked around and surprisingly, this was not unusual... I had simply overlooked them.

So naturally I wondered what they were doing there. Were they on vacation? Were they looking for property like I had done? Were they on a tour?



There were still not many "outsiders" or "gringos" coming to Costa Rica yet despite the country being thought of as a "paradise" by many and a vacation destination by many. The beach communities were starting to attract notice but most were still small "one horse" towns populated by "hippies" and surfers.

But I could see what was coming.

Everywhere online people were moaning about the cost of living... the economy... complaining about "politics as usual" and the massive debt load of not only the U.S. but the rest of the world...

And it was time to seek alternatives.

And I was guessing that I could make a pretty good case for Costa Rica.

So I decided to open a real estate company.

No license required.

If I wanted to call myself a realtor and an expert in Costa Rica and its investments and real estate, who was going to argue with me.

I set up a website.

And I visited forums and chatrooms.

And I took out a few tiny ads in local online papers and magazines that featured stories about Costa Rica that were targeted toward expats and people interested in Costa Rica and what it offered ... much like I was precisely a couple of years ago.

And I remembered how I had trouble getting ahold of people and I made myself available to anyone who needed information or who just wanted to talk. I was accessible.

And I started getting interest... people writing in and even making appointments to see me when they came down to visit.

And I started a newsletter too... about places we had visited... along with pictures, descriptions... enough to stoke the fires of all the dreamers out there. And I told them about our adventures... everything that happened to us.

And people loved it.

But I didn't have anything to sell. And potential sellers sure weren't going to talk to me. They couldn't! Virtually no one spoke English and I didn't speak Spanish yet.



And I found a neighbor who used to work for Wady, the guy that found us our land and arranged for a contractor... he even knew English. He was without a job and knew everyone in the area.

I hired him on the spot to find properties for me.

Now keep in mind that real estate in Costa Rica is pretty “loosey goosey”. No real rules or regulations... sort of like the Wild, Wild West. The properties are surveyed and titled in something called the National Registro and everything is overseen by attorney and pretty well formatted, but a lot of stuff slips between the cracks and there are different rules and regulations for each municipality which makes things even more difficult (not to mention, completely different rules and regulations for beachfront properties).

So... I was pretty dependent upon him.

But he did great.

Chapter 6 - Becoming “famous”.

And I started putting properties online.

And more and more people started coming to my website. And everyone that came, of course, was shown our house along with a description of building, costs and what to expect from life in Costa Rica. Rhonda was always there too, and the women then had their questions answered, which were completely different than the ones that men asked.

And tour groups contacted us and asked if they could visit us as well. Of course, we said yes... it was free potential business.

And my online business was booming... it seemed as if I was online at least a couple of hours a day. I even put a forum on the site so that people could ask questions 24 hours a day.

The newsletter too, had taken off... and it was still relatively sporadic but I tried to send out at least twice monthly. Naturally I had a place for visitors to the website to sign up to subscribe and also advertised it in various expat online publications.

It wasn't long before we were showing properties to at least 5 to 10 people a week. And while it wasn't exactly as busy as it was in the States, I had to remember that all of these people had flown here from at least a couple thousand miles away... many just to see us and view properties.

Business began to really boom. And sales began slowly and gradually we could barely keep up.

We still worked out of the house...and one day the phone rang... Rhonda answered it assuming it was business and she waved me over and said “Newsweek Magazine is one the line.”

I said, “sure, they are” and laughed.

But they were.

And within a week a stringer from Mexico City came and took pictures.

And within a month, we were featured in Newsweek Magazine... the article was entitled “Running Away to Retire” and that really added fuel to the fire.

Did we take advantage of it? What do you think?

We asked our daughter and Costa Rican son in law, who were still living in Minnesota if they wanted to move down to help us... and they jumped at the chance. Good jobs were still not easy to find and especially jobs with good potential.

And suddenly we were THE real estate firm in the area... and we expanded over to the coast so that we could offer beach property as well.

That's when it really exploded.



And we got an office in downtown Grecia, our hometown... and started worry about things like SEO, publicity, rankings... in short... expanding our business online because that is where 99% of it originated.

And we continued to grow and we branched into construction... built a few spec homes using Arturo as our builder (remember him, our very first?) and things worked out great.

