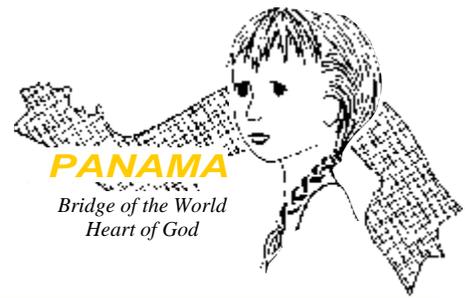


The Jones Journal



Kirk, Yvonne, Chloe, Anthony, Celina & Gracie
Missionaries to the Children of Panamá

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Ministry Report ~ by Kirk

VBS Goes Bananas – Plantation, That Is

It was my pleasure to return to the banana plantations in the NW corner of Panamá with Pastor Eloy Pimentel for another VBS. We ministered there several years ago during our first term. The church has since grown and is reaching people in several nearby communities, including some "Ticos" from Costa Rica that walk three hours to get there.



"slide" show stage using a clothesline and pulleys.

In March the topic was *Ministering to Street Kids*. Our invited speakers, Tony García and Oscar Sanchez, brought us to tears both laughing and crying. They first met on Coiba Island, a

former penal colony for the worst felons during Panama's dictator era. Now they are reaching out to kids heading toward prison, or death, if they don't change. (pictures online in Ministry)

In the evening services there were about 250 adults and children. In the morning VBS there were 110-120 children-- we know because we ran out of our 100 coloring pencils! They were very receptive to the story of Joseph forgiving his brothers. I guess everyone has sibling rivalry issues. They loved coloring the memory verse picture, as you can see!

Guaymí Family Retreat

This is the Annual retreat where we've helped lead the children's ministries with our good friend Pastor Julio Valdés. He's coordinated it for

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Children's Ministries Monthly Seminars

In February ("summer" vacation here) we held a VBS-style workshop. About 35 learned how to make their own teaching aids for Bible stories, memory work, and gospel games. Manuel Miranda made a simple





22 years straight. Let's run down a few of the numbers:

- 30,000 lbs. of food donated by Convoy of Hope with Kent Moody, our friend and former missionary here in Panamá.
- Over 2000 adults, youth and children in attendance.
- Almost 500 children.
- 65 baptisms.
- 4 days of classes and 4 nights of Celebration services.
- 1 new friend (among many!) named Simón (pictured with his memory verse artwork).

Let me share a snapshot: at



midnight, while cooling off outside my tent and doing my devotions, I heard three very different "sound tracks."

1. four-part harmony singing hymns in the adjacent Adventist camp.
2. praying in tongues from a pastor in the tent next-door.
3. "ALERT!" from the volunteer police calling all men to unload a food donation.

We also delivered Light-for-the-Lost evangelistic tracts and Jesus stories for kids, as you can see in the hand of one of our *pastoras*.



PRAYER

- Conservation of results from the KidsQuest Training and Crusade 30 March – 7 April.
- Chloe will travel solo to El Salvador for an MK retreat 6-11 April.

PRAISE

- Great leaders in children's ministries are rising up, as evidenced in our recent Monthly Seminars and preparation for the KidsQuest training.

UPCOMING

- National Elections will be held 2 May 2004.
- AIM Choir from Georgia will tour Panamá 15 -24 July, ministering in churches, pastors retreat and in the streets.

Family Report ~ by Yvonne

Chloe

She's a typical, active teen:



Panamanian Profile

Meet Simón Gonzalez.

He teases me mercilessly. I know that's an odd way to introduce a friend, but it's true. At first I wasn't sure if I should be offended or flattered. He's the funniest joke-teller I've met, plus one of the best preachers I've ever heard.

He's served as AG national vice president for several years. He pastors a strong church in a difficult area. We've ministered together with US teams. He and his wife Magali have three youth age kids: Tracy, Dwight and Calvin.



swimming in PE, after-school softball, volleyball, soccer and drama. She's middle school vice president, and active in youth group.

Anthony

His fifth grade class helped teach the Kindergarteners one day. His teacher said that even though his station wasn't the most interesting, all the kids wanted to go back because he made it so much fun. That's probably because he gets lots of practice with a Kindergartener at home!

Celina

As you can see, Celina has grown very fond of the cats. Yes, Kiwi

had 5 kittens. Luckily all the kids were home at the time. Even better, we've found good homes for four of them. "Rascal" will stay with us.

Gracie

This picture shows the morning after the Tooth Fairy visited. She's lost three baby teeth so far. Our little baby is growing up! And when she



does, she still wants to be Spiderman.

We've enjoyed the breezy summer evenings playing badminton, or just

playing around, in the park near our house.



Duíma ~ The Miracle of the FIRST Hut

To fully understand the context here, I encourage you to re-read "The Miracle of the Second Hut" in our 4/96 Newsletter. Reviewing briefly, in 5/95 we went to visit Duíma for the first time. The family in the first hut didn't talk with us because they were mourning the loss of their baby. In the second hut, they all received the Message and now are participating in the blessing of the school and church (see e-Mailer for 9/03 in Ministry on our website).

Pictured here are Yolani (17 years), who we met that first visit, and her two little sisters (ages 6 and 2), and their mother in back. Who you don't see are the four little babies who died in between.

This is the same family that practiced animistic religious traditions. Pastor César Rivera, whose



heart has been in Duíma ever since that first visit in 5/95, told me they scribbled down some strange writings in a sacred book that they didn't even understand. They believed one day a child would be born who would interpret it for them. Instead they buried baby after baby.

Pastor César held Christian funeral services for each deceased child. At the last one, the parents gave their hearts to the Lord, and later burned their religious books and the sacred shrine. These two little miracles seated next to Yolani proclaim the transforming power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

A Final Word

God will raise us from death by the same power that he used when he raised our Lord to life.

1 Corinthians 6:14 CEV



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