





**HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS**

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**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

*Bleats From the Sheep*

We received the following very inspiring letter this week:

Dear Friends:

*I am writing to communicate my sense of gratitude to you. On December 24, I was at the bus station in Waco. I found your tract entitled "Christmas Gifts for You!" I was alone and feeling very disappointed that I would be alone at Christmas. My family and friends deserted me when I became homeless. I do have housing now, but I still have troubles.*

*I don't know how your tract got to that bench in Waco, but thank you for the message and the sense of comfort and love it sent. God bless you!*

*Sincerely, Gloria*

It was such an encouragement to us! We figured out that Titus had distributed a bunch of tracts at the Dallas station before he had traveled to visit relatives, and somehow one of them was carried down to Waco and then "accidentally" dropped on a bench there for this dear woman to find! What care He shows for those who need Him most! TYJ!

*From Christina S. of James, U.S.A*

**THE SNOWBALL**

By Diane Loy  
sent in by June,  
FCF

I made myself a snowball,  
As perfect as could be.  
I thought I'd keep it as a pet,  
And let it sleep with me.  
I made it some pajamas  
And a pillow for its head.  
Then last night it ran away,  
But first—it wet the bed.

**20**

**YEARS  
AGO  
TODAY**

Our feature this month is a Letter Dad wrote in December 1978 titled ...  
**"WHY THE FAMILY?"**

Ever wondered what Dad's original thoughts were about the founding of the Family—his goals and vision for it? And what really is the point of being in the Family? Why couldn't a couple of ghosts come down and do the job instead of us?

*Find answers to these questions and more in ML #752.*

## From Comfort, Josh, Gracia and Ginny, Japan:

We'd had P&P several times over the past months, receiving His messages of encouragement and instruction for our house-hunting. In one such session, over a month ago, the Lord told me, "On the 21<sup>st</sup> you'll know!" As it turned out, on May 21<sup>st</sup>, a house we'd been hoping to get turned out to be a closed door; then 21 days before we needed to move out, we found out there was NO possibility of staying longer in our present location; and this all happened 21 days after receiving this message in prophecy! Then, on June 21<sup>st</sup>, we first got in touch with the man in charge of this property, who put us in touch with the owners, who turned out to be a very helpful and potential couple.—And to top it off, the final, 45% discounted price on this property was "21-man yen" (210,000 yen)! Wow! How specific can you get? [For the mathematically-minded: 7 (Perfection) x 3 (God) = 21 — God's perfect setup!]

## From Rachel, India:

On the last day of our road trip, we discovered that the briefcase we keep the tools in was locked, and none of us knew the combination! We were desperate as we were just about to go out and were being delayed. Alithia (15) suggested we pray and ask the Lord for the number, as we were wasting time and getting worried.

We stopped and asked the Lord to give us the number specifically, and sought His forgiveness. A few numbers kept flashing in my mind, but one stood out while others kept flashing on and off. It was the number 740. I decided to give it a try, and guess what? That was the number indeed! The briefcase opened and we thanked the Lord!—And went out to have a super-duper day!

# STUFF

ON THE 21st	A NUMBER FLASH	SLEEPING AMONGST THE SHEEP	CHRIST- MAS ANGELS	DISCO DANCING ADVER- SARIES
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When the bells of Christmas ring,  
Joyous memories they do bring.  
Children come to your door to sing:  
"Glory to the newborn king!"  
Decorations on the wall,  
But most important of them all  
The manger scene with Mary, kind and  
mild,  
Cradling the Heaven-sent child.  
See Joseph the carpenter, strong and  
stout,

With sheep and oxen all about.  
It's cold and white outside;  
There are sleighs that you can ride.  
See the evergreen Christmas tree,  
All decorated so beautifully.  
See the shining star above  
That reminds us of our Father's love.  
Hear angels in the dark blue sky,  
Their Heavenly wings spread up so high.  
Hear their echoing voices sing:  
"Glory to the newborn king!"  
See the wise men, the gifts they bring—  
Gold, frankincense and myrrh—gifts fit  
for a king.

Shepherds come from far away,  
Who have heard what the angels say.  
There they see the baby lay,  
Cuddled soft upon the hay.

—By Angelina (13), Canada

## From Dani (18), Dulce (18), Daniel (17) and John (17), Spain:

Hi, folks! We YAs and senior teens are raising funds to go to the mission field. For a year we were happy just having fellowship amongst ourselves, but in the last weeks we thought we needed to go out to "have fun." Then a fair came to our town. So one Saturday night we decided to go there and we ended up dancing in one of the discos. We got so into it that we got into the flesh and weren't praying or on guard at all. That's all the Devil was waiting for in order to attack us. He did it through a gang of guys who for no apparent reason started beating us up, resulting in one of us being knocked unconscious and taken away in an ambulance to the hospital, and the others getting quite bruised up.

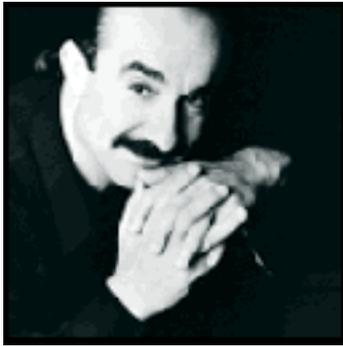
Thank God we are all fine, with nothing broken or permanently hurt, but we learned a good lesson that we cannot relax and let our guard down, not even for a second—especially when we're on the Enemy's territory. "Be sober, be vigilant, for your adversary the Devil walketh about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour" (1Pe.5:8,9a).

## From Michael Newman, England:

While out witnessing I gave a woman a "Love Came Down at Christmas" poster. Pointing to the angels, she said, "I know they exist!" She told me how she was crossing the road and tripped over the curb, straight into the path of an oncoming car which was traveling much too fast to stop without hitting her. Just as she was about to hit the road, a pair of strong, invisible hands caught her, lifted her to her feet and put her back on the pavement.—And all so fast that the car hadn't yet reached where she was! PTL! ■

**RAUL DI BLASSIO**

(From Mercy T., Mexico:) There was a concert in our city by an Argentine pianist named Raul Di Blassio. He is like a Latin American Richard Clayderman. During the concert, I felt convicted to give him the message somehow, although—LHM—I had not prepared anything to do so. In between songs, people were going up to greet him and give him gifts, etc. So my daughter Tina (10) and I went up to the front. We shook his hand and gave him a “To You with Love” tract, which he later mentioned in a thank you to the public for the “gifts, flowers and paper about love.”



**OLAF PALME**

**MISS AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN WORLD 1997**

(From Josué Montañés, Bolivia:) I was going store to store and decided to go into a travel agency. As I was witnessing to the clerks, she walked in (they had been showing me some pictures of her). I asked all of them to receive Jesus, and believe it or not, she was the one who was the most eager and enthusiastic about it!

**KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN**

(From Miracle, Croatia:) The Family used to minister to his family, especially to his children, when we were in Jordan in 1979. He sent us a personal Christmas greeting, with a picture of himself and queen Noor. Also Olaf Palme of Sweden (former Prime Minister who was assassinated some years ago) used to be an avid reader of Mo Letters, always friendly and happy to see us on the street to get his new Letter.



**PIERCE BROSNAN  
PETER USTINOV  
BRIAN BROWN  
JOHN STAUNTON**

(From Marie, China:) I was one of those who witnessed to Pierce Brosnan (photo below right) in Macau in the 80s, when he was there filming “Around the World in Eighty Days.” Peter Ustinov was also there at the time (photo below).

Ben and I got parts as extras in the movie, which was lots of fun, and we got to show the directors and others our PR brochure. After all the filming was over, we still hadn’t had a chance to witness to some of the main actors, so we prepared packages of lit and tapes and went to see them on the set. First we had a good talk with Pierce Brosnan, and he got a tape.

Then we went to see Peter Ustinov who was sitting down between scenes, still dressed up, and we gave him the package, which he was happy to receive. Esther had written a personal note to him in it. We started talking to him about what we do, and once he knew I was Irish he

carried on the whole conversation in an Irish accent, joking around about Ireland, as he has a house there. The funny thing was that after we had been talking to him for a while I looked up and noticed we were being filmed the whole time! (They often run the cameras behind the scenes for a “making of a movie” documentary.) Another time we also acted as extras in the movie “Taipan” and witnessed to Brian Brown and John Staunton, both well-known actors in Australia, as well as several other directors, stunt men and actors.



**CARLINHOS BROWN**

(From Tiago, Sara and Marc, Brazil:) I had the opportunity to witness briefly to Carlinhos Brown and his wife (she’s Chico Buarque de Holanda’s daughter, a famous Brazilian singer). We gave them a Christmas poster and a CD. Carlinhos was very sweet and said he was going to listen to it. That same day we also witnessed to Aginaldo Timóteo, a singer and Federal Congressman. He prayed to receive Jesus with Tracy (5, of Stefan and Ana Luz), and received a Christmas poster.



**STEPHEN BALDWIN**

(From Abner A., Brazil:) One day Christian and I were out at a stoplight witnessing and I saw a pickup truck with a couple of “different” looking people inside. (Different from what I am used to seeing, and from far-away.) I thought, “Man, that guy looks like Stephen Baldwin!” I figured I’d go and talk to him, whoever he was, so I walked up and gave him a tract, starting to talk in Portuguese. The guy said, “Sorry, I don’t speak Portuguese.” Then I thought I had better go for it, and I asked, “Are you Stephen Baldwin?” He replied, “Yes, I am!” And he smiled real big. I explained about our work here and all and asked if he could help with anything. He only had \$1 in his hand at the time, but when his mom (He was with his wife and two kids, and his mom) heard that we were missionaries she said, “Missionaries? That’s so great, that’s wonderful! Here, this is for you!” And she handed me \$10. Stephen was really happy to meet us too and kept thanking me for the tract. TTL for the opportunity to meet him.



**JOE SAMPLE**

(From Susan, USA:) I heard Joe Sample (one of the original "Crusaders") would be playing a concert. I had witnessed to him and spent time with him in Japan 12 years ago, at which time he got saved and filled with the HG. This time, the Lord opened the door to meet and talk to him after the concert, and also later on, I got to witness to him a lot. He told me it had been a really hard time for him in '86 and how he had desperately needed that prayer, and how his life had changed in a very positive way (including his music). We spent hours talking and he really opened up. I also gave him a *Glimpses of Heaven* booklet and *Let Love Touch Your Life* tape. It was very inspiring and he said he wanted to keep in touch.



**FUN/GRAPEVINE**



**KEANU REEVES:** Pearl (17, USA) gave him a tract. [GV #23]

**SUMMARY OF CELEBRITIES MET AND REPORTED ON IN THE**



**CHRISTOPHER LLOYD:** ("Doc" from "Back to the Future"): Met and witnessed to by Andrew, Annie, Grace and Maria, in USA. [GV #18] (LEFT)



**STEVEN SEGAL:** Ivan and Jay (Japan) talked to him and gave him a "Somebody Loves You" tract. [GV #25] (LEFT)

**PERUVIAN FIRST LADY:** Tito, Rosi and Maria Clara's Home sang for her. [GV #38]

**VICE PRESIDENT OF CHINA:** Peter (Angelo) and Sara sang and played for him. [GV #16]

**MISS INDIA:** James, Ruth, Josh and Lily (India) met and prayed with her to receive the Lord. [GV #28]

**QUEEN ELIZABETH:** Simon and Pearl (England) met the Queen while Pearl was in the hospital waiting for her baby's birth. She received a package of lit and a "Fear Not" tape. [GV #13]



**FREDDIE POWELL** (of the original Jamaican bobsledders, of "Cool Runnings" fame): Witnessed to by Phil D. (23), USA, and given some lit. [GV #6]

**TED KENNEDY:** Given a tract by Joshua and Rosella, Italy. [GV #12]



**WILLIAM SHATNER:** ("Captain Kirk" of "Star Trek"): Met by Family in California; witnessed to briefly and received a poster. [FUN #25] (RIGHT)

**MIKHAIL GORBACHEV:** Received a poster and tape from Joshua and Rosella, Italy. [GV #12]

**ABDALA BUCARAM,** FORMER PRESIDENT OF ECUADOR: Angela (17) and John Daniel (JETT) gave him a Christmas card, tape, tracts, FAR, etc. [GV #16]

**EDUARDO FREI,** PRESIDENT OF CHILE: Chris gave him a Spanish "Fear Not" tape. [GV #23] (BELOW)



**DICK ARNEY** (US House Majority Leader): He awarded the "Freedom Works Award" to the Family in DC. [GV #40] (LEFT)



**STEVE MARTIN:** Met by Family in California at carwash. Got a copy of the testimony sheet by the team in Croatia ("Healing Hearts in the War-torn Former Yugoslavia"). [FUN #25]



**CARMAN** (Christian singer): Received a "Somebody Loves You" tract from a girl in the US. Later returned asking for 20 more tracts to pass out to his friends. He said, "This is the best tract I have ever read." [GV #12] (RIGHT)



**BILL PINKEY** (of "The Drifters"): Gabe and Honey (Japan) gave him "Signs of the Times" and "Lion, Dragon, Beast" posters. [GV #28] (LEFT)



**ELIZABETH TAYLOR:** Andrew (USA) sent a package of lit to her via a friend. [GV #18]





Note: Check out Keana and Lance's silhouettes on the cover.