Then we took a major risk and decided to raise a decent chunk of investment money and enter the development market.

We also sold our house... believe it or not, on Ebay!... for nearly three times as much as we paid for it. We bought more land in the same area and built another home... using the same builder, naturally.

Then one day something happened that I didn't think much of at the time... but later... well, I'll let you be the judge.

I was in the local coffee shop and a local by the name of Clyde stopped by. Now... Clyde is a "hanger on"... no one knows much about him and he is always trying to get information from everyone for who knows why... Anyhow, Clyde came over and said "Can you teach me hypnotism?"

"WHAT?" I exclaimed... believing that I had heard him wrong.

"What are you talking about?"

"Well," Clyde said: "You seem to get so many more sales here than anyone else and you always have people coming in talking about you and wanting to work for you... I

figure that you are either running some kind of cult ... or brainwashing people. Can you tell me what the hell you're doing? Everyone around here wants to know."

I still have a hard time believing he actually asked me this... but he did.

I didn't know what to make of it until I mentioned what happened to my wife and she said "you know, you do sell more than anyone else AND you do get a lot of people that ask if they can work for you."

I didn't really think too much more about it until years down the road... but now... looking back it all made sense... and I'll talk about it later in the book. It's really part of what made us successful... a big, big part. And in a way... it is almost a form of hypnotism.

Chapter 7 - Our Second Home

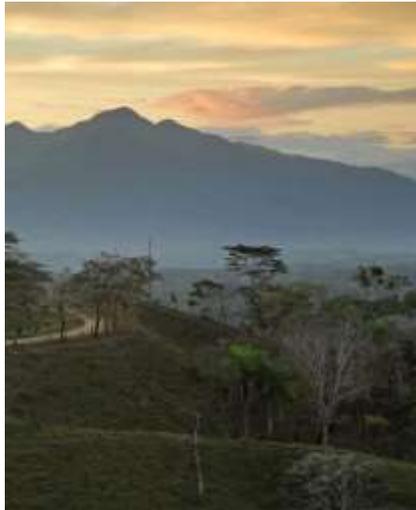
We were now just beginning our very first development, located just a short distance from our home. We considered it a real “feather in our cap” as the location was fantastic... views were to die for... and prices were great and we structured the arrangement with the owner so that we paid no money upfront... only upon the sale.

We sold out 75% of the lots within 3 months.

And we moved on to our next offering... ocean view and in the country.

By then all of us were involved in the locating and scouting for properties as it appeared that it would become an integral part of our future business.

And almost concurrently we found a property about 250 yards from a beach on the central coast... maybe not the best location in the country but still, in our opinion, good.



Now... keep in mind that we are just entering the “recession” and the talk is that it will “avoid” Costa Rica because, after all... Costa Rica is a “different animal.”

It was only a matter of time... and no, most Costa Rican properties were not affected by the recession but, boy oh boy, were the “gringo” properties. You could find properties available for half price by logging onto Craigslist or talking to virtually any realtor in the country.

No one really knew how bad it was going to get... sales were still ongoing but at only a fraction of what they used to be ... and the word “firesale” became commonplace. It seemed like the ONLY thing that was moving were existing “gringo” properties being offered at deep discounts.

But... we were still selling our second and third developments... not at full speed but they were selling.

Remember... our homes were built and designed for the “affordable” niche... not cheap, but affordable... most were smaller but extremely functional with tons of options. AND we offered partial financing. Which virtually no one else was doing.



Meantime we had just made arrangements to purchase a fantastic beach property on the central pacific at roughly half of what it has been purchased for two years previously. It had the ocean on one side and an estuary on the other. It was a rare piece that had just come on the market.

We designed the layout, designed the individual homes... 20 in total... and began clearing it and within a month we offered lots for sale. Half sold almost immediately and deposits were taken.

We were ecstatic... remember our sales were down and even some of the people in the office were betting that we were making a mistake.

Then two nights later we got a call... and this was after a severe weather warning and flood alert for the area... that water was already over the road leading into the property.

We rushed out there, sandbagged all night, even hauled in rocks to build a dike... but to no avail... within 24 hours a third of the property was under water. And this was literally a 100 year flood and no one could ever remember it happening here.

