

My Father`s House

Newsletter



Newsletter No: 001

October, 2009

Welcome

It's with great pleasure that we're presenting our new way of sending information - our newsletter. Our intention is to share our news with our collaborators, partners and friends both in Brazil and in the wider world. In this newsletter, everyone will have the opportunity to follow and know about what's happening, what's in the pipeline and the challenges that we're facing. Every two months we'll send this newsletter, via email, post on our website, through printed editions and other methods. Each edition will be written and organized by the new 'Executive Committee', you'll find out more about them later on in the newsletter. We're very interested in hearing any comments and suggestions about this new venture and we hope that you all enjoy reading it.



Our Mission:

To transform children, adolescents and their families who are in vulnerable social situations, through the opportunity of full time education and the practice of the principles of the Christian faith.

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And lots more...

My Father`s House Today

1 <u>PREVENTION UNIT</u> JARDIM BRASIL V	2 <u>SAFE HOUSE</u> RIO DOCE (ON THE COAST)	3 <u>RURAL UNIT</u> IGARASSÚ (FAMR)
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Hard Work at the Rural Unit (farm)

We have recommenced activities on the farm, after our time in England. The vegetation here grows rapidly, especially at this time of year. We have been able to repair and service the tractor, and are now attacking this problem vigorously. We held a day with the teenagers, and also have taken a small group of boys at risk for a day. Val has also been helping and has replaced five dormitory doors. We are hoping to begin work on our much needed swimming pool before the end of this year. (Ian Meldrum)

Safe House (On the beachfront)

At this moment we have 10 boys at the safe house (ages 8-16). All of them had to leave their families through the child protection. The boys are enrolled in the local school. All of them are far behind at school and so they all take part in catch up classes at the safe house. Besides weekly meetings with the psychologist, they take part in various other activities in order to learn how to have discipline, how to look after themselves, recreational activities (football, swimming pool, beach etc...). We visit the families and every so often organize 'family meetings' to try to help them with their problems and help to reconstruct the damaged relationships with their children.

Volunteer Program

This month we've received another volunteer: Carol Cooney from Lincoln - UK, she's visited us various times already and has helped us a lot, teaching crafts and domestic tasks. Val Burgess - also from Lincoln UK, has already been with us for 6 months and has helped in the safe house, teaching a little bit of carpentry to the boys, how to make domestic repairs and maintenance work around the safe house and the farm buildings.

If you're interested in helping then get in touch and we can talk.

CCAF - Christian Centre of Family Support

This is a program in partnership with 3 organizations: The Anglican Parish of Living Waters, The Presbyterian Church of Casa Caiada and My Father's House.

The centre's activities are based on the principle that transformation begins in **full time education**. The program starts with children up to 6 years old. Through them extending the program to their older siblings and families the 'circle of misery' is broken within these families since lots of the families no longer know, or put into practice, the principles that strengthen the family unit, that strengthen their citizenship and their involvement in society. Today we work with 120 families through 6 classes for children between 2-6 years (total of 60 children). These children receive two nutritious meals a day; one on their arrival and the other just before they return home. We have another 120 children from 7 - 15 years through reinforcement classes, art workshops, sports, Information Technology and home horticulture classes, who also receive a nutritious meal before



Home Horticulture Workshop

Teaching how we can make the most of small spaces in order to grow green plants and vegetables to help the feeding of the children.



returning home. Aline - Art Workshop Monitor

This program relies on help from companies (currently from Nestle) and from two churches. But the waiting list is long and the resources are few. We've been waiting for more than a year for a response from Compassion Brazil, who could help us with the salaries of the teachers and the assistants. If someone is interested in helping or getting to know us more, then just get in touch with us and we can arrange a visit and a meeting.

Outside Help: Andy & Rose Roberts

Andy Roberts, SAMS (South American Mission Society) missionary, began his involvement in Brazil in 2004 when he came and spent 6 months as a volunteer during his gap year. While he was working in the safe house he met Rose, the house keeper of the project at that time. He returned to the UK, completed his degree and then returned to Brazil and got engaged to Rose.

At this moment they've both committed themselves full time to this cause and were married in July this year in the city of York England.

Today, part of Andy's time is dedicated to the work of My Father's House where he's also a member of

the Executive Committee and Rose is beginning work in the health area of the project.



