

Sandra here.
São Paulo, 13 January 1997 -- THE WEEK AFTER

The Gary Gordon sons had a mini-reunion in São Paulo after the Juriti week. It was my privilege to participate in some of it and I'd like to share it with you all.

Donald, Marianne, Prudence, Patience, Alan and Faby ended up sitting some 5 hours in the Goiânia airport because of the rains--they finally got a VARIG flight out (just before Sylvia and Ruth arrived at 3pm for their 5:30 flight). They arrived in SP and Tio Joao and Sr. Zé (Sergio's Dad) picked them up. They all stayed with Hope and Joao. Around 7:30pm Norman and Elsie pulled in with Jo at Helena and Sergio's. A LONG DAY for all of them. Just about that time, the Alan Gordons were getting on a bus in Goiânia for an all night ride to SP. It was cold (the air conditioner couldn't be turned down we were told) and we had 5 infants who orchestrated the night for one to be squirming at all times--Davi said he sure was glad not to have been on that bus! We arrived at the Tietê bus station at 9:00am and spent the next hour getting through the 2 million (Dad estimated) people who "had come to welcome us" (HA HA) and over to the two WONDERFUL people who had come to pick us up. McKinnons in one car and the rest of us in the kombi (of a church friend). I endured until arriving home and getting the luggage up to the apartment, walked into my room and slept until 3pm when I woke up with a wicked migraine. I was so glad for Dad, who had gone and picked up Joy and Kevin at the airport (coming in from Brasilia) and for all 4 of them who kept the house quiet and darkened for me until I went back to sleep at 7pm, waking up Monday wonderfully refreshed.

I talked to Helena Monday and she said that her gang hadn't even gone to church Sunday morning, just in the evening, except for Norm, who went to morning service with Davi and Bete in Penha. That night A.Hope, DM and girls, AF and NE all went to the service with Helena and Sergio at Sao Miguel. Alan preached, NE sang a song "You are my Rock", and Faby taught them a song "Somos Uno".

They were all going to Shopping Center Norte that afternoon and then to Hope and João's for supper. Bete needed to find a dress for a wedding the next Saturday, and anyway part of DOING Sao Paulo, is going to at least one shopping mall. However, I didn't mind missing that particular outing.

I helped get Mom and Dad, Joy and Kevin off to the beach, then slept for several hours. Got up at 5pm, ate, took a shower. At 7pm I was at the corner getting onto a bus to take me to Praça da Sé, to then take a metro to Patriarca station which is just a few blocks from Hope and João's. I arrived at 8:30pm. It was DELICIOUS seeing everyone there again. We talked and laughed and shared and ate--Davi helping A.Hope put on a large spread. Helena and girls, Norm, Elsie, Jo and Hosana all arrived just before we sat down around 9pm. Sergio had worked all day (as had Jo) and his foot was hurting him (the ol' soccer injury at Juriti--Helena stated he forgets he is not as young as he used to be!) so he stayed home. Faby helped the most in the clean up, to the tune of Hope's protestations :> . What a lovable gang. I left with Helena and girls and was put up (? put down?) for the night across the street at D. Adalgisa's (Sergio's parents). I awoke the next morning to the sound of their parrot singing classics such as: Parabens pra voce, and Atirei o pau no gato-to. (Happy Birthday to you, and I Threw the Stick at the Cat-at).

Tuesday, we had decided the previous evening, Donald, Alan, and Norman wanted to spend seeing all the places in SP that they always hear about. It was a GORGEOUS day. Davi drove Donald, Marianne, the girls and Alan (Faby needed some REST!) to COMEV, late morning. Helena drove Norm, Elsie and I to the downtown (Elsie had bought postcards and wanted to SEE the places). We had a lovely time walking around Praça da República, seeing the Italian building, the Muncipal Theater, Viaduto do Chá, and especially, Praça da Sé. It was the first time Helena or I had walked into the cathedral there. It looked very European to me--just like the French ones. Helena thought it looked a lot shabbier, but then her European images are from books and TV--I think she will be disappointed when she finally goes and sees them herself. I

especially enjoyed hearing Helena's stories of having had lunch with her father here, or an anniversary dinner with Sergio there. She even took us below Praça Patriarca (no connection geographically to Patriarca metro station) where her father had first taken her to see the museum below. Much to her surprise, there is no museum there now. We took a metro back to the car park and much to Helena's relief it started and got us to COMEV. (It was acting up and finally died, in a tremendous rain-hail storm, the next evening when she was taking the three brothers to Bardella, where Sérgio works--but I get ahead of myself.)