The local and national bureaucracies did nothing. They said they could not interfere with what they called “mother nature” and “God’s Will.”

We were out a quarter million dollars. Not to mention having to return all of the deposits we had taken.

It was our first major hit... and it was a big one for us.

But we moved on... joint venturing with two additional properties in fantastic locations... on almost directly on the beach and the other in a very exclusive area about three miles from the beach and close to one of the country's most exclusive resorts, marina and development.

The first we were especially thrilled about because it was one of the very few "titled" beachfront areas in the country (most beachfront area is concession or leased by the municipality to the leaseholder of the land, typically for a specified period of time, usually automatically renewable). And our partner was well heeled and well regarded.

We begun here with the permitting process which we knew would be lengthy but in actuality went very quickly. We laid out the property, designed the homes, and were starting to get a great deal of buzz from local realtors who were used to more upscale offerings. But given the state of the economy and our price point, it is safe to say that they were "chomping at the bit."

It took nearly nine months to get all of our permits in order. We built the first two homes and took orders for more. And the realtors were starting to knock at our door. Now, please understand that there are several bureaucracies involved with the permitting, ranging from water, to wildlife, to environmental impact, to local construction issues. And the beach areas, unlike inland are extremely political and often corrupt.

In the beginning we encountered no problems whatsoever despite nearby owners continually being stymied wherever permitting was requested. Our joint venture partner told us that he believed we were "in great shape" because he had an attorney on retainer who was former president Oscar Arias' personal attorney.

We encountered no problems with the water board, the wildlife bureaucracy, nor the local municipality. All permits were obtained including the first permit giving us the permission to build. We built the first home, then the second... with all permitting in order and we were ecstatic with the reception and acceptance. After all, we were the lowest price point in the area and our homes, maybe a little smaller in size than many, but still architecturally stunning and well built.

We were showing left and right and taking deposits for more.

Then it hit... the one of the larger (and certainly more political bureaucracies) notified us that we were to cease building until at least two more rainy seasons had passed. It seems that a nearby wetland area was questioned as to whether or not we would "disturb it at some point in the future." And despite the fact that our extensive studies had addressed this very issue... the simple fact that someone else "again" had raised the issue, the bureaucracy gave in to them and halted our progress.

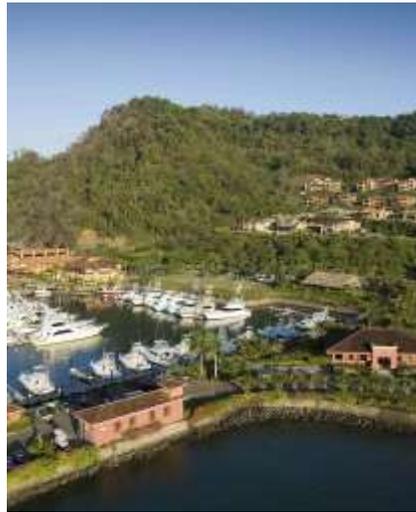
Chapter 8 - Our choices? Fight, or move on.

And fighting would take large sums of money and most likely ten years to fight against the government.

Had we done everything right? Yes... but it didn't matter.

We moved on...

Our next project was one in the same immediate area but off of the beach and at the base of the mountains in the jungles... about two miles from the waterfront and the country's most prestigious resort and marina.



We had tremendous acceptance here almost immediately... with the location, the price point, and the homes. And within approximately nine months we had sold and built slightly more than 50% of the development's three phases and 40 scheduled properties.

Then it happened again... the local municipality "informed" us that they had decided to change the zoning so that we could no longer sell lots in the area where we had ALREADY built. WHAT??

Could they do that?

We had already bought in utilities, built two bridges over a small river, put in a swimming pool and massive landscaping and had a full time caretaker as well... all done on the basis of projections of 40 homes and properties being sold.

When we met with the homeowners, they were furious. And despite the fact that this hurt us tremendously, they blamed us, rather than the municipality. They threatened lawsuits... they screamed, they yelled... they wanted their money back.

In the end... there was absolutely nothing anyone could do.

But it gets better (or worse, depending upon semantics)

We were floundering ... we still had some projects... and we were still generating cash flow but we were into the quicksand.