Criação do Comitê Executivo

Due to the demands of a growing NGO, the 'Executive Committee' of My Father's House was created in August 2009 with the approval of the board of directors. This committee is responsible for the execution of decisions from the directors, forward planning, integrating the different programs, elaborating projects, fundraising, financial reports, communication (newsletter), planning events etc... For more information contact:

simeameldrum@terra.com.br
andyroberts48@hotmail.com
john@casademeupai.com.br
joaobentinho@hotmail.com

Fruits that become leaders, in this edition: João Bento

We believe that every child and adolescent, despite the challenges and problems that they are facing, has the potential to become a leader.

Ten years ago, João Bento had to deal with a crisis within his family. He was sent to our project via the state child welfare while a solution for his family was sought. After a while João was received by a substitute family (directors of MFH) who were able to provide a decent education for him. Over the years, João became an exam-

ple of overcoming his problems: he finished college, restored his family ties, made a lot of friends, was invited to England on an exchange program and returned a year later with very good English and is currently studying administration at University. He's working in a local Hotel and is also part of the Executive Committee of My Father's House. We all dream of a special future for each child that we receive.



Resouces and Finances

At the moment, we count on help from people in Brazil, England and Ireland.

Prevention Unit: We have a partnership with Nestle which is able to partially cover the costs, but this is about to end in 4 months time. We still rely on help from the Presbyterian Church in Casa Caiada.

Safe House: Relies completely on help from people and organizations in England whose donations are able to help with the monthly costs.

Rural Unit: This is in urgent need of new financial helpers and resources to help equip the farm and turn the space into one adequate to deal with children whose lives are in serious risk, or who need to go through drug detox and rehabilitation. This is a 32 hector piece of land which is able to accommodate up to 60 children full time but would also need 30 workers to take part in a 3-way rota for the daily activities.

World Economy

Due to the recent world financial crisis the Brazilian currency, the Real, has strengthened itself against the Pound and the Dollar (the currencies of the main financial donors to MFH). Therefore we are currently facing a big downturn in the value of donations that we're receiving since the money isn't go 'as far' as it used to. This means it's proving difficult to maintain our programs. We're in need of more resources and financial help to continue all our projects.

Editors:

This newsletter was put together and edited by John Meldrum (Director and member of the Executive Committee). Suggestions and comments about future editions of this newsletter, or, if you would like provide the email address of someone interested in receiving this newsletter, then please enter in contact with:

john@casademeupai.com.br
+55 (81) 8856-1987

Contact:

diretoria@casademeupai.com.br
+55 (81) 3429-0278

Av. Ministro Marcos Freire, 5615, Rio Doce
Olinda / Pernambuco - Brazil

Partners:

Nestle - Nutrition Project - Prevention Unit
Granja St. Antonio - Food donations
SAMS/CMS - Church Mission Society
Presbyterian Church of Casa Caiada
Anglican Parish of Living Waters - Jardim Brasil V

How can I help?

There are many ways that you, your company or church can become partners with My Father's House, be it as a volunteer, delivering this newsletter, financial or food donations etc...

It would be a pleasure to welcome you to our project, if you'd like to visit then just get in touch. In England we have a steering comitee with whom you can also have contact via Beth Stevenson:

beth-steve@ukfsn.org

Information for Donations:

Tax efficient financial donations can be made through our UK based Chariy - The Service of Hope.

For more information please get in contact with

Roger Atkinson via:

koinonia115@ntlworld.com



The team!

Our organization is composed of the board of directors and sub-coordinators.

Board of Directors:

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

Inspection Council:

Members - Angela Arcoverde, Elise Correia and Renata Sampaio

Executive Committee:

Members: Simea Meldrum, Andy Roberts, Joao Bento and John Meldrum
Coordination Council (CCAF)
Members - Sergio Lyra, Wendel Raimundo, Simea Meldrum and Ian Meldrum

Within the Safe House:

Jefferson Almeida (Coordinator and 'Father' of the house)

Educators - Raimundo Firmino, Gabriel and Leda.

Psychologist - Debora do Nascimento

Volunteers - Val Burgess, Rita Canuto (Teacher), Risoneide (Accountant), Joao Lessa Neto (Law Advisor).

Within the CCAF:

We currently rely on a team of 16 volunteers made up of educators, teachers, cooks, nutritionists, psychologists, nurse etc... Some of which receive a basic salary.

Challenges

- Buy a house for the Safe House meaning we wouldn't have to spend money on rent and instead make renovations.
- Re-equip the farm and build a swimming pool.
- Additional resources in order to establish an office for My Father's House.
- Additional professionals and educators since the demand is rising for the growth of the project.