We met up with the other car at COMEV, as it was just pulling out. I realized I was much more comfortable driving around the south side of town--I get all mixed up on the east side; and it was just the opposite for Helena. Once we got on Ave. 23 de Maio, she asked me to direct the car. Norm and Elsie and Helena, who had never been to COMEV either, had a tour of COMEV. We all went to Mimosa gift shop around the corner, then Helena, DM, girls and I drove straight to my house because it was 1pm and the girls needed lunch and Helena wasn't feeling well and needed a rest. The others drove to Titia and U.Dick's and had a tour and snack there first before coming to lunch.

At "my" house (Titia asked Norm, when he said he was going to Sandra's place, if I had moved and not told her :->) we ate in shifts. Donald tried to eat with Patience in his lap, Marianne had Prudence, and Helena and I. Donald finally gave up and Marianne very kindly watched the girls while Donald scarfed down FOOD. Helena went to lay down and Marianne and Donald fed the girls. Donald was very impressed with the view--I never tire of it, it is always changing and always beautiful. The rest of the gang arrived and ate pretty much what was left on the table. NE asked for a tour of the apartment, and were duly impressed, especially by my backdoor spy system on callers in the LR. Elsie went to lay down. We finally found a number for Alan to call to confirm his Ecuadorian flight home. The girls played with the toys my parents keep in the LR for grandkids. Around 4pm we piled into the two cars and headed for the McKinnons. It made me nervous to go into a house with 5 kids under 3 yrs old again. I asked Matty to take me home, and he did, as well as taking Helena by a bank to pay a bill she had. I hear they all went over to PACA where the Dettweilers joined them and a good time was had on the soccer field (Donald, Norm, Alan, Davi) and the playground. Norm said that back on the east side of town that night, he and his brothers finally got together themselves and went out for ice cream.

Wednesday, I took the bus at the corner at 11am and arrived at Helena and Sergio's at 1pm, just in time for eating churrasco, that Davi slaved over. Other than our visiting cousins from the North and all the Silva-Lemes (except Sergio and Jo, who were working) of the east side of town, there were: McKinnons, Dettweilers, Doles and Winstons there! What a lovely crowd. I especially liked getting in a good talk with Stan, Elsie, Faby and Prudence; as well as dancing with Ian, Ivy, Lia and Kayla. Joel and Micah preferred playing more quietly with a large car and a truck. Ana, Hosana, Bete and A.Hope were in one of the bedrooms at one point enjoying each other immensely. Titia and U.Dick were with their grandson a lot--making the most of the moment. Helena saw to everything and everyone with her usual calm, and the help of Nô, her helper, and D.Adalgisa and Sr. Zé (her in-laws).

Davi and Bete left first, to drive down to her parent's beach house and spend two days with them. We got a picture before though. BOY! Did we get pictures. Only Stan's camera could fit the whole group in, but he promised to send me a copy. Hurrah! Hope and João as well as their women house guests left. Then the McKinnon and Dettweiler fathers and kids left, shortly thereafter followed by Simone (Evan), Sonia and myself. We had a vote, the three of us, of who MOST DISLIKED driving in SP, and I lost--so I drove home in the previously mentioned rainstorm. But before leaving, and while Simone fed Evan in the car, Helena and I talked of Thursday plans. We came up with a few alternatives that she was going to pass by our treasured guests. I said goodbye to Marcia and wished them a happy safe trip--filled her in on Susan's probable moves these next two months. For all who weren't at the churrasco: Susan is expecting! And she and Dennis are very, very happy about it. They are the 6th couple of the SIL group in China to get pregnant in these past 2 months. They will certainly have common

ground to share about at mission meetings, ne? I looked into the livingroom on the way out and wished I could stay: there sat 2 Doles, 2 Winstons, Norm, Donald, and Alan all having a quiet, adult conversation finally. I was glad for them. But I had promises to keep and a body to put to bed. Simone, Sonia and I (Evan slept, having just filled his tummy) had a lovely time ourselves, talking and smiling at each other all the way across town. We seemed to drive out of the rain after passing through the center of town--it was sunny on the south side.