I got a call from someone who wanted to meet ... supposedly to “invest”... but he wasn’t really specific.

I drove there the next day... walked into the room... and a guy with a swimsuit on and a sleeveless shirt that weighed at least 300 pounds was sitting at a desk.

He stood up and told me to sit down because he and I had “a lot of things to discuss.”



He then told me that he represented two brothers that were clients of mine and that he was told in no uncertain terms to “get their money back... by whatever means it took”.

Now, I have to back up because these two brothers, about two year before that had purchased a home near where I lived... nice guys... from a small Midwestern town. Nothing different about them... they seemed pretty ordinary.

They paid a visit to me about six months before this meeting ... and told me that their brother had “invented” synthetic drugs which imitated the effects of more popular drugs such as cocaine, marijuana and more. But they were legal.

They wanted me to represent them in Costa Rica. I referred them to someone else and told them that I simply didn’t have the time.

Since that time, they had purchased two homes in... you guessed it... the last two projects that had “died from death by municipality.”

Well, obviously they were not happy and they had “hired” this guy to collect.

I didn’t have a lot of choice... I didn’t have the money and I told him that.

He didn't believe me and told me that "it would be in your best interest to FIND the money and pay the brothers off."

Oh, I don't think I mentioned that it ultimately turned out that these two guys had become the largest manufacturers of synthetic drugs in the U.S. That's how big they were. And how powerful.

They were connected. Big time.

I walked out of the office... but I admit I was shaking. And while the "big guy" didn't threaten me in so many words... the message was clear.

And he started calling me... at least 50 times a day. And no, I didn't answer the phone... What was I going to say?

Then he threatened my family and me directly.

I hired an armed guard and talked to Interpol.

I also talked to my JV partner who knew the attorney of Oscar Arias... he actually "knew" the guy and said that he was "full of hot air."

Interpol, however, said that he WAS connected to the West Coast "mob" and that yes, he had a reputation. He was supposedly in the country illegally and they had him on their watch list.

Neither my wife or I were sleeping well.

Gradually it died down.

And we were down to our last project... which was a development we had taken over in a suburb of San Jose. The owners had run out of money during the permitting process and we agreed that we would take it over and bring it to a conclusion.

This was primarily a Costa Rican project... as the local economy was still good and real estate, at least for locals, was still doing very well.

But after 18 months... it was still stalled... despite the fact that we had hired the best engineering firm in the country to assist with the permits. And believe me... we have them vetted backwards and forwards. They were golden.

But it stalled again... and again... and the excuses never stopped no matter what we did. We were stopped by ONE entity and, as it turns out we were not the only ones that were being held up. There were over 2000 other projects, small and large that were in limbo too. And no matter what we did... nothing worked.

Chapter 9 - We were at a crisis point.

Not totally done and not down and out... yet... but getting there.

We get saying that our luck had to change.

And I remember that very day... that we went to our bank to get funds for payroll and to cover mortgage payments and bills... and the bank manager waved us over and said “we’ll cover your account this time, but you should know that you are overdrawn.”

Impossible.

We were watching our bank account like the proverbial hawk as every colon was precious. The only other person who had access to that account was our attorney.

And when we went storming into his office, he denied everything... of course. And finally ... when we said that we were going to the local office of the OIJ (the equivalent of the FBI) he said, “who do you think they’re going to believe? You, a gringo who is a guest in my country... or me, whose family has been around this area for well over a century?”

And after meeting with other attorneys in the area... it become very apparent that our choices were non-existent again... and WE WERE BROKE.

All of our money that we had left was gone.

We had no options left.

Now at this point, I’m sure that maybe 5% of you believe all of the things that I’m telling you. But I assure you... they happened. ALL OF THEM. Just as I described.

And my wife and I went home and we made some very difficult decisions.

We were out of options. We had some land left which was not liquid, our house (with a mortgage on it) and some participations in projects ... some of which were generating a small amount of cash.

Our attorneys told us that we did not owe any money to anyone ... legally. Except our mortgage, of course.

The investors were equity participants and there was absolutely nothing that any of the owners could do legally because we had done nothing wrong.

But both of us, particularly me, felt responsible.