**Q: Since we've got you here in the spotlight for a little while, we hope you don't mind if we ask you a couple of questions .... To start with, what's the happiest memory of your time with Grandpa?**

A: Well, there're lots of happy memories, it's kinda hard to know which was the happiest. He was busy, but he always tried to make time to spend with us and do special things with us. I think some of my happiest memories with him are from right before he died. It was perfect to see him so happy and full of life. We lived in a place where he could go out a lot, and he would take us out often and we'd have really great times. I'm so thankful for those very sweet times we got to have right before he died.

**Q: What was the biggest way that Grandpa's death affected your life?**

A: I can't say this for sure, but Grandpa did say that he always wanted me to have a little baby.—So it seems that was one of the first things he helped engineer once he got There.

**Q: What was it like knowing that your father was God's Endtime prophet?**

A: What he said about the difference between when he was speaking ex cathedra or when he was just talking was really true. He was our sweet, loving Grandpa, but he was the Endtime prophet when God anointed him. When I read the Word, I didn't think about it like "Grandpa wrote this," because it was God's anointing.

**Q: As our readers saw in one of the last Zines, you're not so involved in Zine production work anymore. Can you explain a little about this?**

A: I guess it was from the time I went to see my mom.

It would've been difficult to still be involved while I was there, as the other Zineists weren't there. So I resigned for a while, and since I was at Mom's house for five months, by the time I came back, things were going quite well with the other guys that had been doing the FZ the whole time and there was quite a need for someone to help in another department.

**Q: So what is your main job now? Can you describe a little bit about it and what it entails?**

A: I'm working in the pipeline production of some of the other pubs—FSMs, CLTPs (Christian Leadership Training Program), Reflections.

**Q: If you ever decided to go to the field, which country would you like to be in?**

A: It seems to me that the whole field of Africa is so relatively virgin, I'd have to be there. Of course when it all comes down to it, I wouldn't do anything unless the Lord said I should.

**Q: You've got a boyfriend now, right? Can you tell our readers his name, age, and a little about him?**

A: His name's Lance, 20 years old. As far as what he does, he's programming the CVC computer course now. He's really grown a brain lately. He's so talented, I just love him. He's so sexy. Well anyway. What can I say? He's perfect for me; I don't know where I'd be without him. If I didn't believe God loved me any other way, this would prove it to me, 'cause I don't know why he loves me, there's no way I deserve him.

**Q: What kind of things that shepherds do make it easiest for you?**

A: Trust is a big thing to me. When a person has faith in you, and faith that God will watch out for you, I really respect that.—When they try to understand points of view that they may not even share, and realize that what works for them may not work for you.

**Q: What are some of your favorite Family songs?**

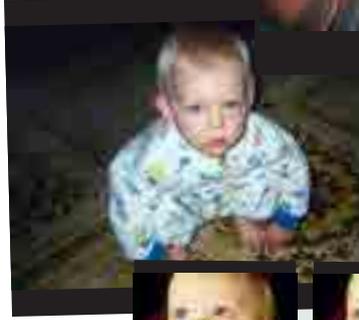
A: This is a classic question. I listen to the DC studio stuff a lot. Simon Black's one of my favorite singers/songwriters, his new stuff and of course all of his classics. I love the crazy hippie rock from the first Family bands. They were cool!

**Q: Has it been difficult for you, growing up as Tech and being highlighted to the Family?**

A: Extremely! I'm a very private person by nature, so probably nothing could have gone against my grain more than that part of the life I had. That's one of the things that's mystified me the most about life in general actually, is how the Lord deals out the burdens and the blessings, and they all end up equal. He's like so awesome, no?

**Q: How would you describe Mama?**

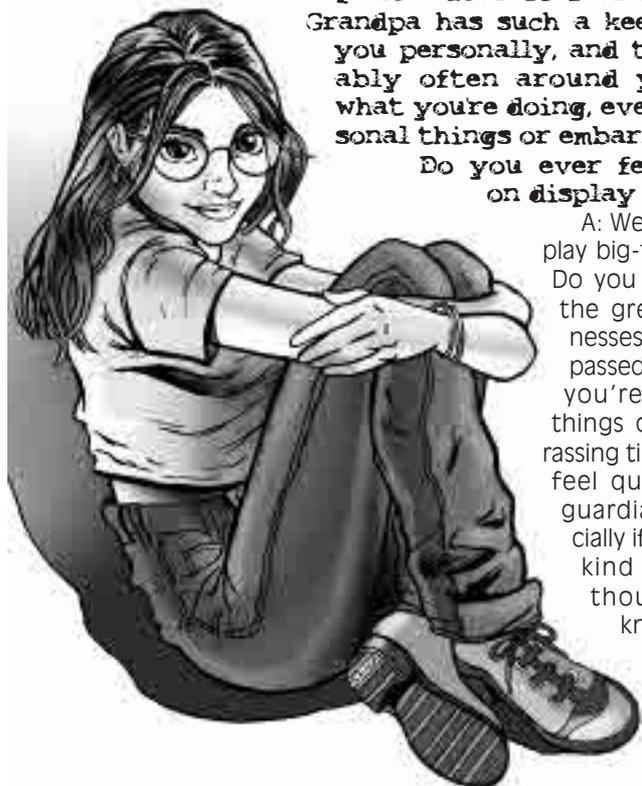
A: I think she's special. Well, obviously, I guess. You know Grandpa said she was created specifically for what she did.—Her whole makeup being that for years she lived entirely in his shadow, perfectly content only to serve and love, but with an incredible inner strength, that when called on to come out, proved itself more than sufficient. "Carrying the world on her shoulders."



**Q: What is your relationship with Peter, or how did you feel when he married your mom?**

A: He's loved her for so long, frankly, I think he deserves it. I mean, what can I say but it's a marriage made in Heaven? She really needed everything that he is, and he probably loves her and takes care of her more than anyone could, and what more could I want for my mama, huh? Anyway, I'm proud he's our king.

**Q: How does it feel knowing that Grandpa has such a keen interest in you personally, and that he's probably often around you watching what you're doing, even in more personal things or embarrassing times? Do you ever feel like you're on display or something?**



A: Well, we're all on display big-time, are we not? Do you ever think about the great cloud of witnesses that we're compassed about with when you're doing personal things or having embarrassing times? Sometimes I feel quite sorry for my guardian angel.—'Specially if it's a guy, which I kind of hope it is, though. Anyway, I know that like the Lord, Grandpa has the big picture and all, and will engineer for

me what he knows to be best.

**Q: How do you get along with your brother?**

A: He's definitely the best. At first we lived with Alf and Sara's kids in a bigger Home, and as

Trevor



typical siblings, you know, sometimes we fought and stuff. But from the time I was about 10, it was just the two of us and he included me in everything he did (well almost) and made me feel like he wanted me around—whether he did or not, I guess! Probably the reason we stuck together so well was 'cause there weren't any other young people around to get along with!

**Q: So what's the little "angel" up to these days?**

A: I can't say he makes me feel very saintly sometimes, but he's generally a pretty good kid. He's getting smarter all the time, learning to read, write lines, color inside of the lines. He'll be 3 in January, so I guess he should be. Can't say as much for my childcare skills, though. Maybe someday. I just have to give lots of credit to Korie here, and others, cuz without them his smartness might not have been discovered.

He loves his computer learning games too, it's the thing that keeps his attention the longest. What a typical boy! He likes it even more than videos generally.

Here's a story he told us the other day—so he can get in on this interview:

"Once upon a time, big thunder and lightning! (Sound of thunder with his hands making a thunder motion.) Hit Liefia [Olivia] and Trevor and they died. Went to Heaven! (Then what happened?) Grumpy and sad. (Then what?) Apple! Then happy! (You got an apple and then you were happy?) Yes, apple. (Where was Jesus?) Jesus came and prayed for it. (What would you do in Heaven?) Play with motorcycles and cars." ■

# THE LIGHT SHOW AND THE CHRISTMAS ANGEL

CLAIRE  
CHINA

I had a very special, breathtaking experience on Christmas day. Like most of the Family, we'd had a very busy Christmas season, with lots of visitors and things happening. I was busy cooking, cleaning, and acting like a real Martha, Lord help me. Matt volunteered to take all the kids for some get-out, so they beat a hasty retreat.

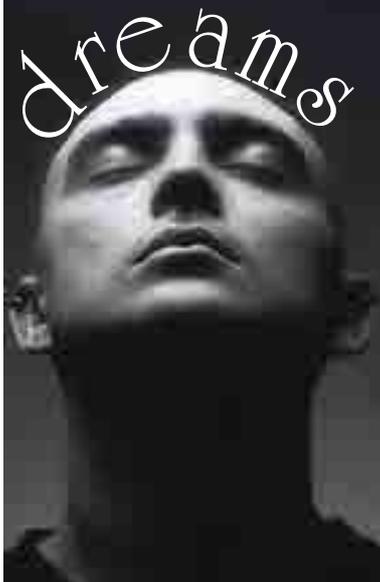
I was trying to wrap things up in the kitchen. All the food was cooked and I just needed to wash some pots. Then I began thinking how this was not really the right way for me to act on the Lord's birthday—being so busy working instead of stopping and filling up on Him before our Christmas dinner together. I got convicted so I decided to just stop and leave the pots, and went off to my little "haven." (I have a chair that overlooks a beautiful view out the window in my bedroom where I spend a lot of my prayer time.)

I sat down and sang some songs and began to feel a lot better. Then I felt the Lord was beginning to give a prophecy, so I found my notebook and began to write. The Lord told me to come to Him and put aside the hustle and bustle and "treasure the golden moments of silence and peace." Then the Lord told me, "Look up and be fascinated by My light. I rain down My gifts upon mankind. I rain down My love, My rainbow sign in the sky. I rain down My Spirit. I guard and protect and bless all My children and these who would be My children."



As I was writing this I had the impression I was supposed to look up at the sky, so I glanced upwards and nearly fell out of my seat!—The sky was lit up with a beautiful turquoise and aqua light show! Beautiful, incredible beams of light were shining down in a circular pattern, like pulsating waves of light. It was gorgeous! It started off in thin little glowing lines, then got brighter and brighter, and

I WAS STARING AT THIS, AND GETTING SO EXCITED, IT WAS JUST INCREDIBLE! I CAN'T DESCRIBE IT BUT IT WAS AMAZING. IT WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING I HAD EVER SEEN. I WAS JUST OOING AND AAING.



just filled the whole sky. It looked a little like the pattern of a spider's web, only made of glowing light. It was mainly shades of green, but also had the most beautiful patterns of purple and light orange woven into it, kind of iridescent.

Then the outline of a figure, like an angel's head, with longish hair, appeared in the center of this pattern that was just glowing with light. I couldn't see the head so clearly, as it was an outline, but at the same time it was three-dimensional. I was staring at this, and getting so excited, it was just incredible! I can't describe it but it was amazing. It was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen. It lasted for several minutes at least, and I was just oohing and aahing — then it suddenly vanished! By this time I was crying, as it was something really supernatural.

I was pretty stunned and asked the Lord, "What is it?" He said, "My blessings, My protection ... My care, My healing. Each to each one what is needed, for My power can be all things to all men; My judgment, My withholding, all from the same source: My Spirit. For I send My angel to rain down My Spirit on all men." It was a pretty heavy experience and I was really flipped by it, though I can't say I understand it all. It was such a beautiful Christmas gift!

A few days later Matt and I got together to pray with the children about our impending move to another city in China. None of the three middle ones (ages 9-13) had the gift of prophecy, but we wanted to get together with them for a confirmation and direction. After prayer, suddenly one after another they all began to receive beautiful prophecies! They even got things in pieces—one receiving a picture, the other the interpretation, another a verse that went along, and each flowing into the other like a synchronized team! It was amazing and we all marveled at what had happened.

Later I realized the connection. As a sweet Christmas gift, the Lord rained down His spirit and sent messages to the children about His leading and encouragement to pioneer a new place. He told them that He would supply, and if we would go, He would bless and use them like never before. He miraculously answered His promise of supply, sending funds in very unexpected ways, and provided a beautiful new place for us in our new city. Though much of this experience is still a mystery, and exactly why it happened I don't know—I know He knows! And it certainly was an encouragement to us all.

