

My Father's House

Newsletter



Newsletter No: 002

New Year, New Challenges

New challenges lie ahead of us as we begin 2010. The profile of at-risk children and teenagers has completely changed in the past 20 years. Post modern society has brought a new behaviour and lifestyle with serious consequences. Sex, without responsibility, has generated a new family model; teenage mums living under the same roof with various other family members; confused children, without discipline, limits or routine are brought up in a way which means they will have to resort to force and violence to survive. How do you work with children like these? How do you train workers to teach new principles and values? How do you educate a society to look at this population with compassion and not fear and contempt? How do you organize an NGO and equip it to receive and look after these children



until they are ready to be received once more by society? We are searching for those answers.

Our Mission:

To transform at-risk, socially vulnerable children, adolescents and their families through the opportunity of full time education and the practice of the principles of the Christian faith.

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My Father's House Today

1

PREVENTION
UNIT

JARDIM
BRASIL V

2

SAFE HOUSE

RIO DOCE
(ON THE COAST)

3

RURAL UNIT

IGARASSÚ
(FARM)



Hard Work on the Farm This month: A new football pitch!

We continue to work to improve the farm, a new football pitch has been finished and preparation work to receive the year's first event: The Living Waters Church Member's Camp along with the children and teenagers from My Father's House. Along with the new pitch, new hydraulic systems have been installed and the tractor has been working hard to keep the vegetation under control... Thanks to a donation for a new tractor tyre!

All those who visit the farm agree that it has great potential but that it would need great investment to achieve the dreams we have of a high quality work which would eventually become self-sustaining.



Farewell!

During 2009 it was possible to count on the support of our English volunteer, Val Burgess. Using her maintenance skills she was able to do some important repairs at the safe house and at the farm.

Living at the safe house, Val was a great help in the daily chores of the house as well as making some great friendships in the project as well as in the community around Living Waters Church.

My Father's House has received many English volunteers over the years who, after a selection process, have been able to serve within the safe house and in the community, offering their talents and raising the quality of our work.

CCAF - Expansion

This is one of the programs of My Father's House which came out of a partnership between two churches: The Anglican Church of Living Waters and the Presbyterian Church of Casa Caiada.

Since 2006, the two churches began a work of education, health, job training and social work to the children and families who a part of the project. This work needed a juridical 'umbrella organization' and so decided to officially become a part of My Father's House NGO. Therefore, My Father's House took on the CCAF buildings along with the agreements with the Local Council and Child Authorities. Since then the CCAF programs have grown along with the number of benefactors. This brought another problem - physical space! So, the Presbyterian church, through it's links with Northern Ireland, ac-



quired the funds and begun construction of the new CCAF building. The new 3-floor building is already well on it's way! In this new building the CCAF will be able to receive 250 children each morning and afternoon and will also include 9 classrooms, refectory, medical clinic, library, staff room, bathrooms and storage space. All the funds for the first stage ground floor are in the bank. The main problem comes after: how to sustain this program to receive daily 500 needy children and teenagers who need help in their education and to support their rights in the family, school and community?

We continue to look for investments to complete the next two building stages.

More Foreign Volunteers: Michael and Francesca Boden

Interview conducted with the couple:

1. Where do you both come from and what were you doing in the UK?

"We're from Birmingham. Francesca was a nursery nurse and I was a business manager working with a travel company. We were both very involved with our local church."

2. How did you hear about 'My Father's House'?

"Through our friend Rev. Barry Harper, we heard that the project is always on the look out for volunteers. After praying about it, we felt compelled to leave our jobs and visit Brazil to help in the project for a month."

3. What are your expectations for your time in Brazil?

"There are lots of expectations! Firstly, we hope to be challenged whilst we're living and working in a different culture. We also hope to be inspired by the stories that we hear, the things that we see and the work that we do. We hope that God will teach us many things

during our time here and that our faith and dependence on him might increase. We're looking forward to these opportunities and hope that they may pass all our expectations.