Heard later, that Helena drove Donald, Alan and Norm to Bardella in the hail storm. They went in two cars, Alan driving one. Helena's car died in front of Bardella (the clutch simply went through the floor). She then, took her father's car home (that Alan had driven); and Sergio drove the 3 guys back after their tour. A mechanic near Bardella is seeing to the car.

Thursday, I caught the corner bus at 7am and was at A.Hope's and Tio João's at 8:30. Donald was feeding the girls. It took A.Hope and João a moment to find the key to the gate to let me in. Turned out nobody wanted to go sightseeing so I just enjoyed the company as it fluttered in and out of Hope and João's living room. Alan and Faby had to pack. Donald and Marianne and girls started devotions, I joined in, much amused at the free-flowing form. People would walk in and out, so we would read the Bible, answer a question Faby had about baggage, discuss the Ezekiel chapter, answer the phone, put Patience down for a nap, discuss Ezekiel again, visit with Helena, Norm and Elsie a minute who were on their way to Shopping Penha, finally, just before lunch, we held hands and Donald prayed, thus ending devotions. But it was a double blessing of spending time with people I love and reading/applying the Bible--VERY worth while.

At noon, Tio João took DM, Prudence, Alan, Faby and I to a Por Kilo place--good food, paid by weight (the food, not the person). A.Hope stayed at home with Patience. We took her some food when we went back. Alan and Faby were dressed to the nines. We took pictures, of course. At one-ish Helena, Norm and Elsie came back and I rode with them, while Tio João, drove A.Hope, Alan and Faby to the airport. DM and Elsie figured they would have enough airport time later! We got them checked in and then sat together working on the "grifograma" the waiter at Juriti had made for the Gordon Family. Even with A.Hope, Helena, Faby, myself and the help of a fellow traveler sitting nearby, we couldn't make out all of the clues. (Later that evening, at home with Mom, Dad, Joy and Kevin, we finally did--but I won't spoil it for the rest of you who want to figure it out yourselves.) We saw them through passport check, then went back to Vila Rê. Tio João took me onto the metro for me to start back home. It was hard saying goodbye to Donald, Marianne, Norm and Elsie too.

I got home at 6pm. Joy and Kevin were just leaving for supper (churrascaria) with the McKinnons. Kevin had a cold, and Mom was coming down with one.

Friday, we all had a lovely breakfast, the 5 of us. JK went to lunch at the McKinnons to finally see their house. At 4pm we all left, except Mom who was sick in bed, for the airport. Dettweilers in their fusca, McKinnons in their Elba, and Gordons and Deckers in the Quantum. We stopped to pick up some pictures on the way. At the airport, trying to keep 5 kids happy and safe took the fulltime attention of at least 6 adults at all times (Donald and Marianne can truly understand.) We had a good time, though, and I got lovely chats in, with Steve, Simone and Joy and Kevin, taboo. Seeing Kevin swing the kids around was sort of like looking at the Jolly Green Giant pick up a can of green beans. Ian, especially, loves being tossed about. Finally it was time for them to go. I will miss them. I am missing them.

Saturday, I had planned to go to a wedding at the Sao Miguel church--I didn't make it. Sunday, Dad and Matty with Ian drove about to pick up the Dettweiler Srs. at the airport (I do believe, our family paid the majority of airport parking tickets these past weeks) and took both Srs. and Jrs. down to Mongagua for a week. I stayed home pattering and napping and keeping Mom supplied with plenty of Vit. C and liquids.

This morning, Monday, I finally feel myself again and even want to go by the McKinnons and play with Ian and Logan some. It is wonderful that Sonia and Steve are still about; the 3 of us here will be going down to join them later this week. I am replete with happy memories of all of you. Thank you for them. God bless you richly.