# A VERY SPECIAL NUN

RUTH  
VENEZUELA

I saw in a dream the outline of a nun, and I heard a voice: "This nun is Sister San Emilio, and she is your spirit helper."

I was quite shocked by this dream, because this Catholic Sister San Emilio I knew many years ago when I was a little girl in a Catholic school. I remember this nun as someone who was quite old and very sweet. She was also very loving and caring to the girls at the school. We sometimes



spent time together talking, and she was always faithful to share stories from the Bible, and teach me good, spiritual principles. This made quite an impression on my life that I would never forget. We became very good friends and I often visited her at the convent.

This sweet nun had a great influence in my spiritual life, and with her I began to know and understand the love of Jesus. I was always curious to know who my spirit helper was. So I prayed, and the Lord gave me someone very special, TYJ!

This dream was a confirmation of the prophecy in the "Releasing the Spirits" GN, where Dad said, "You are going to feel them. Don't be surprised if the Lord

even lets some people see some of those spirits and hear them too, as a sign to strengthen their faith."

"The prophet that has a dream, let him tell the dream; and he that has My Word let him speak My Word faithfully" (Jeremiah 23:28).

## DREAMS NEW AND OLD

RUTH  
MEXICO

My ten-year-old daughter had a dream the other day that seemed significant. Here is what she shared: "In the dream, I was in a Family Home in the USA." (Note: She has never lived in the States.) "I don't remember where we were exactly but I turned on the TV and the news was on so I decided to see the weather. The news said there was going to be a big flood but no one seemed to believe it was going to happen. We tried to tell people but they didn't believe us either. So I told everyone that I was going to leave if no one believed me, so I left. The next day the flood came, and then I woke up."

She received this before we had read the Letter on "Trash Your Trinkets" and leaving the US and other first world countries. It reminded me of a dream Dad had years ago, "The Deluge," so I looked it up. I read it with the girls and it's very interesting that many of the things he mentioned in there are so similar to those mentioned in the recent prophecies in the Letter on the "Trinkets." All this inspired me to get out "The Great Escape," and we read that today. Wow!—Another letter confirming those recent prophecies. PG!

**THE NEWS SAID THERE WAS GOING TO BE A BIG FLOOD BUT NO ONE SEEMED TO BELIEVE IT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN. WE TRIED TO TELL PEOPLE BUT THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE US EITHER. SO I TOLD EVERYONE THAT I WAS GOING TO LEAVE IF NO ONE BELIEVED ME.**



**Fact Box: You can find "The Deluge," ML #339, in Volume 3, and "The Great Escape," ML #160, in Volume 2.**

## I'M DREAMING OF A ...

LUKE, JOY AND CRYSTAL  
INDIA

The Lord answered 12-year-old Lily's prayer for a white Christmas. We just came to India seven months ago, and as Lily was going to sleep the other night she was thinking and praying about how nice it would be to have a white Christmas. She fell fast asleep and had a beautiful dream that she was on a beach, watching a gorgeous sunset, when all of a



sudden, it started snowing. She was so excited. People were picking up the snow and touching it excitedly and she ran down the beach playing as well. As she reached one end of the beach, she could see Jesus with a big bag, sprinkling snow onto the beach. So Lily could literally say, "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas!"

## RUMORED PREDICTIONS

STEVEN, CHRISTINA AND MICHAELA  
SOUTH AFRICA

While on the road in a small town, we met a sincere Christian older man. He gave us a copy of a prophecy a lady in Canada had received at the beginning of the year. We were amazed to see that this message was similar in content to some of the ones our WS prophets have received, along the lines of letting go of the old ways and following the new ways of the Lord, being warriors for the Endtime, etc.

This man also gave us a photocopy of a newspaper article about an 120-year-old Eskimo woman who had made very accurate and outstanding predictions, such as WW1, WW2, the assassination of JFK, the great Alaska earthquake, etc. This woman predicts a major worldwide stock market crash in 1998, the Great Tribulation starting somewhere in 1999—and even the day of the second coming of Jesus, on Dec. 25th, 2003! This last one sounds a bit far-fetched, as the Word says that "of that day and hour knoweth no man," not even the angels in Heaven. However, we found the article is quite interesting!

# a Christmas Peril

{ A S T O L D B Y S P I R O }

"I'd like to be a Christmas tree ..."

Sounds of the Christmas spirit already filled the air, and if by nothing else, one could tell that Christmas wasn't too far off by the sheer amount of decorations going up around the house. It seemed that the various kids' groups had conspired together to cover every available inch of wall and ceiling with crepe paper and other wild Christmassy contraptions, homemade and donated.

"Well, I'm safe for now; thank goodness I have my own room," Teddy mused to himself. "But I don't know if I can hold them off for very much longer."

He opened the door and sneaked a peek out into the hallway, where it seemed the paper foliage had come alive and was steadily closing in on the gateway to his world—the last bastion of normalcy, where ne'er a colored paper shape could be found.

Teddy quickly retreated into the safety of his room. But just as soon as he shut the door, there came a knock.

TED: Uh, hi Suzie! What can I do you for?

SUZIE: Well, you know, since you're in charge of the money for the show troupe, do you think we can, like, discuss it sometime? Like, now?

TED: Uh, okay. What do you want to discuss?

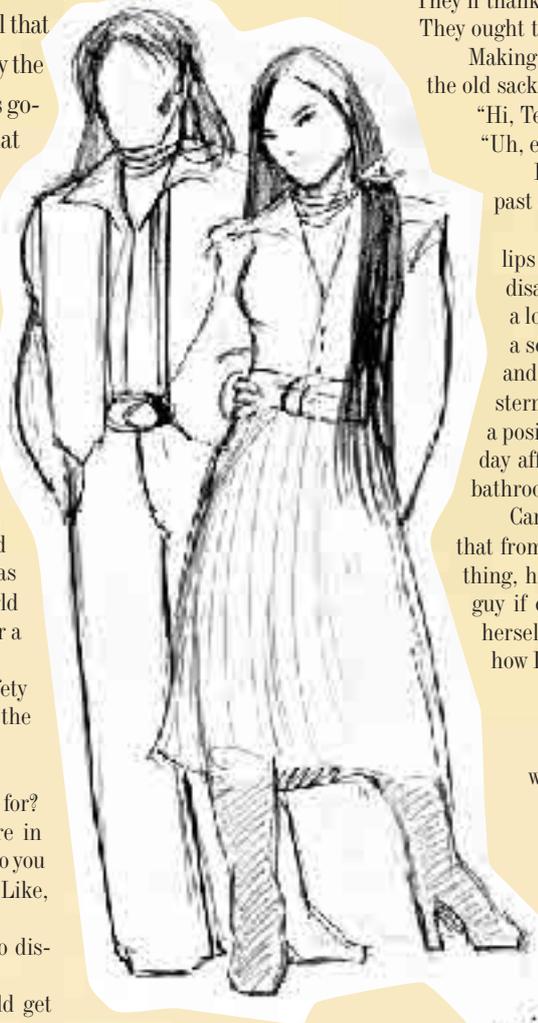
SUZIE: Like, do you think we could get some matching costumes this year? I mean, I know the striped pajama pants and polka-dot shirts are cute, but there's just something about them—I don't know, maybe it's the color coordination or something.

TED: Okay, great idea. I think downstairs in the linen closet there's some extra cloth left over from the curtains. Why don't we start with that, and go from there? Maybe we can buy a few ribbons if really necessary.

SUZIE: I was actually thinking about something more substantial. Like, getting some nice material.

TED: (Gasp! Choke!) We'll see—I'll get back to you later.

Teddy Tightwad was not known for his giving, and in fact had quite a reputation for living up to the latter part of his name. This time was no different.



RETRO CHRISTMAS  
COSTUME SKETCHES BY  
SOLOMON COSTA RICA.

"We can't just waste money like that," Ted thought to himself. "I mean, come tomorrow we could all have to flee at a moment's notice! They'll thank me then ... now, where were those gunnysacks? They ought to make great Christmas costumes."

Making his way to the basement where he had last spotted the old sacks, Ted ran into Carol.

"Hi, Ted ..."

"Uh, excuse me ... coming through."

Hardly noticing her beautiful smile, he whizzed past as if being chased by a horde of killer bees.

Ted didn't hear the sigh that escaped from Carol's lips as he passed, nor did he notice the same look of disappointment every time he ignored her. There were a lot of things that Ted didn't notice about her. Being a self-appointed organizer and financier is a big job, and demands a lot of one's time—not to mention the stern countenance that is required to accompany such a position. He couldn't bother himself with petty everyday affairs, like talking to people, eating, or using the bathroom—much less looking at people's faces.

Carol was disappointed, but had learned to expect that from Ted. "Ever since he started on this fundraising thing, he's just been so distant. He could be such a nice guy if only .... But this is not working," Carol said to herself. "I need to just be honest, come out and tell him how I feel."

CAROL: Oh, hi Ted! I was just looking for you.

TRANSLATION: This is getting serious, and I want to talk NOW!

TED: Well, you found me ...

CAROL: Well, you know, I was just going to say that ... it's not like you need to say anything ... but I'm just saying this in case ... you know, like, just sort of throwing it out there ... heh, like um, I was just wondering if you ... not that I think you are ... or anything ... I mean, it's not like I'm so like that, you know ... but I was just thinking that maybe, well, only if you ... you know ... feel the same way ...

TRANSLATION: I like you!

Silence ...

TED: So you're saying that ... ?

CAROL: Oh, I'm sorry, I thought it was perfectly clear. I thought maybe we could meet after dinner and I could help you with some of the new dance steps.

TRANSLATION: Aargh! (literally: v. to kick one's self) I almost

did it – I guess next time.

TED: Yeah, of course, that's what I thought ... heh, I must have been spacing out there for a second. Okay, well, um, I'll get back to you on that one – see ya!

The first day of the singing group's practice arrives and Ted, being new on the team, feels a little out of place. For those of us who've never been in a Christmas practice session, we aren't usually prepared physically or mentally when we find ourselves amidst a bunch of dancing enthusiasts. At first sight it looks like a karatisizing class, and you instinctively look around for the nearest cover. But if you'll look closer you realize that they're actually just dance steps, and those high kicks aren't intentionally aimed at you. But hey, no one's perfect.

Okay, so after you've picked yourself up off the floor, you will hopefully have learned the first rule of the dance troupe: never raise both hands at the same time (leaving certain key elements exposed), and don't stand in flat, open spaces! Ted is a quick learner, and soon blends in with the rest of the group.

But while Ted's body may be swaying in time to the music, his thoughts are far away.

"I don't know what in the world I'm doing here. I mean, look at me – I don't belong in a dance troupe. I should be behind some desk counting money or something. This is such a waste of time and valuable resources – me! I just don't feel that ..." Similar thoughts found their way in and out of his head for the remainder of the practice session, after which Ted gratefully raced off to tend to his accounting responsibilities.

He had barely made it a few steps when someone called after him.

"Hey, wait up!" Tina said, catching up to him.

"I was wondering if you could perhaps, you know, do my dishes for me tonight, because, like, I've got to help Kim with her kids and there's really no one else."

Rriinnnnng!

No sooner had Tina finished than the sweet sound of a ringing telephone filled Ted's ears.

"Oh, that must be for me! Uh, excuse me, I'll get back to you later."

Translation: Whew, saved!

Ted answered the phone, taking his time to find out who the caller was looking for, and after passing on the receiver, conveniently disappeared into the bathroom.

"That was close," he muttered to himself, trying to block out the vivid, painful image of having to do someone else's dishes when it wasn't even his turn! After sitting on the john for a considerable amount of time, he felt that the coast was clear, but not before opening the door a crack and peering into the hall – just to make sure. Being assured that he was no longer in danger, Ted tip-toed up to his room where he immediately found something to keep him very busy, like realigning all his cash by denomination and stacking his coins.

The next days were as busy as ever, and Ted found himself swamped with work after the new FTT came out, trying to find original excuses why he couldn't lend out his walkman. The "Well, you see, I'm planning on using it soon" excuse wasn't working anymore, because he didn't have time to listen to music himself – he was too busy.

"I think I'll go with the 'I'm just not so comfortable lending it out when I'm not around, and I'm going out today.'" Ted quietly repeated the line to himself, and readied himself for the first refusal

of the day.

But Ted wasn't ready for what happened next. "Oh, that'll work out great then," Joey replied enthusiastically, "because I just heard that I'm going out with you, so I can just listen to it on the bus."

Ted's mind raced into full gear in the seconds that followed, trying to find a way out; but no, this time he was stumped.

"Uh, okay I guess. I'll get it for you," he mumbled, as he slowly turned and handed over the precious piece of equipment with all the enthusiasm of a slug in a mud-puddle.

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"Today is our first show," announced Tabitha at the breakfast table. "And I know you're all very excited, so let's press in and get ready, we've got an exciting day ahead of us."