*Interview conducted in November 2009.

Rafael

On the 31st January we heard the sad news that Rafael, 17, had been shot and killed on the rubbish dump. Rafael lived at My Father's House for a year and a half when he was 14. During that time, Rafael gave his life to the Lord and became a Christian - he was a great witness through his behaviour and good sense of humour. After a year and a half, he had to leave the project and returned to live with his family in the community. Rafael, by that time,

was already a young man and was much older than the other boys in the project. We spoke to Rafael about 3 months ago and discovered that he had returned to one of the local drug gangs due to the problems he was having with his family.

Rafael's death motivates us all the more to do the things that we do because we know that, without projects such as 'My Father's House', most of

our children would be back in the same situation as Rafael. But hope exists because the Power to change lives exists. It's this hope in this Power that 'My Father's House' Project brings to many children each day.

John and Pam Bailey

January saw the visit of John and Pam Bailey, escaping from the cold and the snow in England by spending 3 weeks in Olinda. Pam and John are part of our 'Steering Committee' who meet every six weeks to hear the latest news via video conference with Ian and Siméa Meldrum and coordinate fundraising activities for the project. You can find out more about this work by getting in touch with Beth at: beth-steve@ukfsn.org



World Economy

Due to the recent financial crisis, the Brazilian 'Real' currency, has strengthened itself against the Pound and the Dollar (the two main currencies used by Project supporters) and so we are facing a sharp drop in our income which is affecting our ability to maintain our programs running. We are currently searching for extra financial support to keep our project and programs up and running.

Editors:

This newsletter was edited by John Meldrum (Project Director and Member of the Executive Committee) along with other members of the committee. Any suggestions for the newsletter or to be added to the distribution list, please get in touch: john@casademeupai.com.br +55 (81) 9694-4444

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Partners:

Nestlé - Nutrition Project (CCAF)
Granja St. Antonio - Food donations
Presbitarian Church of Casa Caiada
Living Waters Anglican Parish Church
Globo Bakery - Food donations (Safe House)

How can I help?

There are many ways that you, or your company, can become partners with 'My Father's House' Project, be it a volunteer, distributor of this newsletter, financial or food donors, etc...

We would have great pleasure in welcoming you to any of our units, do get in touch!

*For tax efficient giving via our UK Charity 'Service of Hope' please get in touch with Roger Atkinson:
koinonia115@ntlworld.co.uk*

Thanks for all your support.



Our Team!

The organization is composed of a board of directors and other sub-groups:

Board of Directors

Members: Ian Meldrum (President), Helena Sampaio (Vice-President), Jandean Vieira, Kléber Amorim, Teresa Jansem and John Meldrum.

Council Members

Members: Ângela Arcoverde, Elise Correia and Renata Sampaio

Executive Committee

Members: Siméa Meldrum, Andrew Roberts, João Bento and John Meldrum

Council (CCAF)

Members: Sérgio Lyra, Wendel Raimundo, Siméa Meldrum and Ian Meldrum

Within the Safe House:

Jeferson Almeida (Coordinator and Project 'Dad')

Educators: Raimundo Firmino, Gabriel.

Psychologist: Débora do Nascimento

Volunteers: Rita Canuto (Teacher), Risoneide (Accountant), João Lessa Neto (Juridicial Assistance), Paula (IT Teacher) e Lêda (Cook)

CCAF:

Currently we count on the help and support of 16 volunteers amongst educators, teachers, cooks, nutritionist, psychologist, nurse etc... Some of these volunteers receive some financial help since they are full time volunteers.

Challenges

- Acquire a house of our own for our Safe House. This would save money on rent etc... And would enable us to invest that money into repairs and expansion of the house.
- Building on our plans for the Farm including a swimming pool.
- Resources to establish a proper office for 'My Father's House'.
- More professional help as our project is growing and the number of our programs is increasing.