Subject: Trip home, after 2 weeks in Brazil

Thur, noon, 9-Jan-97
Dear Family,

Instead of reading my e-mail, and then writing, I will write first. G'father is back at the Presbyterian Home, while Carol, Doris, and I are happy to be back in Washington Grove. Here's a brief account of the last five days.

When I left Juriti I thought I was through with preparing for programs and discussions. I told Dr. Suhail we would like to attend (assist) Sunday School the next morning, but he thought it would be fine for me to speak at their church for 25 minutes. So Saturday night I was trying to combine our week's festivities with God's call to Abraham.

Carol continued in bed (from the previous Wed afternoon) with a variety of symptoms. The sore throat, and runny nose, ended with post-nasal drip. Dr. Suhail went to the pharmacy, bought a couple of medicines (with his own money), which seemed to do the trick. Not many patients get such service. Tuesday afternoon Carol was up and about. With Carol and Father to take care of, Doris and I didn't get out as much as we would have liked. But we did have a good time.

Visitors to Father included: Lucy, Doninha (her sister), Abadia (long time friend of family), and two that went to school with Hope and me, Anesia Gusmao (Zizi), and Anesia Leao. There were others whom I didn't know well, but who were delighted to see father. One lady compared him to a star from heaven who came down to earth. A few times we sang the Rio Verde song, with words written by Edward Reis Costa (who was at the hotel). I thought the music was written by G'mother, Zaida's book says it was written by G'mother and Java, and one lady insisted it was written by G'mother, Java, and Alan!

One afternoon I had a 2-hr interview with someone from the University, interested in writing about the history of medicine, nursing, dentistry, and public health, -- in Goias. There were four of them, with tape recorder and camera. They borrowed a few old photos, copied, and returned them. Somewhere history will record nursing classes being given in Job's house!

Here's a few highlights, and lowlights, of our trip home. It was not quite as smooth as our trip to Brazil. I told Carol we could almost write a contribution to the "Gordon Travelogue." The driver, arranged by Dr. Suhail, got lost in Brasilia, trying to find the airport. Doris always wanted to see Brasilia, but this was nighttime, and I would rather not have wasted an hour. (I wished I had bought a map of Brasilia in Goiania). There was a mix-up in computer seat assignments. The Brasilia girl thought that 7 EG, and 8 EG (similar to what we had going to Brazil) had been reserved for us. But 7 EG had been grabbed by Sao Paulo (those are in the front row, with a lot of leg room). As a result, G'father had much more trouble getting in and out, especially when the seat in front was leaned back.

I had two scissors in my backpack, and now these are not allowed

in carry-on luggage (nothing was said about the penknife in my pocket that didn't set off the buzzer). Doris was given a package of pecans, which were stored in her suitcase. The police couldn't be sure of the X-ray, so I was escorted down to the tarmac, opened the suitcase, and showed the pecans. Father didn't sleep too well on the trip, would wake up thinking he was on a ship, and wanted to get up and walk around. On the plane we sat next to Scott Freeze, a Baptist missionary formerly at Goiania, and now at Florianopolis. He knew some of the family, and had played tennis with U. Alan at MIB (the latter won). He also remembered meeting us on a plane in 94, when Doris, Carol, and I visited Brazil.

Upon our arrival at Dulles, we were greeted by a snowstorm, which had just started, and slippery driving conditions. Also, when I went to the car, it had a dead battery and wouldn't start! We did have a porter (with wheelchair) who was wonderful, took us to the head of the line at immigration, got the carts for our bags, escorted the family upstairs (which I thought would be less walking in the snow) to the "departure" location. He stood out in the snow to see when I was coming, while the family waited in the warm building. At the Home, Mary Ann Fiske happened to be near the front door, and gave Father a special warm welcome. While we unpacked his suitcase, G'father read a couple of letters from Alminha (written Dec 10, 12). He exclaimed how nice it was to have them typed, and in large print. He also exclaimed over the nice photos by Stan (one of which was in color).

We landed at 6:30 AM at Dulles, and arrived home about 10:30. Doris heated some soup, made some tea. Added to some crackers and biscoitos (given by Zaida), it was a welcome noontime meal.