Ted could feel a shudder pass through his body at that last part.

"Why does everyone have to be all ippity dippity and excited about everything all the time? It really makes me uncomfortable. I wish they would just be 'normal' like me!"

The sad state that Ted had fallen into didn't lend itself to feelings of joy or excitement. Instead he felt annoyed at other people's mirth, and couldn't understand what they were all so happy about. After all, going to this performance was the last thing he wanted to do, and definitely not his idea of fun. After finishing his mental rebuke of everyone else in the room who seemed to be enjoying themselves, Ted felt a presence behind him. But before he could turn around or mount any sort of defense, he was issued a slap on the back, forcing a little piece of scrambled egg out of his mouth and onto the table.

"Hey there ma brotha', wassup? Getting ready for the big day?"

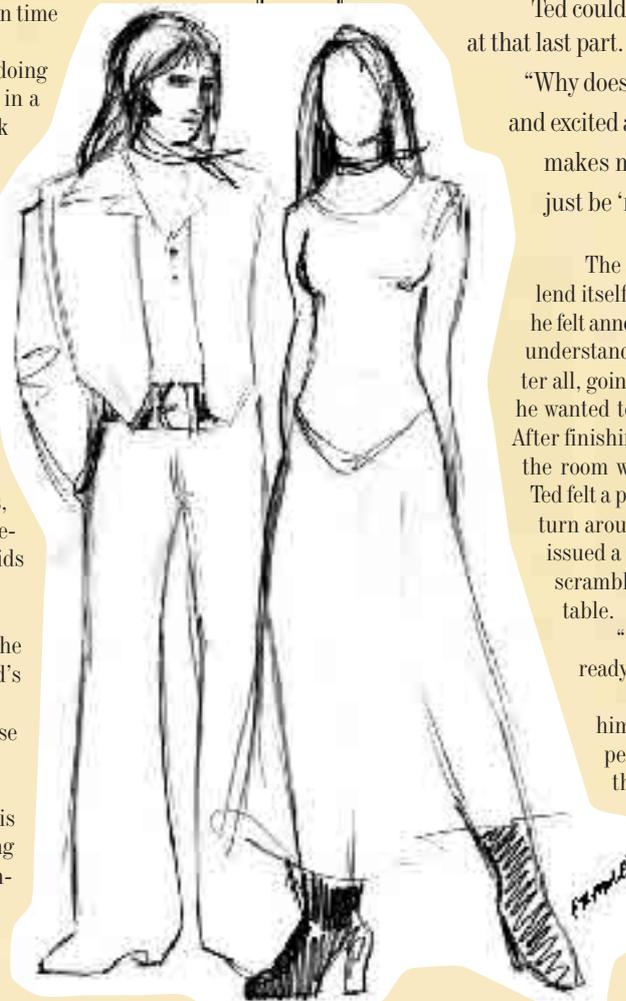
"I should have known," Ted thought to himself after realizing what had just happened. "Why does he have to always do that?"

"Oh, uh, yeah .... Hi, Jerry!" Ted replied, and then made a resolution that from then on out he would sit with his back to the wall, and eat with one hand on his fork and the other ready to defend himself at any given moment.

Soon all members of the show troupe (ages 3-22) were gathered (including seven guitars), piled into the VW van, and headed out toward what would be their first show of the Christmas season. The excitement in the van built with each carol they sang along the way—though only half of them could sing at a time, as they needed to conserve the limited supply of oxygen that still managed to fit in-between them.

Upon arriving at their destination, the team piled out of the car, and raced to get set up. They were half an hour late, due to complications that can arise when travelling in large groups—namely, stopping 25 times for bathroom breaks.

One of the OCs, Tiny Jim, hadn't been able to make it for the show due to a sudden unexplained illness. Ted now felt like he was about to come down with the same thing right about then.—He'd just been asked if he could fill in for Jimmy, being the only other male on the team, and sing "I'd Like to be a Christmas Tree." The part



needed a boy singer because all the girls were involved in the intricate dance sequence that accompanied the song. So the responsibility rested on Ted's shoulders.

"Figures!" he mumbled to himself, and not seeing a way of escape, he took up his place center-stage.

Needless to say, the crowd wasn't wowed with Ted's performance, although the overall show came off pretty well, and many lonely hearts were infused with the real meaning of Christmas.

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Christmas shows came and went until finally, upon the eve of Christmas, Ted went to bed early wanting to be rested for the big day ahead. But he found that he couldn't sleep.

"Something's not right," he finally concluded. He reflected back on the last few weeks, and words from the Christmas songs he had been singing kept flooding his mind.

Throughout the Christmas season, Ted had been taking full advantage of every opportunity to raise funds, with the intent of moving on to another field. That, however, had somewhat clouded the real purpose for his witnessing activities during this time of the year. He had of course heard the stories all his life about the real meaning of Christmas, and he could still hear the little girl saying, "Please let me stop and look at Jesus! Please let me stop and look at Jesus!" from the old drama tape, over and over.

But what he had never realized was that he himself could be like that busy mother, rushing around trying to get what he wanted out of the holiday season, and all the while neglecting to notice ways in which he could give to others and truly sacrifice to make them happier.

With that thought on his mind, Ted soon fell fast asleep.

What seemed like only a moment later, Ted opened his eyes and looked around the room without moving his head. A soft, warm light filled the room, and everything seemed to radiate an unearthly glow.

Not knowing what to expect, he cautiously sat upright and surveyed the room. Although this was an unusual experience, there was nothing about it that made him feel the slightest bit uneasy or afraid. In fact, the glow itself seemed to penetrate his skin and fill his whole body with a warm and fuzzy feeling. It wasn't long before he noticed that something was happening in the corner of the room, where the light seemed to shine the strongest.—The light itself was taking shape.

Ted, trying to keep his lower jaw from hitting the floor, watched as the shape of a female being, dressed in clothes of light, took form and stood before him.

Normally at a time like this, the next thing that would happen would be a question from the dazed youth sitting on the bed, like, "Uh, wha..wh..whu..who are you?" But in this case, Ted—forgetting his line—just sat there, lower jaw resting on his knees, staring at the beautiful angel who was now making her way over to his bed.

In a voice that seemed to be made up of a 500-piece orchestra, the being of light introduced itself.

"Hi Teddy, I'm the Spirit of Christmas Giving, and there are two

more that shall come after me."

This last sentence didn't seem to have any effect on the lad, who remained speechless, eyes transfixed on the various curves in front of him.

"I've come here to take you on a journey, Ted.—A journey that will open your eyes and reveal to you the true joy that can be found in giving."

At that last announcement, Teddy began showing some signs of life. He blinked, slowly readjusted his gaze and looked in her eyes. Her eyes were filled with such joy and light. He knew where the light came from, and knew also that he himself could have that very same love and joy.

A tear welled up in his eye and ran hot down his cheek as he reflected on his actions of late. He could safely say that it was indeed time for a refilling.

The spirit understood what Ted's eyes were saying. Without further ado she reached out and took hold of his hand. "Come with me," was all she said.

Ted felt his body begin to rise and slowly drift through the air, across his room, and out the window leading to the street.

The scene was now changed, and it didn't take long for Ted to realize that they were no longer in the same place or even the same time.

"That's weird," Ted found himself saying aloud. "Look at all those people down there; they've all got this long hair and these weird unmatching clothes, and they're driving around in these really old cars. Wait a minute, could it be? I must be in the '70s or something!"

As if in answer to his question, they started to descend upon what looked like a ranch in the middle of nowhere. As they got closer, Ted recognized that this wasn't just any ranch — it was *the* Ranch, as in TSC.

They lowered themselves through the roof and into a meeting room where a large group of people were gathered together. Ted, familiar with Family history, recognized that this was some sort of lovefest. Everyone was hugging each other, laughing and praising and making other similar sounds of joy.

"They all seem to be so happy and without a care in the world, even though it seems they don't have much in the way of earthly possessions," he remarked, after observing the outfits of many of the people who were now engaged in wild and free gypsy dancing.

As he scanned the room, marveling at how some people managed to fit into some of those clothes, his attention was drawn to a particular couple in the tenth concentric ring of dancers.

something about them that's different if I know them?—I've got to

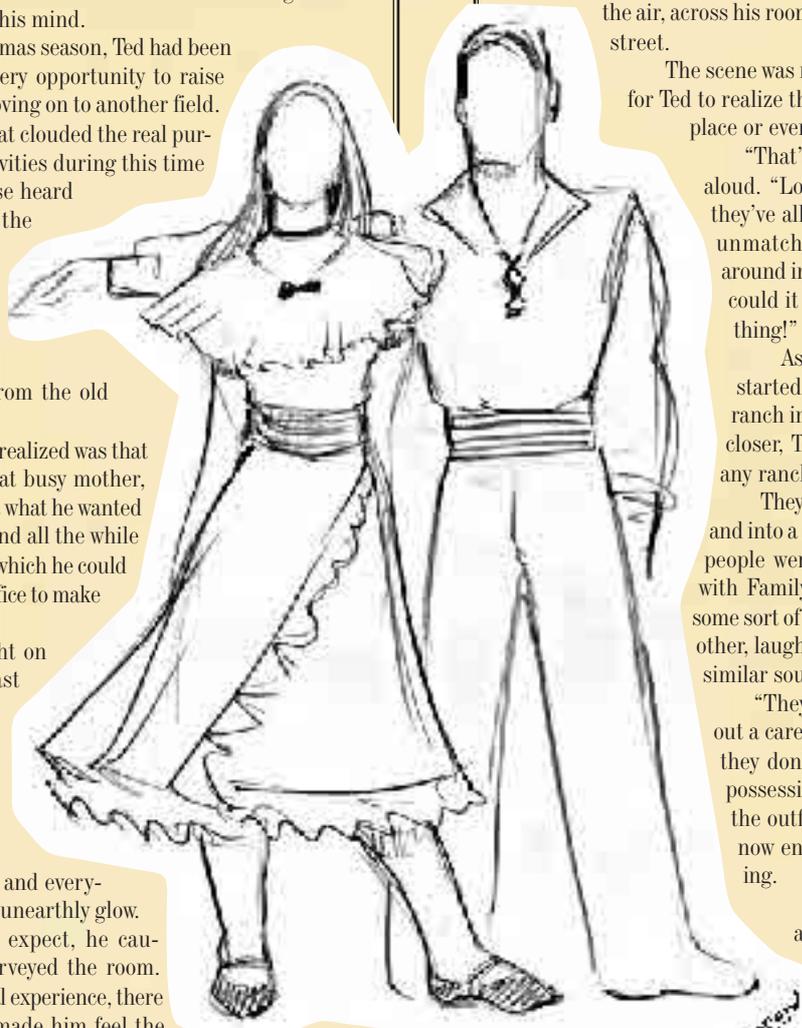
"There's awfully familiar. I won't get a closer look."

Ted began moving in the direction of the couple, trying to get a closer look at their faces which they seemed to be intentionally hiding from him, as every time they shook their head back and forth, their waist-length hair would be flung in front of their faces, obscuring his line of vision.

At last the dancing slowed down and he was able to get a good look at them.

"Whoa, could it be? Yes, it is — it's my parents."

Just then someone approached the couple. "Praise the Lord, Shabadiah and Zapporalith, I was wondering if you would be able to donate your car to the pioneer team that's heading out tomorrow, amen?"



1998  
12/15

"We would love to II Corinthians 2:13a," came the quick reply. "I know we just got here, but anything we have that could be of use to someone, we would be more than happy to share with our precious brethren!"

"Amen, hallelujah brother! The Lord will mightily bless you, amen?!" With that and after a big bear hug and kiss for both of them, II Corinthians made his way back through the crowd, leaving Shab and Zap with a look of fulfillment on their faces, glad that they could have a small part in it all.

Ted, however, had a very different look on his face. Seeing the sacrificial spirit and willingness to share of his parents and all those around him only seemed to highlight his own selfishness and lack of love. He painfully reflected on his recent actions and the things that he held so dear, and tried so hard to hold on to, which were now dwarfed and made insignificant by what he saw all around him.

His spirit guide read the expression on his face, and knowing that he had gotten the point, looked over at him as if to ask if he was ready to move on.

Ted nodded his assent, having been convicted and wanting to get away somewhere where he could quietly focus on his own life and the reason he was here at all, without having it rubbed in beyond what he could bear.

The spirit again took him gently by the hand and led him away, this time back to his own home and to his awaiting bed, into which he collapsed thankfully and prepared himself for his next adventure.

It seemed like seconds after he had fallen asleep that he woke again with a start. This time more aware of what was going on, he sat up and looked around expecting to see the form of an angel appear before him.

A moment passed and nothing happened.

Just as he was about to lie down again, he heard a curious noise coming from the next room. It was the sound of laughter and merriment. He could tell it was a female voice, though definitely not earthly. It had the same qualities as the last spirit, as if it was being played out on musical instruments.

