

NEWS FROM CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA

REJOICING IN HIS LIFE

Dear Friends,

It is our prayer that this Hanukkah-Christmas-New Year season finds you rejoicing in hope, which does not leave us ashamed, as the Word says. 2009 is the year of miracles, of seeing many promises come to birth.

Much has happened since our last letter in August. School totally absorbed my energies for most of these months as many administrative and practical changes had taken place. I am working 23 hours weekly with 4 courses, 3 of them English and one "Science" vocabulary in English. It has been a time of learning to trust the Lord as never before, make Philippians 4:4-8 a reality in my life.

One of the biggest challenges has been a young sixth-grader with serious emotional problems which have come out as aggression and harassment. For some reason, I was one of his frequent targets, which gave me a huge opportunity to put into practice *agape* love, as it was either that or throw in the towel! Dealing with that situation and the process of restoration in our marriage all together has been quite a plateful, but the Lord has convinced me of one great truth—self-control is truly a choice. He has been faithful to help me to respond in firm love. If I can do it at school, I can do it at home, right? Our staff are confronting the situation with professional help, but „Juan“ needs prayer for his whole family's salvation, most of all. It's been a hard school year for all of us, but fruit is growing.

In October I met Sharon Bowen and Arlene Cook of „Heart to Heart“ worship and inner healing ministry, who teach Theophostic prayer ministry in Florida. They gave me some wonderful materials, including *The Shack*. If you haven't read it yet, get it. Yes, it's controversial, but it'll shake loose a lot of religious chains we don't need. Meeting the ladies confirmed to me the calling to minister in inner healing. When the Lord chooses to send me out again, I sense this will be very important.

REJOICING IN DEBI'S 15TH BIRTHDAY AND OUR ANNIVERSARY



November was a very eventful month for us personally. Debi turned SWEET 15 on the 6th, and we celebrated with a party just last week on December 20th. One of my co-workers, Alexandra Guerra, a gifted singer, teacher, and pastor, organized the party, did the decorations and most of the meal (I made the crepes— Alex did the filling! Good thing my mom taught me to make blintzes!) I am including some pics here, including some professional shots which were

another gift from the Lord, but you can see lots on Facebook. Here are the links: „debi's photo study“ <http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=66031&l=7cd8f&id=522292582> , and “sweet 15” <http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=66040&l=b5706&id=522292582>. She went as a “star”. Don't be fooled, though, she's still very much the outwardly forward but inwardly-shy, delightful young lady. The dressmaker goofed in shortening the dress, actually, so we decided it would be more of a disguise—hope nobody is offended by the pics. Debi normally does not wear real short skirts. We were able to have a promise ring made for her using some of the jewelry my parents left me, which made it special, as if they'd participated, too. The inscription is in English, “True Love Waits”. Debi is very Colombian, but has her very American side, too!

December 27, 2008



Mission South America

PRaises

- Victories in the restoration process
- Debi turned 15
- Official Translator Exam taken
- Norman's US visa renewed

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Total healing for our marriage
- Financial provision and liberty
- Naturalization—Colombian Citizenship for Susana





REJOICING IN TRIBULATIONS

On December 4th I traveled by bus to Bogotá to take the Official Translators' Test. I had just been listening to a teaching on "rejoicing in tribulations" when unexpectedly I found myself in the Master's Workshop. My suitcase was stolen by the taxi driver who let me off at my friends' apartment. In it was my permission to take the test, all my clothes, my Spanish-English dictionary, my favorite Bible, etc. Amazingly, everything worked out and I was able to replace enough clothes, the dictionary, and most important, get permission to take the test anyway! It has really been a season of trusting the Lord like never before, and I that lesson will become much more important as time goes on in these difficult days the world is experiencing. "Hope maketh not ashamed" the Word says"! Test results come out Feb. 4, 2009.



REJOICING IN THE SEASON

On Nov. 21 we celebrated our 16th wedding anniversary with friends—our first-ever anniversary party. It was a time to strengthen bonds that I know are going to be very important for us, the first time we have reached out to other couples in years, a need I have felt for a very long time. For that I am grateful, indeed.

This year Debi and I had a desire to spend Christmas Eve, the big celebration in Colombia, with other people, as we have always been alone without relatives, just we 3. Though we had planned to eat at home, while Norman finished work Debi and I went to a Christmas program at another church and went to get her dad. Spontaneously we decided to stay downtown at a friends' invitation and spent the entire evening with the Isaza family, who used to be part of our cell group some 7 years ago. We had a wonderful time renewing old friendships and plan to get together on New Year's Eve, too. This last pic is of Cartagena at night, a magical place to be at Christmas! For more see "Xmas eve" <http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?pid=1755282&l=6596d&id=727683083>

As 2009 fast approaches, I want to encourage you to persevere in God's process in your life. Perhaps you are in a spiritual winter season as well as hip-deep in snow, but remember this: the river continues to flow beneath the ice. Take heart, the Lord has come!

Susana Hernandez

Susana, Norman & Debora Ruth Hernandez



Isaza and Hernandez familias in Santo Domingo Plaza, Christmas Eve night.



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