

# News from Barb

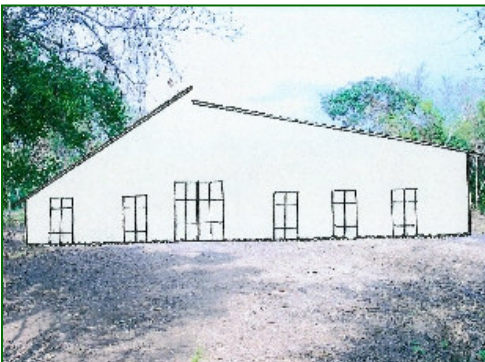
June 2006

Dear Friends and Family,

We, in ABANSA, have finished another week of “Thanksgiving Days”, the celebration that the ABANSA family has every year. What a wonderful time it was. Every year the whole ABANSA family gets together at one of the homes and celebrates all the blessings received in the previous year. Not only do we celebrate all that God has done for the family, but every home also offers something to the other homes. Urenya, this year, has received a lot of pasta, along with rice, the “arepa” flour, and lots of beans, peas, and lentils. We also received plenty of books, clothes and shoes for the kids in the school. In the years past, the Urenya home hasn’t really taken anything as an offering to the other homes, though we received plenty from them. This year, the boys got together and went to a workshop for making clocks and we made clocks with biblical verses cut out of wood. They were received well and the boys learned, first hand, that it is more exciting to give than to receive.

## Jezreel House

We have added four more boys to our family. The “boys dorm” is getting pretty crowded. And although we really do need a bigger table, I bought straight-back chairs so we can get more chairs around the table that we have. We are increasing the need for the construction of the Jezreel House for boys. The site for the house has been chosen, cleared, and is ready for the ground-breaking.



*Sketch of Jezreel House overlaid on construction site.*

Jezreel means, “God plants.” Seeds of God’s Word are planted in the boys’ lives as they work on the farm and grow within ABANSA family. We hope to house 6-20 boys in Jezreel. We have a floor plan and a site; we need workers and funding. Will you help in this? Please mark your donation “Urenya- Jezreel”. Thank you for your part in this plan.

Our boys have gotten quite musical. A friend of mine donated a trumpet. We also have the Venezuelan, typical, guitar-like “cuatro”, as well as a regular guitar, and have received an accordion. All the boys are starting some sort of music lessons to learn at least one of them. A couple of them have quite an ear for music; it’s exciting to see them try. Perhaps Urenya will provide the music for the next year during the Thanksgiving Days for ABANSA-My Refuge.



*Boys entering into worship as some play their newly acquired musical instruments.*

## Evangelism

We did an event this year that involved about 300 Colombian kids. I made it an opportunity for us to evangelize and armed us all with “EVANGECUBES.” I told all who wanted to go to the event that they had to present the gospel through the “EVANGECUBE” to at least three people. We all did fairly well, but Alceedes wins the prize; his disciple, “Beto”, received well the message and Jesus Christ as his Savior.

## The Fruit of the Land

It's banana season now and we have lots of bananas. The trees that I have on the side of my house have given me some really good tasting bananas—like a vine ripened tomato. The “Moriah” part of this



project has got many banana trees, as well as the plantains, or the “cooking banana”, and other fruits. From the products of Moriah, we are trying to become more self-sufficient. Do you know Noni? We also have a lot of Noni growing. “Noni”, ( *Morinda citrifolia*), has its

origin in the Polynesian Islands. It is a very stinky fruit that has been found to have more than 20 medicinal properties doing anything from enhancing the immune system to inhibiting the growth of tumors. Because of its medicinal value, it is expensive to buy in the market. But like anything, we sell it for pennies so that they can sell it for bucks. Our main buyer doesn't even buy much anymore. He said that his clients buy it, plant the seeds, and in 3 months have their own fruits. It makes me wonder why such a sudden increase in popularity of this stinky wonder fruit. Do you know “Noni”?

## School News

I'm finding out that English is not an easy language to teach. In the school, I am teaching second through sixth grades and the ABANSA family at night around the table. The six different levels has gotten me to wonder if I even know English. And because I am processing words from one language to the other, I am also speaking a lot of “Spanglish” in the normal course of the day.

The Way, the Truth, and the Life School is having its first graduating class on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Six sixth graders will graduate and hopefully go on to further studies in other area schools. We are still looking for the miracle of opening next year, offering seventh grade (in 2004, we were hoping to offer



sixth grade) so that we can help these same students with yet another year. The school is still set up to receive students who cannot pay the fees of other schools, nor the bus fare to get to other schools---still a big need in this area. We want to be able to help as much as we can; we would like to be able to take them to the next level and make sure they get a dose of God's Word along the way.

## Bridging the Gap

After many attempts and plans to get a bridge over to the school side of the gully, we are finally

“bridging the gap” with a suspension bridge. It will go from top level to top level so we won't even have to enter the gully at all and wide enough to run a wheelbarrow across. It will be a welcome convenience.



I will be in the States in July and August for some vacation time. There is so much to do here at the farm, as well as other homes and farms in ABANSA, I can hardly think of taking time off, but it will be a necessary break to regroup, rethink, report, and relax. I thank you all for your continued support in this branch of God's work in South America. I hope I get a chance to visit you while Stateside. May God bless you and recompense you for your prayers and your support in thought and deed. I've quoted this before but it is worth repeating: “missions without money is difficult but missions without prayer is impossible.”

*Barb Decker*