Now... I have to say this in retrospect... that feeling guilty and responsible to investors is probably not the mark of a good “entrepreneur”. I should simply say “you win some, you lose some... we did our best”. We all took risks and we lost. Not totally but in some cases.

Now, I have to also say that Rhonda and I are not quitters... never have been... probably never will be. And we put in well over \$500,000 of our own funds into projects that simply ran out of money.

Could this have been foreseen?

I'm not sure... because I'm convinced that no one could have told us about the Costa Rican bureaucracies and municipalities being as lazy and corrupt as they are... and no one could have predicted "the brothers" or the "100 year flood" or our attorney draining our account.



Could more money have saved the projects?

I don't think so.

So in retrospect... all we could really say was... "we did our best, we could not have done any more than we did or any differently."

But it still felt like we failed and were running away.

Chapter 10 - So we made a decision.

We left our assets to the investors... all of them except for a few dollars we kept after selling a car and our home furnishings... enough to get us back to Minnesota.

We had a meeting, actually several meetings... and we told the investors and property owners what we were going to do.

We actually thought that we were doing the “right thing” in our minds... even though we were not obligated to do anything monetarily... we chose to. Almost everyone was outraged. They accused us of stealing the money, of not fulfilling our obligations, of “skipping the country”, of theft, fraud, embezzlement... anything they could think of... they accused us of it.



It didn't matter that we had provided reports and statements to them all along... we were still liars and thieves. Class lawsuits were threatened.

We were called every name under the sun.

Even our employees wanted severance pay.

It was a nightmare come true... and this was on top of all of the things that had happened to us over the past couple of years.

I honestly think that maybe 3 or 4 people thanked us for everything we had done and said they understood.

Did it hurt?

Damn right.

It still does.

Chapter 11 - Back to Minnesota... in winter.

So we left... and our daughter and two grandsons are still in Costa Rica.

And we went back to Minnesota... in the middle of winter.

To 30 degree below zero weather... to live in my sister in law's basement.



To all of you that have read this Ebook... a heartfelt thank you.

“At this point we could have chosen to look at what happened to us as failure and

Just endure the rest of our lives. But... looking back at all of the good things... the people we met and the beauty of the country itself... we don't want to forget the good things.

The "bad things" and the simple fact that we chose to leave with virtually no money... it WAS our choice and we made the best choice we could at the time.

And we still feel it was right for us.

But now... it is important to know that we have completely dissected what

happened to us...the "good, bad, and the ugly". And we know what we did right AND what we did wrong. And the result was the KISS Blueprint, the Reinvention Protocol and our other writings .

It is important that we are able to pass on to others what we accomplished...

because what happened for us in Costa Rica was something we never will forget.

I am a big believer that there are no coincidences in life... and that things happen

for a reason. Sometimes these coincidences and "things" are difficult to see and

understand... but it is important that you see what they can mean for you... If you are seeking "something better" for yourself.... go to our websites and look for yourself...

See if you understand what my time in Costa Rica can mean for you".

And by way of brief introduction, our first writings were in www.KeepItSimpleStupidMarketing.com which contains well over 100 videos and it an almost exact blueprint of what we had done in Costa Rica... the business side of things... the KISS Blueprint. If you have been looking for alternatives to your present situation... take a close look at this website... because if you are unhappy with any part of your life now, this may be a great alternative for you. It works like gangbusters... and best of all... there is no charge for the course... It is my way of "paying it forward."

The second site is www.ReinventionProtocol.com which was written as almost a tribute to the many expats I met in Costa Rica that were hiding from an intolerable situation somewhere else. Many were hiding from the IRS... some from a bad marriage or simply an unhappy life and simply wanted a "fresh start". "How they did it" was almost inspirational and gave me the courage to start over and "reinvent" my own life. The Reinvention Protocol is primarily for those in an existing niche or business that somehow has become stalled and going nowhere.

The steps and guides in the Protocol will completely reinvigorate your existing business and take it to the level you always wanted.

Both of these sites represent over a decade of learning, trial and errors, and exact steps that worked for us. And even though we didn't realize exactly what they were at the time... we do now... and that is what's important.

Please take the time to visit our sites.

www.KeepItSimpleStupidMarketing.com and www.ReinventionProtocol.com

thanks for reading,

Randy B.