G'father's comment when we reached the Home was: "It was an excellent trip. I thank all those who made it possible."

Hope you all reached home safely too. Love to all,
(U.) Gary

Date: Tue, 14 Jan 1997 09:39:12 +0800
From: Stan & Marcia Winston <stanmarc@ms8.hinet.net>
Subject: We're back!

Dearest friends and family,

Yes, after a 42-hour trip, we finally arrived home from 6 wonderful weeks in Brasil!! How great it was seeing so many of you! Just wish we'd had time to stop in the States to see the rest of you! Hopefully next time.

Well, though it does feel good to be home, I can't say I'm thrilled to be back in Taiwan yet. Too many special times we had together with my dearest parents and yes, the whole Gordon clan!

For those of you who don't know, my Grandfather Gordon will be 100 years old next week and we ALL gathered--children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren--in the city where he spent the majority of his life ministering to SO many as a physician, who did just about everything in order to help those in need there. The whole city celebrated his life with us, with 100 banners up all over the city, and many presentations, medals and plaques presented to him (by city and state officials). And my Grandfather himself was there walking, talking, smiling and sharing a real part in all the celebrations! What an incredible time!

Then off we all went to a nearby "farm-hotel" (they call it), where we had the whole place to ourselves. We took along two wonderful baby-sitters (for the 8 little ones there) and all of us thoroughly enjoyed ourselves with LOTS of talking and catching up, games, presentations, and of course sports too! (Bet you can't guess what Stan most enjoyed?) Anyway, a wonderful and blessed time!

Then, a 14-hour drive back to Sao Paulo and my parents dear "Love Nest" (as they call it), where we spent the last three days sharing a few last meals, lots of computer talk (between Stan and my Dad), and yes, the joy of packing up. We were all too soon--off to the airport!

And now, back to COLD Taiwan (we're in the 50's mostly--and NO heat!), am missing SO much all of you--especially the two proud and beloved Grandparents of my 3! Was pretty blue Monday morning, as everyone took off for school, leaving me here with the "gift" of unpacking, doing loads of laundry, cooking once again (boy, did I get spoiled!), and yes, major jet lag, which we're still all trying to get through. The children and I all slept from 1-5:30 yesterday afternoon and woke up feeling like zombies. But then by 5am this morning we were all awake--the girls raring to go. Not so true for me, since I'd been up about 7 times with sweet Gabriel between 11pm and 5am. He certainly still thinks it's morning when it's in the middle of the night!!!

Please pray for us on this? And it looks like, same as happened when we arrived in Brasil, that we're all coming down with colds. Our bodies just can't seem to handle it all?!

Last night I went to my women's Bible study group--what a blessing!!! We're now beginning a book called, "Becoming a Woman of Freedom" by Cynthia Heald. Oh, the challenge of truly "throwing off those things which so easily entangle and hinder us!" Am really looking forward to

(continued upside down on other side →)

Sun - 12 Jan 97

Subject: Re: A Dream Come True!

So was it a dream or virtual reality? Someone give us a cyber pinch to be sure!

It was so great to get a Dole/Silva sendoff at Guaralhos - you know, big family style (although I could've hung out in that Am. Express lounge for another hour or two!!). we - Elsie, Donald, Marianne, Stan, Marcie, Prudence, Patience, and I - had a long (and packed!) flight back to New York where - inbetween customs lines - we said goodbye to the Winstons and headed to LA with the first and last family companions: the Donald Gordon family. Little Patience couldn't stay too still much of the night so we took turns keeping her hands and mouth out of things.

Friday afternoon, 12:30 local time, we found ourselves dumped back in Glendale with our belongings with nothing but some misc. souvenirs and lots of memories. I was fortunate in that the post-vacation blues came and went with a bang and were done with (as far as I know). - I spent the afternoon trying to rationalize the worthwhileness of coming back to reality after two weeks of glory and decided that I only had one life to live and, unfortunately, it wasn't in Rio Verde, not even in Sao Paulo - oh, well.

That's about all the time we had to sit and muse. A church service was in our hands to plan a day and half from then and we had lots of souvenirs to deliver to parishioners. We got to work unpacking, cleaning house, writing sermons, and taking care of the initial loose ends.