He decided to follow the sound and find its source. It led him out of his door, down the hall and through another door and into another room. Ted recognized that it was Kim's room, the single mom who had been trying for a while now to go to another field to get together with Calvin, the father of her child.

Ted also noticed that he hadn't actually opened any of the doors, he just simply walked through them.

"Cool," he whispered in astonishment.

"Yes it is." He turned at the voice coming from behind. "And you haven't seen anything yet," finished the spirit who now stood in front of him.

"I'm the Spirit of Christmas Love," she said, as the words rang in his ears and clouded out every other thought.

"Yes, I can see that," he found himself saying aloud, as his eyes followed the contours of his new spirit guide. "But what am I doing here?" he asked, more to himself than posing a question.

Without another word, the spirit waved her hand and the room came to life. Ted turned to see Kim standing by her bed. He watched as she unpacked a few bundles from her bag and laid them on her bed. He could tell by the wrapping paper that these were gifts she intended to give to various members of the Home. But he knew that the best gifts that Kim had to give to people were the ones she gave them every day.—Her warm and friendly smile, and her willingness to help out wherever needed, her love and care for each member of the Home and her enthusiastic, uplifting spirit. After taking a closer

look, Ted noticed that one of the packages bore his own name.

He looked up shamefully at the Spirit. "I don't know what to say," he finally managed to get out. "You know as well as anyone that I don't deserve this from her. It makes me so ashamed to think that I could have ever been unloving to such a saint as this. Yet she never responded in like manner to my coldness, but answered each unloving deed with one of compassion and love."

"Everyone makes mistakes," the spirit encouraged him, "but there's still time to make it right."

With that she took hold of his arm, and Ted again felt that light airy feeling come over him as they were transported out of there and into another place he was unfamiliar with.

"This is where Calvin lives," the spirit explained, and proceeded to take him through the house and introduce him to the various Family living there, each one so unique and precious in their own way. Then they came to Calvin. He was kneeling beside his bed and seemed to be praying. Ted moved closer and could see his lips moving. He strained to hear.

"Lord, you know that this is a very poor field, and there just doesn't seem to be anything I can do from here to help Kim. But I don't think I can leave right now because there's just so much to do and so much depends on me. I know that You can do it, though, You've promised that ...."

Ted moved away and buried his head in his hands. Conviction pierced his heart as if it were a sword. He watched this faithful missionary, who obviously had much less than he, down on his knees and so desperate for a solution. Ted knew that he could have been the answer to his prayers all along. Saddened to think that he could have done something so long ago, but hadn't, he turned to leave.

The spirit called after him, "There's more."

They traveled together to many Family Homes around the world, and Ted marveled at the dedication and sacrifice that so many portrayed, and the love that each one had for the other. His heart broke as he thought of all the unloving deeds he had done and the times he could have done or said something, but hadn't.

Sensing his despair, the spirit came close and wrapped her arms around him, enfolding him in a blanket of love. Ted had never felt like this before, totally at peace. Every trace of discouragement vanished, and was replaced with a resolution to make things right.

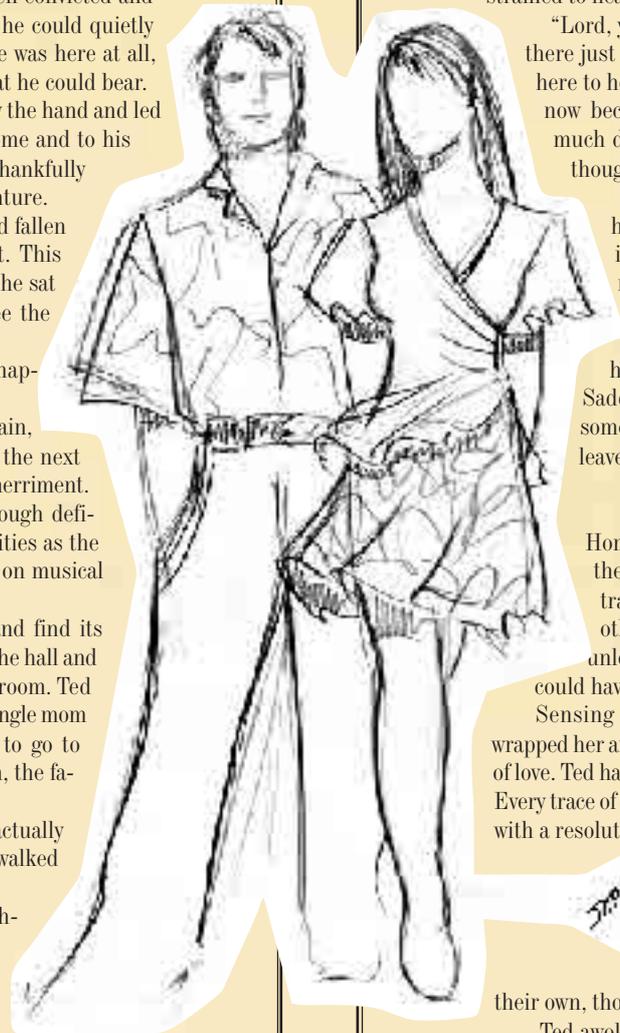
At last they were back where they had begun, in his own room. Ted knew there was still one more angel to come, so he tried to stay awake.

His eyelids seemed to have a mind of their own, though, and he drifted off.

Ted awoke for the third time. He sensed that there was something different this time. It wasn't an uneasy or frightful feeling, but more a quiet, sober atmosphere. What appeared to him next was the form of a male angel, tall and built like a fortress. The look on his face was more serious in nature than his predecessors, but not at all unkind. The tall guide turned to leave without saying a word. Ted instinctively followed him out of the room and down the hall.

There were no words spoken between them, but Ted knew who his guide was.—He was the angel of death. Ted had figured by now that his time had not come, but felt as if he knew this was going to happen all along, and that this angel had something important to show him. Making their way through the house, they soon came upon the rest of the Home members gathered together in the living room. Ted noticed that it wasn't night anymore, but the middle of the day—a day that hadn't happened yet.

He looked closer at some of the Home members and realized



that they were crying. "Something terrible must have happened," he thought. "Everyone seems to be grieving as in the loss of a loved one."

Finally someone spoke.

"It's hard to know where to start! Ted was such a blessing to all of us and we loved him so much...."

"Ted? Wha..." Only then did he realize that it was him they were grieving over.

After listening a while longer, he learned that there had been an accident, and he had died. The Home members went around and one by one recounted all the good times they had shared together with Ted, and how much they had appreciated him and loved him.

Finally it was Carol's turn to speak. After wiping away a few tears and collecting herself, she began.

"I think you all know that I liked Ted a lot. At times it seemed that he could be a little distant, and to be honest, I think we all felt that he could have been a little more loving sometimes. But in spite of his idiosyncrasies, of which we all have plenty I'm sure, he was a wonderful person. He was such a good missionary and loved the Lord so much. I was hoping that one day we'd be together on this Earth; I guess I'll have to wait till we get to Heaven for that, but it's something to look forward to...."

Ted listened for a while longer and, without knowing, was shedding his own tears along with them. He felt unworthy of the praise and love that they were offering him. He felt that he didn't deserve these words of endearment after the way he had acted while living with them.

He turned to his guide and pleaded, "Please, I've got to have another chance. Please send me back, there's so much I can still do. I know it's not too late...."

His lips moved, repeating those last words over and over as he slowly opened his eyes. He found himself in his own room, lying in his bed with the morning sun shining through the windows. Overjoyed, Ted jumped out of bed and ran out into the hall, still in his pajamas.

It was Christmas morning and there were only a few people up and shuffling around the house. Ted proceeded to make his way through the house, hugging everyone he could find.

"Merry Christmas," he shouted as he danced around the house, grateful for a new lease on life.

Soon more people began emerging from their rooms and were surprised to find a very different Ted than the one that they had known the day before. He seemed more full of life and definitely more affectionate.

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Later that day was the scheduled big show. When it came time for Ted's part, much to everyone's surprise, he got up on stage and sang with such gusto that he inspired a standing ovation.

"Wow, I never knew I had it in me," he marveled. But he wasn't as shocked as his fellow show troupe members, who sat there for a



moment trying to figure out what had just happened. It took a minute for them to break out of their reverie and realize they were still on stage and the show must go on.

The rest of the show came off with the same enthusiasm, fueled by Ted's solo, so that when they were done they all felt that it had been their best yet.

Ted's next objective was to find Carol and tell her how he felt and how sorry he was that he had been so insensitive all this time. The opportunity soon presented itself after they had gotten home and everyone crashed in the living room to talk about the day's events.

"Uh, hi Carol! I was wondering if you had a minute."

Carol could tell that there was something different about Ted. Not only had his performing abilities drastically improved, but there was a sparkle in his eye that had not been there before.

"Yeah, sure," she replied enthusiastically.

"Listen, I know this is coming a little late, but I just wanted to apologize for the way I've been acting of late. It's just that you've been, like, so sweet to me and I think I've been a real jerk sometimes. Anyway, I just wanted to say I'm sorry and I really love you ... boy, this is weird, I don't know what else to say...."

"Then don't say anything," came the reply.

His eyes shifted and met her gaze. "Whoa, those eyes!" he thought.

The two love birds found themselves slowly drifting closer until their lips met and—well, you know what happened next.

"Oh, there's one more thing I've got to do! — Carol, hold that thought, I'll be right back!"

Ted raced off to find Kim, but first stopped in his own room and retrieved a package from his suitcase.

"Hey Kim! Hi, I've got something for you," he said, as he proceeded to hand her the package. "Go on, open it."

Wondering what it could be, Kim unwrapped the bundle, to uncover a wad of money. A gasp escaped from her lips as she stared at the pile in her hand. "Are you serious? Oh, no, I couldn't possibly ... I...."

"Come on, Kim, we both know that you need it more than I do.—And besides, it's just enough for your trip."

"I don't know what to say, I mean thank you, you're the answer to my prayers."

Ted found himself turning red as Kim hugged and showered him with kisses.

"Yes, okay ... uh, yeah, I love you too ... uh huh, you're welcome ... um, yeah ... uh...."

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In the weeks that followed, Ted and Carol grew closer every day and formed a bond of

love between them. After giving his money to Kim, Ted gave up the idea of moving on to another field. But what he got was much more in return. While his thoughts were so occupied with moving, Ted hadn't realized that he was right where he was supposed to be, in a field and Home that needed and loved him. He soon fell in love with the people of that beautiful and exotic country, and found the fulfillment that comes from being in the Lord's will.

THE END

(Angelina:) Our first show in Sarajevo was set for the day after we arrived. It was to be the beginning of many shows during the Christmas season in Muslim Sarajevo.

We had booked two shows a day for the first two days in a mentally handicapped center. When entering the compound there were these jolly men, pointing and guiding us to where to park. Most of the patients were older men who were not mentally stable, yet very sweet, and wanting to continually shake our hands and kiss us girls. Ha! As soon as we parked, a crowd gathered. We quickly filed out and while shaking everyone's hands, made our way to the room where we were to perform. The nauseating odor nearly knocked us flat—the stench of a carpet that smelled like it hadn't been changed in years, with the pungent, sour, smoky humidity filling the room!

The excited and happy reac-

## CRIES IN THE WILDERNESS

tion of the people toward us made us inspired all the more to do our show for them wholeheartedly, as we didn't need to worry whether they would think we were professional or not.

We also got to talk to the staff who was very dedicated to their work, even though they were in very poor conditions. GBT! They really want us to come back, and we definitely will.

(Marisa:) After doing many shows in Muslim institutions and schools, we were delighted to discover Croatian Christian areas in Bosnia. This meant that we could openly witness about Jesus in those towns, and give the Christmas message freely. Although we were able to be a great witness with our sample and showing love in the Muslim areas, we felt somewhat lacking when not able to freely witness about the Lord on Christmas. So we booked shows in these Christian areas and the result of this led to our praying with many students to receive Jesus.

Our show consisted of three clowns: Andrew (of Miracle) as the main one, and Ang and Crystal as Fi-Fi and Lu-Lu. But as

## CRIES IN THE WILDERNESS

drinking.

(\* A children's story by Dr. Seuss, where an evil Grinch who hated Christmas managed to steal all the Christmas decorations and presents, but the people celebrated it anyway with thankful singing and unity because he couldn't take it from

they had singing and dancing to do as well, after their beginning clown skit, they had to quickly scrub off their make-up in the little given time—hence returning from their "freshening up" a brighter shade of pink, as though they had just feasted on a meal of spaghetti. (All those who've done clowning will know what we're talking about!)