It's now Sunday afternoon and January is now stretching out in front of us uncluttered by distractions. Back to life.

I will cherish all the precious moments I had with each and everyone one of you. Several thanked me for the idea of a reunion. What was so radical about that idea? I just put the pieces together: a centennial birthday, a family who hadn't been together in 23 years, and deep reverence for a patriarch who was miraculously still alive. Now it didn't take a genius to put that together, did it?

Back to life. Now, through the e-mail we can all, let's hope, get back to each others' real lives, amen?

Deep love, Norm

P.S. Brasil sure felt like HOME to both Stan and me!! Pray with us as we seek HIS will as to if we should go back there this coming summer?

Much love,
Marcie

Well, time to go finish the little unpacking left, not to mention begin going through the PILES of bills and mail! And maybe a quick nap? Am feeling wiped out! Would LOVE to hear from you!

the coming months in this study. In February, I'll be leading the group. Pray.

24 jan 97

Sandra (eu) e a Helena nos encontramos a semana passada para mandarmos agradecimentos da família Gordon, a(o):

Diretoria do Hospital Evangélico de Rio Verde
 Conselho Deliberativo do GRAM
 Primeira Igreja Presbiteriana de Rio Verde
 Honorato Plaza Hotel
 Sr. Afonso Rodrigues e D. Édila da Pousada Juriti

Segue, o conteúdo de uma das cartas, sendo que todas elas se parecem, mais ou menos, com algumas pequenas mudanças:

"A Família Gordon vem externar seus agradecimentos a

Diretoria do Hospital Evangelico de Rio Verde

pelo imenso esforço e carinho do Capelao Rev. Eudoxio Junior e de todos aqueles que contribuíram nos eventos de comemoração do Centenario do Dr. Donald Gordon, realizada nos dias 27-29 de dezembro de 1996, na cidade de Rio Verde, Goias.

Sabemos que a hospedagem e a organização do evento nao foi tarefa facio, e reconhecemos que esforços nao foram medidos nos gastos para que pudesseemos ter um evento inesquecivel.

Ficamos honrados e felizes em poder retornar a esta cidade. Destacamos que o Dr. Gordon com grande satisfação reviu toda sua obra, o que so foi possibel pela disposição desta casa em dar toda a assistencia e cuidados a ele atraves dos enfermeiros e outros, alem da hospedagem a toda sua familia.

Para nos, os netos, muitos dos quais ainda nao conheciam Rio Verde e o Hospital Evangelico, foi um privilegio e uma alegria muito grande poder estar nesta cidade que tanto significa para nossa familia e de poder presenciar com que carinho esta casa preparou todos os detalhes para este evento. Muito nos comoveram as faixas que nos abraçaram logo na entrada da cidade até o momento da despedida com o bolo naquele local tao especial. Teremos certamente lembranças que o tempo nao apagara de nossas memorias.

Que Deus abencoe ricamente este ministerio, e que este Hospital continue promovendo a cura tanto do corpo quanto da alma, seguindo os passos de nosso avo, Dr. Gordon.

Em nome da familia,

Helena Gordon Silva Leme (neta) Sandra Hope Gordon (neta)

Sao Paulo, janeiro de 1997",

Em particular para o Honorato Plaza Hotel, o paragrafo #3 ficou:

"Ficamos honrados e felizes em poder nos hospedar neste hotel. Destacamos que o Dr. Gordon teve grande satisfação em poder estar a seus cuidados e agradece toda a assistencia, tanto nas suas instalaçoes quanto na sua alimentação especial."

E para a Pousada Juriti, o paragrafo #4 foi o seguinte:

"Foi muito prazeiroso estarmos juntos como familia e sermos tao carinhosamente assistidos por todos do Hotel, em especial os garçons que prontamente nos serviram em todos os momentos, mesmo debaixo de tanta chuva. Teremos certamente lembranças que o tempo nao apagara de nossa memorias, como a passagem do ano e os marshmallows a beira da fogueira."

Falei com o Diretor Administrativo do CRAM, Sr. Natanael, e ele pediu notícias do Vovô e quando eu falei que ele estava bem, e já de volta para os Estados Unidos com muita alegria no coração pelo tempo que passou em Rio Verde, o Sr. Natanael disse, "Se ele está feliz, nós estamos felizes." Ainda mais, ele disse que estavam montando o vídeo da celebração e assim que terminasse, mandaria uma cópia para mim.

E então, mandarei para vocês.

PS: Alguem que ja recebeu o grifograma, ja decifrou? Tenho em mao ainda para dar/mandar para: Titia, Sylvia, e Marcos. Alguém mais quer? Os meus pais e a Joy e eu já deciframos. As palavras que eu, Helena, Faby e Tia Hope descobrimos durante "a primeira sessao" foram:

B--alevino (o moco ao nosso lado no aeroporto que nos ajudou com essa)

C--tomado

D--risonho

G--redondo

J--sagrado

M--carinho

Q--rompido

Helena, melhor? Davi, imagino que voce nao tera dificuldade com letra !!

Subject: Standing Room Only -- for DCG

Dear Family,

Sunday, January 26, 1997

Joy and Kevin described very well yesterday's party at the Presbyterian Home, celebrating grandfather's 100th birthday. I'd like to add a few "before and after" details.

Sylvia, Paul, and Alan, traveled all Friday night on the train from SC. They had a roomette with two bunks, and slept well. They arrived at Union Station, came by Metro to the Home, and had a good visit with Grandfather Saturday morning. Valderson and Eugenia came by bus from NY on Saturday morning. Doris and I rose at 6 AM, when I put together a slide/tape show of photos we took in Brazil. By 11 AM we had gathered many things to take to the Home. Joy had an Alexandria Singers rehearsal Saturday morning, but left early so we could all have lunch at a nearby restaurant: Joy & Kevin, Sylvia, Paul, Alan, Carol, Doris, and I.

Joy's group consisted of 11 singers, and a keyboard accompanist. They brought risers, costumes, and choreography. They were dynamic, and enunciated the words clearly. My favorite was "Why Haven't I Heard from You?" The guests included a large number of friends from the Home, a few from Fourth Presbyterian, Betty Pearce and Neil and Eleanor Munch from GPC, and Tammy Dennis and Wally and Lynda Harman from New Hope Presbyterian. We could have invited many more of our friends, but we restricted it to those that had a special interest in grandfather. Grandfather was especially happy that Rio Verde was represented.

Grandfather received many birthday cards, phone messages, faxes, e-mail, and spoken congratulations. Zaida, from Goiania, wrote:

"O senhor foi, e e', um homem agraciado por Deus, um ser diferente, um santo, que veio para o sudoeste de Goias, dando o privilegio a Rio Verde, de abriga-lo e a sua family, com destaque a nossa amada D. Helena.

"Obrigada por tudo que fizeram pela nossa terra, obrigada pelas bencaos que o Suhail e eu recebemos atraves de voces. Parabens!! 100 anos de vida abundante sao para poucas pessoas! Nos o amamos muito. Abracos fraternos de Suhail e Zaida."

(Translation: You were, and are, a man blessed by God, a being set apart, a saint, who came to southwest Goias, giving the privilege to Rio Verde of hosting you, your family, and especially our beloved Mrs. Gordon.

Thank you for all you have done for our land, thank you for the blessings that Suhail and I have received through you. Congratulations!! 100 years of abundant life is for only a few individuals. We love you very much. Special hugs from Suhail and Zaida)

After the party, the crowd dwindled. Carol drove Sylvia and her boys over to Friendship Heights, so they could take the Metro back to Union Station. Valderson, Eugenia, Doris, and I, continued talking for a while. They had a room at the Home for the night, so they were in no hurry to leave. After Carol came back, we went out to dinner at the Samba Cafe, the Brazilian restaurant in Bethesda. Carol left Lily (her car) at the Home, and came home with us.