We also did the Dr. Chainbuster skit which always got plenty of laughs with our nerdy Dr. Ludy (David), the spastic patient (Ang) and myself as nurse "Knock-me-out." When administering the anesthesia, I'd wave the frying pan towards Ang's head—although oftentimes the

"donk" followed a while later as the sound-effects person who was clanging two metal items together was a little too out of sight. This skit also of course got a very good message across as well. After most of our shows we'd get all these kids asking us to autograph their posters. It actually was good, 'cause then the kids would treasure the posters much more since our "autographs" were on them.

(Angelina:) We enjoyed our stay in Sarajevo immensely, and shall never forget it. There's nothing like seeing the faces of those kids brighten up and laugh as we perform, knowing all they went through during this horrid war, just being able to bring a tiny spark of joy into their lives is very fulfilling. And even though we may not see them again, we pray that the spark of happiness the Lord gives them through us will last forever in their lives.

Art by Julie. (12)



their hearts.)

This is Russia at Christmastime, and into this we come, trying to blow that little spark into an ember that will glow and into a flame that will burn all year long. We need to start from scratch. Seventy years have erased basic facts from the communal mind. Here's an example:

Returning home from visiting one of our friends we got on the wrong train that passed our destination. No matter, as conversation is struck up with a tough-looking young man in our simple Russian, with whom we speak about the festivities (it's New Year's Eve) and the drunkenness everywhere. Since we are comparing cultures, he asks if we have a Christmas tree.

Cries in the wilderness

"Of course! And a manger scene, too!"

This is where the difficulty comes in. We try to describe it and he answers, "Jesus I know, but Mary and Joseph? A stable?"

So we pull out a Christmas card with a picture of the beautiful, rustic scene and begin to explain the wonderful story that our friend is ignorant of. Amazed, he asks about Jesus being born in a barn. We pulled out another "help." A tract that speaks of Jesus' Christmas present: "To You!—With Love!" We told our fascinated audience that Jesus was born in a stable because there was no other room in the village, but He could be born right now if there was room in his heart. He read the simple prayer at the end and looking up, he just shone. He stuck to us till we returned on the next train back.—Imagine, there are still places in the world that don't know this!

Not long after, nearly home from the

### CRIES IN THE WILDERNESS

train station, an unkempt man who had followed us from the train lunged at David, grumbling loudly about some "Chechnyan dog!" We had been avoiding this man, thinking he was drunk, as he'd already insulted David in the train station. But he seemed bent on his intent.

So he came at David, who fell back a few steps and told him very firmly: "Jesus, stop you!"

I was telling him over and over, "He's Argentinean! He's not from Chechnya! He's my husband!"

Then an almost miraculous transformation came over the man. He kind of shuddered and came to. He started to apologize over and over, "Excuse me, excuse me! Please tell your husband I'm sorry. Please!"

I'm sure it wasn't just from my explanation that he had such a change of heart! He showed us his hands, all red and

scarred, and was saying something about the war in Chechnya, and how he had suffered. David was so touched by all this that he took those punished hands in his and kissed them.

The man, also moved, kissed David's hands, saying again how sorry he was. I gave him a Christmas tract about "Jesus giving gifts of love to you" and he almost started to cry. We had come to our turn-off and continued on our way after more hugs, and the man shouted across the courtyard, "Happy New Year!" and stopped the people nearest him to show them the tract he had just received. We came home to share with the others in our New Year's Candlelight Service this beautiful testimony, and thanked the Lord to be here where we can reach those who have been so damaged in their hearts by the wounds of war, with the salve with which only Jesus can heal. ■

## INSIDE THE TEMPLES OF DOOM

From Marianne (18 of UrbanandRage), USA

December faithfully rolled around at the same time it does every year, and almost every day was packed with some show or another. Although all of us in the singing group were happy with the idea of doing lots of shows, more time spent doing shows meant less time postering—which, in our eyes, seemed much more fruitful.

"Argh, can't we do some postering?!" was a frequent thought in my head. Well, maybe more like a murmur. Yikes!! The Lord snapped me out of that complaining state real quick when the "glass" I was seeing through darkly became clear, and I was able to see what it all meant in the spirit. We were invading churches, man!

We were invading churches of the most widespread religion of them all—and this ain't Islam, Christianity, Judaism, or any of those other ones; the churches we were invading aren't the regular ones with a bell in the steeple or a cross at the top. These churches are gigantic palaces with several floors, escalators and stairways all over the place, the sides nicely lined with what seemed like nice stores with stuff you need. But in reality—or in the spirit—they're whorehouses full of whorish spirits who were ready to jump out and rape anyone that they could, after luring them with their delicacies, and sucking all the blood,

sweat and tears out of their wallets. The hallways are always packed with society's robots, who were falling right and left for these "beautiful women." (Can you guess what these "churches" are? Temples of mammon—shopping malls!)

Another common sight at these "churches" were the temple guards (security officers), making sure all the robots were working right and that there were no short circuits anywhere. Had there been, you'd see a conglomeration of these guards setting the robot

straight or escorting it out. Sounds pretty bad for Christmas time.

Well, the high priests (mall managers) of these "churches," by a total miracle, allowed us to bring some real Christmas to their "congregation" (previously referred to as robots, or more commonly known as the people). It was incredible because here we had these extremely AC malls which tried their best to stuff people's minds with Christmas shopping thoughts, and never a word about Jesus or Christmas.—The closest they came to it was "Season's Greetings," "Happy Holidays," "X-mas trees on sale!" etc., which was pretty far

from actual "Christmas." And we invaded these malls with songs like "The Real Meaning of Christmas," "What Makes Christmas?" and other songs that clearly reminded people that "things" were not the main idea of Christmas. As soon as we finished singing we would blast out and pass out tracts to every single body. It was so cool; the Devil couldn't even sic his dogs on us to tell us to stop passing out literature, and we were able to reach hundreds of people with the message.

So, TTL, of the 19 shows we had this Christmas season, six of them were mall shows!—And we ended up having very fruitful Christmas postering as well!!



We recently visited the city of Semipalatinsk, the former testing ground for Russian nuclear weapons. But radiation was not the only danger that we faced in our special searching mission.—The greatest danger was the cold!

The Lord had put the burden on our hearts to visit a few cities in our country to bring the Christmas message to our dear friends and sheep. So off we went! We traveled under camouflage like the locals in the Platscart wagon (lower than the lowest class in western countries), but were recognized by our companions as being different from them. After a night of talking, they began to understand the many things we shared with them.

Upon our arrival we felt the difference—a temperature of -25! (Our usual winter temperatures are between -5 and -10.) But that was just the beginning. The first day, following orders from Heavenly Headquarters, we found a place to stay with our faithful MM members. Not only were they sweet and hungry, but also when we were hungry and frozen we always had nice food and hot tea. We shared with them the Christmas message and showed them *Countdown to Armageddon* as well as *Treasures*, which they read faithfully every day.

The next day the Enemy started to fight harder by increasing the cold to 42 degrees below zero! But this didn't stop us, as we continued our mission. All together we had seven classes with 19 attendees. Our main tactic for meeting people usually was to run a short distance

C

CRIES IN THE WILDER-

C

THE 1st CHRISTMAS :

AND BEHOLD, ON THAT NIGHT NOT LONG AGO, JOSEPH PHONED EVERY POSSIBLE HOTEL, BUT ALL WERE FULL!.....



EVENTUALLY, THEY DECIDED TO KNOCK ON PEOPLE'S DOORS.....



FINALLY, AFTER MUCH KNOCKING AND ASKING, THEY CAME UPON A HIPPIE COLONY.....



AND BABY JESUS WAS BORN THAT NIGHT, AND ALL HEAVEN REJOICED FOR THE SAVIOR WAS BORN!



from building to building, where we would warm up for a few minutes and then continue on our way.

Maybe you are wondering how we survived while walking home at 10 PM in -42 weather. We usually kept our minds busy with singing so we wouldn't think about the cold. (Our favorites were "We are not afraid to die" and "It's a hard cold world we live in and it's getting colder every day. It's a struggle to survive just to keep your brains alive, sometimes you want to run away ...") Thank the Lord and His supply and all the sweet people we met, whose warmth made up for the cold! While we were searching for a place to stay, two complete strangers invited us to stay with them if we didn't find anything else. So the Lord was always faithful and we got home safely—in an unheated train wagon!

NYET NYET NYET...NOT ANYMORE!

From Achan (VA) & Risa

Lily and I went on a road trip to a little faraway town. We caught a ride there with friends, and the trip went very well, as we witnessed in the snow. Then all of a sudden Lily felt sick—*real* sick! We knew we had to get back home that night.

We stopped, sat, and prayed desperately. The Lord showed us to try provisioning the bus, which left for our Home in a couple hours. We made it to the office of the director of the bus station, went in, and upon seeing her, I was instantly discouraged. She was huge and looked as cold as steel.

Whatever! We explained our work—sort of wearily smiled and stumbled out our words and our request. Guess what she said? "Nyet, nyet, nyet, nyet, nyet, nyet ...." Over and over again. Our hearts were calling "YES, YES, YES, YES." Then ... the miracle. She stopped and walked out.

I looked at Lily, then at the floor. Then Lily overheard her talking with some people, saying they need to help us because we're working to help people, and doing good. *Huh? I thought she didn't like us.* The people were saying, "Yes, yes! We need to help."

She came back in and said, "Yes." YES!! A little while later we were seated happily in the bus, toasty warm—the nicest, cleanest bus I've ever seen in Russia—and on our way straight home. PTL! It was a total miracle how quickly God changed her mind! He never fails us! ■





### By Ado:

The *JUST GO in '98* overseas mission program for teens (See *Grapevine* issues #38, 40, 43) organized a trip in July with eight teens from the US and Canada, along with myself, on a 30-day journey to Russia. Eliza (24), who has lived in Russia for a number of years, was our guide and escort, as well as Abner and Maria (20) for part of our trip. We had many exciting and thrilling adventures and experiences traveling more than halfway across Russia into Siberia, covering more than 8,000 miles.

We prepared ahead of time daily Word classes (taken from the CVC and recent GNs about Russia) and memory projects (from "Be a Missionary" GN). The students kept a travel journal that, among other things, included a Russian history timeline and blank map of Russia which they filled in with the names of cities we visited or places of geographical importance.

Although we had a general itinerary, the difficulties we faced of where to sleep, what to eat and where to go seemed to be ever present, which kept us praying and made our exciting trip even more adventurous. Reading over our daily log at the close of our trip, it was amazing to see all the things that happened to us. However, at the

time it was so much fun to see how the Lord led us day-by-day, and the thrill of being out on the field was truly exciting.

One of the most thrilling parts of the whole trip for me was meeting many precious young Russian teenagers. Several times we had a group of them gather around us as they struggled to speak the little English that they knew, and we,

Above Right: (L-R) Johnny, Angelo, Chris, Jason (below), Maria. We had a lot of fun on the train. Our group of teens weren't the "quiet reserved type" and since this whole trip was special for us all, we just enjoyed every "experience".

Above Left: "So this is where we were going to stay?" Angelo on the scouting team found the bungalows stripped and unuseable.

with our ever-present Russian phrasebook in hand, using every Russian word we knew. It was so much fun. The experiences from this trip could fill a book and will no doubt fill the lives of those who went on it, for years to come. I hope that by sharing with you some of the exciting adventures of our journey, you too can partake of it with us. The following accounts were written by some of the teens that came on our 30-day trip to Russia.

### By Angelo and Mari:

One of the first exciting experiences in Russia, and one that made our travelling budget somewhat smaller, was when our team of 12 people entered one of Moscow's nine busy train stations. After getting our luggage through the mobs of people passing through the station, some of us relaxed and ate what was to become our standard meal during our month-long Russia trip—bread and cheese—while two people headed off to gather some info about the trains departing for Siberia.

In Russia, the train system has prices for Russians and prices for foreigners (I bet you can guess which ones are cheaper!). By a miracle, we got train tickets at Russian prices—WOW!! As we reached for our bags we were told that our train leaves "tomorrow night at 9:30." Little did we know how that time would be indelibly imprinted in our minds for many tomorrows and months to come! A young friend of the Family who came with us to the station suggested that we leave our 20 pieces of luggage at his parents' nearby apartment. That was welcome news, although the wisdom behind this decision was a topic of discussion throughout the rest of the trip, as you'll see below.

After leaving our bags and saying "Dasvidanya!" ("Goodbye" in Russian) to our friend, we headed once again to

In Russia we were joined by Eliza, SGA, our guide and escort, Abner of Joy, and Maria, 20. Those of us on the trip were:

Ado; Angelo (of Ado and Kanah), 14, USA; Mari (of Ado and Kanah), 17, USA; Johnny (of Patty and Jac), 14, USA; Jason (of Stephen and Emily), 14, USA; Joy (of Annie and Andrew), 16, USA; Chris (of Amy), 17, USA; Suzi (of John and Marie), 15, Canada; Andre (of John and Marie), 13, Canada.