Sunday morning we three drove to the Home, and went to Fourth Presbyterian with father, Eugenia, and Valderson. The sermon, on "Life in Christ" (Phil 1:19-26), was very appropriate, as we remembered father's life. We sat in the front row. The senior pastor, Dr. Norris, came down from the pulpit, right up to father, and spoke this tribute:

"The flowers that are in the Sanctuary are given in gratitude, by the family and the church, for the blessing of Dr. Gordon. Dr. Gordon, who has sat with us, in the front pew, is 100 years old today. [Applause]

"For those of you who do not know Dr. Gordon, or know of him, there is an article written by Anita Bard, that is placed in our Fourth Presb this month, and I would urge you to read it, because it records and chronicles the life of a missionary. For Dr. Gordon has been a missionary in South America for all his long life. He has founded a hospital there, that continues to hold forth the gospel ministry. He has served in the Presbyterian Church with distinction. He has served his Lord in all these years.

"And, it has been our great privilege, in these latter years, to have him as a part of this congregation. His prayers, his cheerfulness, the wit with which he is able, corresponds, ... but much more -- the spirit of Christ that he shows and demonstrates, and the love of the Lord that is ever in him. He is a blessing to each one of us. And so, as we, a family of faith gather this morning, as we say, sir, congratulations, and a very happy birthday, it would be our privilege to pray for you this morning:

"Let us pray. Our Father, we thank you, that in every generation you raise to yourself servants, whose voice echoes the divine Master. We thank you for Dr. Gordon. We thank you that this morning we are able to celebrate 100 years, and, many of those years in service to Your Kingdom. We pray your blessing and benediction upon him, joy, as in the company of his family and friends he celebrates. And, with that sure hope resting upon His Savior, he faces yet your tomorrow. Grant to him and to us -- joy, we beseech you. In Jesus, our Lord. Amen."

On Sat, 25 Jan 1997 Joy and Kevin wrote:

- > It was standing room only at the Presbyterian Home today as we celebrated
- > grandfather's 100th birthday. The kind staff of the home had chairs added
- > outside the third floor social room so people could at least listen if not
- > see everything. Grandfather had a seat front and center for the Emcee
- > Monologues (Uncle Gary) and the Vocal Express (one of Joy's singing groups)
- > performance. Aunt Doris coordinated the decorations with help from Carol with
- > Kevin serving as designated tall person for streaming crepe paper ribbons and
- > bows. The Brazilian flag hung prominently at the center front of the room.
- > What a big smile grandfather had as the first two faces he saw when he
- > entered the room were from Rio Verde. Eugenia and her husband had taken a bus
- > down from New York to be at the party. There were also friends from New Hope,
- > GPC, and 4th Presbyterian as well as many old friends from the home. Uncle
- > Gary welcomed everyone and introduced the friends and family: Uncle Gary and
- > Aunt Doris, Carol Sue, Sylvia, Alan, and Paul, Joy, and Kevin (nattily
- > attired in 'The T-Shirt'). Then Joy and her group performed a variety of
- > songs including Music to Do (plagiarized from Magic to Do with a Macarena.
- > choreography thrown in), Route 66, Til there was You, Under the Sea (from the

- > Little Mermaid), A Wink and a Smile (from Sleepless in Seattle), Why Haven't
- > I Heard from You (dedicated by Joy to all the folks from the Home and their
- > children), Pizza (new lyrics to the opera piece Funiculli Funiculla), and a
- > very special Happy Birthday arrangement. They closed with Grand Knowing You.
- > Uncle Gary returned then and gave a brief synopsis of the trip to Brasil and
- > the ceremonies. When grandfather put on the medal, with help from Uncle Gary,
- > he received a special ovation from the crowd. Uncle Gary then read a number
- > of notes and faxes including Titia's poem and a special message from Zaida.
- > Just before the refreshments Carol stood up and asked that everyone sing
- > Great is Thy Faithfulness and Happy Birthday. After punch, cake, and peach
- > frozen yogurt were served many people watched the slide/sound show that Uncle
- > Gary had prepared. Many people were awed at the wonderful picture albums that
- > Aunt Doris had put together from the ceremony and the reunion. They were
- > displayed with a couple of grandfather's albums and the awards he received in
- > Rio Verde. Birthday cards from everyone were displayed on bookshelves and
- > tables around the room. Thanks for all your thoughts and prayers while we
- > celebrated.
- >
- > Joy and Kevin