Crowding into the photo around our lunch are (L - R) Ado, Johnny, Maria (top), Jason (bottom), Chris (up close). The space on the train was somewhat confining, with open bunks, no doors and a lot of people. But it was a fun way to get to know people and witness.



the student dorms where we stayed for our first three nights in Moscow. We arrived at the dorm after 1:00 a.m. After working through the details of getting the rooms, registration, etc., we finally went to our rooms. We were shocked to find little cockroaches crawling everywhere on the walls. UGH!! But by this time, we were too tired to try and explain our problem in our limited Russian, so we pulled all the beds to the center of the room and crashed out.

The next day after leisurely exploring the local area, visiting a circus, and eating more bread and cheese, we headed to the apartment where our bags were. Arriving at the apartment in plenty of time, three of our boys headed up the elevator to retrieve the luggage. One load came down, then another; on the third and last load all did not go well as we waited and waited and kept waiting. Then someone yelled those unthinkable words which you don't want to hear when you're supposed to catch a train in about 45 minutes, "THEY'RE STUCK IN THE ELEVATOR!!!"

After some serious prayer and a little discussion of the problem, half of us took what luggage we had and met up with Eliza and Abner, who were going to travel with us. Dad and Angelo ran back to the apartment, hoping, almost expecting to see the boys coming along the path

at each corner we turned. Meanwhile at the station, the train conductors agreed to hold the train for a few minutes. However, they soon decided they couldn't wait any longer for us. And the train pulled out ... without us!

Back at the apartment: After evaluating the situation, I (Angelo) ran back to the station to tell the others to cancel the tickets. I got there just in time to see our train slowly pulling away from the platform. "It's hard to describe the feelings of disbelief, disappointment and shock," Mari said, "when something like that happens. We were just sitting on the platform in shocked silence watching the train slowly depart."

At the apartment, the maintenance man had finally come and within minutes the boys crawled out of the small space they had been confined in for almost an hour. Finally our "stuck in the elevator group" arrived and solemnly joined the rest of us on the deserted train platform. Though we had been praying for a "stop the train" miracle, we figured that the Lord had allowed this strange event to happen for a reason—and we had to find out what that reason was. We

hoped that we could at least exchange our tickets for the next train or get our money back, but the train officials said we couldn't do either. After much prayer we decided to buy new tickets for the 1:00 AM train.

We had yet another close call as the second half of our group was boarding the train; we were stopped by a lady conductor who wanted to know how we could have Russian-priced tickets. It's quite a difference in price, and a miracle that we got them, but as foreigners we were not supposed to have Russian tickets (that makes sense though it's not fair, really). For a few moments we thought "Not again ...!" The train began to move and there we were, still outside—bags and all. Just then another conductor approached and anxiously they both began yelling in Russian at us to "quick get on, just get on." Whew!! It wasn't long before we drifted off into a blissful sleep knowing that we'd finally made it onto the Trans-Siberian train.

[Ado: The "missed train experience" was a major one for us all. Eliza and Abner said that nothing like this had ever happened to them and they, like us all, were stunned.—Maybe the Lord wanted to make our trip a real "faith trip." We had begun with a certain amount of funds budgeted for our travels, but now having lost a large percentage of our traveling funds we would have to really seek the Lord as to how we spent the money and would therefore be more desperate about our decisions.

[While standing next to the train track that night, with a

dozen people and our pile of luggage, I took a little walk down the deserted platform to ask Jesus what to do—go to Siberia or stay in Moscow. The Lord spoke clearly that we had to "put the boat in motion and let the rudder (Jesus) take control." We decided that it would be a miracle if we could get Russian priced tickets again, and if not then we would stay in Moscow for now. As I explained this to the teens, I emphasized that in life seemingly bad things often happen and you have to make a choice how you'll react. We decided to pick ourselves up and do something. As you read, Jesus did the miracle and we were on the next train to Siberia. It was a good lesson for us all.]

### By Joy and Mari:

We spent four days (96 hours) on the Trans-Siberian Railway, traveling from Moscow to Irkutsk (in central Siberia) which was about 5,300 kilometers (3,200 miles). Because of a four-hour breakdown during our train ride, we spent a night at the train station along with other travelers.

When the sun came up we unsuccessfully looked for a place to stay in town, so took a very slow train (it took us two hours to get 24 miles) to a little off-the-map village called Maritui on the banks of a beautiful lake where we were told there were dorms for traveling students. Arriving at the town, we noted that our group of teens may have outnumbered the population of this little town. We soon learned that the bungalows that we were hoping to stay in had been stripped of all the usable wood,



Our dejected group sitting on the deserted train platform. We had just missed the train and we were sitting at the empty platform wondering what to do. Ado is explaining how "God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform!"



Angelo is really happy because on this particular train from St. Pete's to Moscow we were given a little boxed meal and water. We learned to appreciate the simple things in life.



Our group in front of the Bolshoy Theatre, site of many famous ballets and operas. (We attended a ballet in the Kremlin theater, inside the walls of the Kremlin.)



After washing our clothes in the freezing river, we had to have a place to dry them. The soot from the stove actually got some of the clothes dirtier than they were before.



basic structure on the outside. (None of the villagers seemed to know what happened to the buildings, although suspicious-looking planks and beams were being used as firewood behind several houses.)

We picked a spot in the lush green grass, surrounded by the beautiful scenery, to eat our lunch of bread and cheese, with the extra treat of a jar of donated pickled eggplant. Homeless once again, having been dropped off by the once-a-day train, we knew that where God guides He provides.

It wasn't long before an older lady invited us to stay in an old farmhouse where several families lived. It was quite...rustic is putting it mildly; ancient might be a better description. It had no running water or electricity, and the outhouse was 50 yards away across a bridge, through the bushes and on the edge of a cliff. But the farmhouse was a place to sleep and it wasn't moving. (Only 10 hours of our last five days had not been spent on trains.) A shower? There was the ice-cold stream running through the middle of the village, and a pipe that brought the villagers drinking water, but that would have been awkward. Some of us had a brilliant idea to go swimming in the beautiful Lake Baikal. We had expected it to be cold, but boy were we in for a big surprise. It was beyond cold. The best part though was when it was all over and we were all nice and clean.

Although the lake bathing was a challenge, hand-washing our laundry in the ice-cold stream was nothing short of an experience. There was enough time to wash out say, one sock, before you had to take your hands out of the water and let them thaw out. Some of the boys, who weren't at all used to washing their own clothes, ended up with their clothes dirtier after they washed them than before! One boy lost some of his clothes in the fast-moving stream and one of the villagers even brought us one of the boy's socks that they had found near the stream.

The next morning we were abruptly woken by someone pounding on our door. It was a drunk by the name of

Nicholas who wanted us to give him money to relieve his hangover. He came back four times before he was convinced that we weren't going to contribute to his alcoholic plight. On one of those visits, Uncle Ado took Nicholas outside and explained that we didn't have money to give him. Nicholas, undaunted, said that he would go ask the "students" for money. Uncle Ado stood in front of the door. TTL, he stopped bothering us after that.

## Witnessing experiences in Siberia

—by Ado

On the train we had a chance to pass out some posters and tracts. This led us into some fun conversations with other passengers. Since I was limited by my lack of Russian, I figured we could at least sing songs, since music is a universal language. In our train car, there were several mothers travelling with children, and whenever we'd pull out the guitar, we'd quickly have a group of children around us. Maria (who had joined us in Moscow) knew a few songs in Russian, which was a real help. We tried to explain the simple children's songs in Russian and then would sing them in English, usually with hand motions for the kids to follow. Although we weren't able to actually lead these folks in prayer to receive Jesus, we gave them the posters and tracts, showing them the prayer that they could say on their own. We had several people come back to us asking for more posters for their friends or family.

While in Siberia, next to the beautiful Lake Baikal we met a group of 12 young students between 13 and 16 years old. These students were thrilled to meet some foreigners and they really enjoyed practicing their few English words on us. The day we met, we walked to the lakeside pier where they gathered around us in a close circle, wanting to talk and fellowship. I'll always remember the sparkle in their smiles, the shine in their eyes and joy in their laughter as we talked. I wanted to pray with them but couldn't, so showed them the prayer on the poster and tracts telling

them to pray that night before bed. Thankfully, Abner came up to us at that moment and led them all in prayer to receive Jesus into their hearts. It was a special moment. Later that night some of us sat around the campfire with these teens and their teachers, singing and talking of our lives.

### By Johnny:

Since Eliza lives in Moscow, she has quite a few friends there. One of them is this really funny, big Turkish man. He was so excited to hear that a group of teenagers was coming to Russia to learn about being missionaries. Before we left Moscow he invited all of us out to a Turkish restaurant. We were so thirsty that as soon as we all sat down we began to drink the delicious cold fresh juice that they served (cherry, apple, peach, orange). Our friend was shocked to see us down several pitchers of juice within a matter of minutes. So he quickly had the waiters bring more juice, telling us to save room for the food. Then they served some yummy warm Turkish bread that really hit the spot. The appetizers were a variety of deliciously prepared vegetables that could be eaten plain or with the bread. It was quite the experience for us all. The whole time there were a couple of men singing and playing Turkish music. The food was all served in courses and by the time that the main course—lamb—was served, most of us were already full.

Later on, four belly dancers came out at different times and danced right next to our table. When one of them came close to us, our friend gave me some money to give as a tip to the dancer. He told me that I had to fold up the bill and stick it in her bra. That was kind of cool.

### By Chris:

IAdo: In order to give everyone a chance to learn about shopping and food buying, we divided into four boy/girl teams. Each team was responsible to buy the food for the meal, prepare the meal and clean up afterwards. It gave them the experience of learning to communicate, doing comparative shopping, and choosing the food we would all eat.

One of the things that I liked about Russia was the food. Food can be expensive in cities like Moscow or in restaurants. You have to compare prices a lot but eventually you know where to shop. It wasn't as hard as I thought it would be to get around to do the shopping and ask for the things we needed. We ate a lot of bread on the trip, as well as bananas, cucumbers, tomatoes, noodles, cheese and canned fish. When our train stopped, our meal prep team would step outside to find food. There was always a bunch of people selling food to the travelers, no matter what hour of the day or night it was. I was surprised to see how much ice cream Russian people eat.

### By Andre:

I think Russian people are very sweet and so much more broken than people living in the West. The people we met in Russia were also quite cheerful, considering their past. It's pretty hard to understand all that they went through.

My favorite part of the trip was the food. Although most of our meals consisted mainly of bread and cheese, the Russian food that we did eat was very tasty and I really enjoyed it.

### By Jason:

Russia is an experience I will never forget. During our first day on the train we were very hot and hungry because we had never been on a long train trip before so we were inexperienced about how to manage. But there were some older men sleeping on the bottom bunks below us and they would give Johnny and I some of their food. They treated us like grandchildren, telling us to make our beds, straighten up our clothes, wash up, eat, etc.

### By Suzy:

In Volgograd, after we got home from the orphanage where the Home had put on a puppet show with clowns and all, Chris and I had to go shopping for dinner. We went to a bunch of small kiosks in the area but didn't find what we needed. After asking a few people, someone told us where we could find a small grocery store.

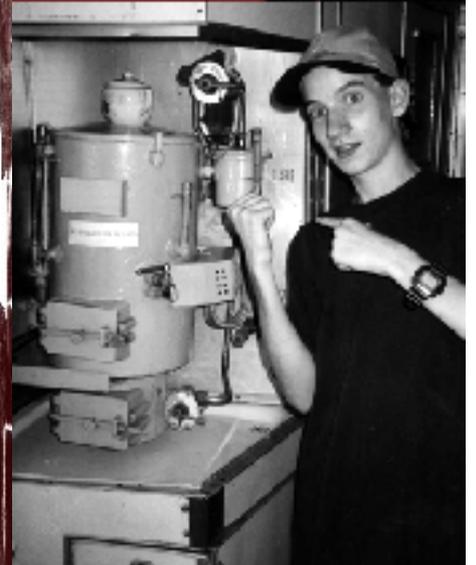
After we bought bread, this

guy came and started shouting at us and freaking out. We were wondering, "What's this guy's trip?" Then the store started getting smoky and there was the obvious smell of smoke so we decided that maybe it was time to leave. Just as we stepped outside, two small fire trucks pulled up. As we went around the corner we saw the flames leaping up from behind a door. The firemen came and started hosing everything down but they couldn't put the fire out so they took axes and began hacking away at the lock of the door. Finally they got it open and they were able to put the fire out. With all the action, we were excited about getting home to tell the others, but we forgot to get all the food we needed and had to go out again to get more!

### Witnessing Experiences in Volgograd —by Ado

It was very hot and sticky while we were in Volgograd, but thankfully we were located right near a beach on the Volga River. One afternoon while swimming, I noticed a small group of young teens following our group of teens along the beach. From a safe distance, they were watching our teens chase each other in and out of the water and when our group sat down for a rest, they sat down not far away. I took the opportunity to talk with them once they

Angelo is pointing to a Samovar. It's a boiler that keeps hot water always available on the train. We thought it was very unique and practical.



Angelo in front of Lenin's granite tomb in Red Square.

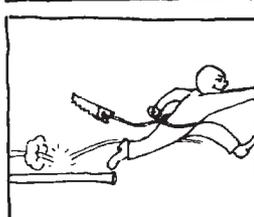
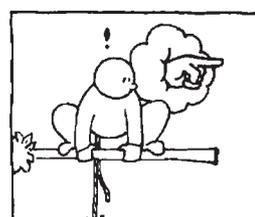
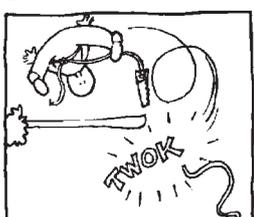
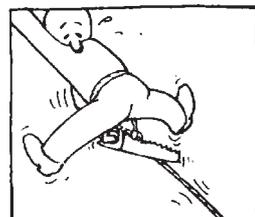
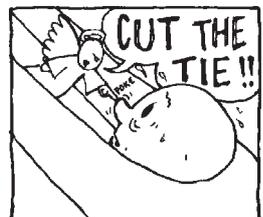
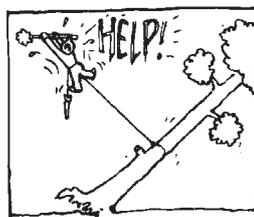
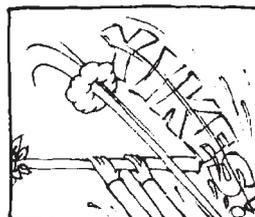
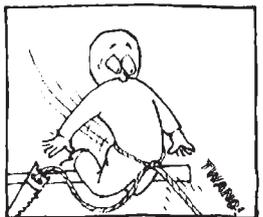
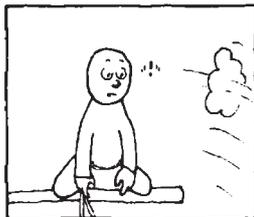
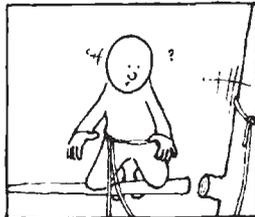
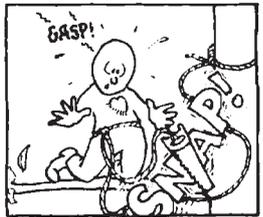
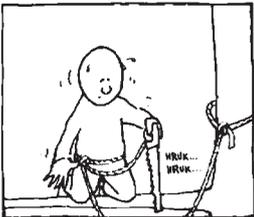
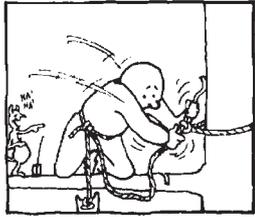
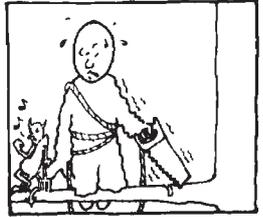
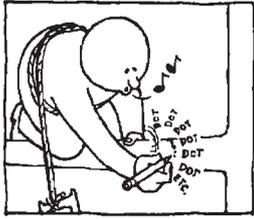
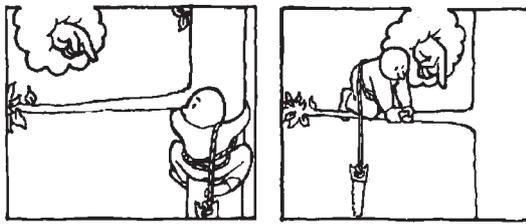


came near the water. My standard opening line in Russian was, "Do you speak English?" That was usually enough to get a conversation started, even if they couldn't speak any English. These teens didn't speak much English, but that didn't matter, they were eager to talk or listen. Of course, because I was swimming I didn't have my Russian phrasebook, but we were able to talk for at least an hour.

I was so impressed by these young Russian teens. They had such eagerness in their eyes to know more, like they wanted to understand. By the time I was finished talking, there were about 12 teens around me and then a couple of girls that spoke a little more English came up and helped to translate a few things. It was a wonderful experience, but I felt bad that I couldn't tell them much about Jesus, due to my lack of Russian. However, it wasn't long before Eliza came and led them in prayer. That witnessing experience was a beautiful ending to our short visit in Volgograd.

# OUT ON A LIMB!

WALKING BY FAITH IS OUT OF SIGHT! (2COR.5:7)



**CUT YOUR TIES**

#21737

# UP FRONT

FEATURES:  
**BUBBLING OVER** | **ENTHUSED LIKE**  
**DON'T JUST** | **NEVER BEFORE**  
**SHOOT THE DOG** | **THESE LITTLE STONES**

## HEART ON A PLATE

### ENTHUSED LIKE NEVER BEFORE

From Nikki (16), Philippines:

When the "Why Witness?" GN first came out, I wasn't that involved with personal witnessing. I read the GN quickly once, put it away, and never touched it again. Then this year, the Lord put me in a situation where I got to do a lot of personal witnessing to other young people who were super turned on about knowing the Lord. I had never been so enthused about witnessing before! Every day that I went out, the Lord would put some special person in my path for me to witness to; it was so exciting! This pushed me to re-read "Why Witness?", and I felt as if the Letter were written just for me! I even felt a spiritual "high" when I read this GN—something I'd never felt before.—Especially paragraph 64 ... when I came across that one, I did a double-take, because it was so true!

"Witnessing puts spark and fervor in your life and gives you a reason to live! It gives meaning to life. If you are out there winning souls and disciples, and teaching and training those whom the Lord lays on your heart, those whom He shows you that you are supposed to take care of—your own personal disciples—all this in itself is reason enough to keep at it, because then you know you are ushering in the Kingdom of God." (ML #3132:64)

When I was halfway through the GN, I got this idea of getting a prophecy for these friends I was ministering to. "Nah," was my first thought, "That's a crazy idea!" But sure enough, at the end of the GN, Mama mentioned doing exactly that—receiving personal messages from Jesus for the sheep. I felt as if Mama and the Lord were right there, answering my doubts and questions.

I went out witnessing the next day with a strengthened vision! Sure enough, my friends loved the personal messages from the Lord. They said it was so cool! That really inspired me to keep going to the Word for instruction and guidance.

### DON'T JUST SHOOT THE DOG

From Isaac (16, of Thai Abe and Christina), Thailand:

I've been learning to give more and do more for others and for the Home in general. To explain: I'd gotten a CVC diploma in photography, but instead of taking pictures for the Home, I spent all my time taking pictures of the dog, children, birds and flowers, etc. Now there's nothing wrong with doing that sometimes, but the main thing is that I am supposed to use my talent for the good of the Home.

Also, I have an acoustic guitar and I know how to play it, yet I never bring it to devotions for inspiration or so on. TTL, now I've started to help on Sunday fellowship and inspiration so I can use my talent. PTL!

So my main lesson is that if you are studying something or you have a talent, use it for the good of the Home. Contribute and give to the Home; that brings unity.

#### THOSE LITTLE STONES...

From Jasmine (YA), Russia:

I had newly come to a Home, and had started helping to take care of a toddler there. One day I was busily trying to get some things done and watch our toddler at the same time. He asked for some little ornamental stones to play with, and although I should have been watching him carefully when he was playing with them, I just gave him some and kept half an eye on him while I was finishing up. And in that time he swallowed two stones.

When that little kid had to go to the hospital for a checkup, I fell flat on the floor and prayed like I hadn't in ages. I used some of Dad's prayers and found there the strength that I needed to stand vigilant in strong prayer.

In my life at that time I was trying to do what the Lord wanted, which is why I had come to this Home instead of going somewhere with more young people like I had originally hoped. But I guess for quite a while I'd been pretty choosy with "little things" like some Charter rules or counsel from others, and I had formed my own opinions in some areas which weren't exactly Jesus' opinions. So Jesus said He wanted to "create in me a new heart," not a heart of stone (like hardened in my opinions), but a new one, yielded and following all that He's commanded.

This situation was hard for me, because I couldn't understand how Jesus in His mercy and love would have me learn these lessons of giving my all to Him through letting this little guy suffer! That was how I saw it, but He knew of the miracle He was going to do, not only to get out the stones in my life, but in the lives of others too, and He promised me that He wouldn't let our little toddler be hurt in any way.

I knew Jesus was asking me to get rid of some things in my own heart and life before our toddler would be healed, so I knew I had to get the victory. That sure made me desperate! And with all those prayers, also from those in my Home and all those we sent a request out to, the Lord did miracles!

The doctors did several things to try to get those stones out, but couldn't understand why they were stuck. About a week after kiddo had swallowed those stones they x-rayed him and saw one clearly, when normally they would've been already out after a day or two. So the situation was serious. To make a long story short, the Lord just zapped those stones, because they're not there anymore now and we didn't see them come out! Talk about doing the impossible!—He sure did it. I'm sure it was because of the desperate prayer that was necessary to win that battle.

#### BUBBLING OVER

From Johanna (17), Ukraine:

I've just come to the Ukraine from Switzerland, and I find it a very fulfilling and receptive field. I'm just bubbling with joy! It's been my heart's desire to go to the EE for so long, but the Lord had me go through some tests to see if I was serious about serving Him. I finally cried out to the Lord and asked Him to open a door quickly. Then I read the want ad from this Home and it was exactly what I was looking for. I wrote right away and I got an answer. Now I'm here and I've never felt so accomplished and fulfilled! I'm so thankful that the Lord gave me the desire of my heart to come here. He's been so good to me.

I was expecting life in the Homes here to be tough with hardly anything to eat, but to the contrary, the Lord has been blessing our Home with everything we could possibly need. I was expecting to lose some weight but now I think I'm gaining some instead, Ha! We've got the most precious young sheep coming over. They are very sweet and hungry for anything we can give them. I feel so undeserving that the Lord would bring me to such a place like this. The adults here are all so very loving and understanding, and I really feel the spirit of unity all striving together toward one goal. We're accomplishing so much and the Lord is blessing us immensely. I guess if you're in the Lord's will, you'll feel fulfilled wherever you are. I'm just so happy that this is the place where He wants me to be!

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FINE PRINT:  
YOU'RE NEXT!!!!

Miguel, Cherish and kids, USA.



Liefke and baby Kady, USA.



Sam, Ester and family, USA.





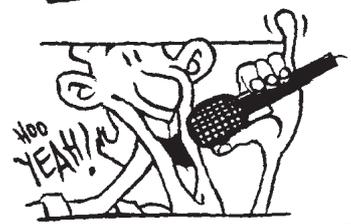
# YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMPLETE GUIDE to MODERN MUSIC

By David Korica

## Chapter 1

### Forming YOUR OWN BAND

A Teen writes: "Us teens from KALAMA.." [Ed: WHOA! HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!.. US' teens?.. It's WE' teens! The 3 Wise Men would NEVER have sung "US 3 KINGS from ORIENT are..." -- ACTUALLY, Ha Ha, the 3 Wise Men didn't REALLY sing that song --- They were LIP-SYNCING ] "O.K., WE teens from KALAMANDUBUKTU (Pop. 750, Height above sea level : 265,000 meters) want to form a BAND for our TRAVELLERS' MEETINGS. What instruments are used in a BAND? [Ed: THESE ones] ..."



1 ELECTRIC MICROPHONE



2 ELECTRIC GUITAR (Rhythm)



3 ELECTRIC GUITAR (Lead)



4 ELECTRIC GUITAR (Bass)



5 ELECTRIC DRUMS



6 ELECTRIC TUBA (Not So Common)



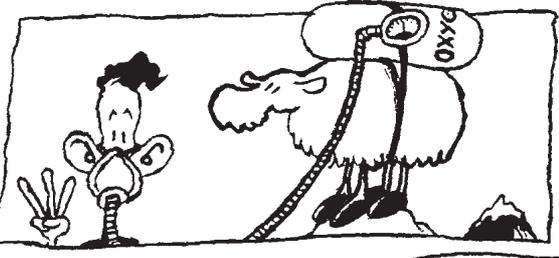
7 ELECTRIC KEYBOARD



8 ELECTRIC TOASTER (FOR SNACKS)

MODERN MUSIC continued our Teen replies:

"That's all very cool, but where we live, it's so HIGH we have our OXYGEN delivered by YAK, & we DON'T HAVE ELECTRICITY!!"



Ed: Point TAKEN! Then go ACOUSTIC [From the GREEK words "ACOU" meaning "No" and "STIC" meaning "Electricity"] BUT WHATEVER YOU DO GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE got and sock it to 'em in the SPIRIT!!!



Coming Next: Something Else.