



**Anne Heyman – Village Visit
April 2010**

Family Time: At lunch today one of the volunteers told me that his family, Family 1, would like to extend a special invitation to me to go to family time. I groaned – inwardly and outwardly – yet more meetings that would have to be postponed and I really wanted to get some work done tonight which I have had NO opportunity to do since I am here – so I told him I would let him know. Over dinner I realized that I would have no other night free while in Rwanda, and I felt bad. After dinner I called him and told him I would come. This was about ½ an hour before family time started. I can't believe I almost missed out on this evening.

I arrived at the house and we all introduced ourselves and I asked the kids tell us something about themselves. The kids then said they had prepared something for me – a skit, and about 8 of them, all pretty decent English speakers, got up to perform. The skit began with someone clearly giving a lecture about Rwanda, and what had happened here. After the lecture, one of the “audience” went up to the speaker and told them that he wanted to help. The speaker said “what do you want to get out of it” and the person offering help said “nothing – I want to give to the children who have suffered”. The next scene is in Israel where there is a discussion about a youth village – they basically have the story right, and it is clear at this point that the story is about Agahozo-Shalom and its founding. The person in Israel suggests to “me” that I go to America to find someone who is Rwandan and who knows about Rwanda who can help me in my quest to build a youth village there. Next scene – I am talking to that someone – Sifa, although no one has names in this skit and they are all boys – but this Sifa is a drunk who says he wants nothing to do with Rwanda, he hates Rwanda, drink is the only family he has left.....pretty powerful stuff...but done with the finesse of the finest of comedians. They are such great actors....I was on the floor and I only wished Sifa could have been with me – just hysterical. The show continues and the now reformed drunk goes with “me” to Rwanda where they talk to people about the village – people who can't believe anyone would do this (I so wish we had known what was coming and had prepared to film it...it was priceless!!!!) and then we go to opening day where “Nir” made a speech, JP made a speech, one of the “old kids” made a speech, and then I made a speech. I – the person playing me – got up and started sobbing. Through sobs he said how happy he was to be here, and how he wanted the kids to take the opportunities given to them, see far, etc. I was on the floor. I could not stop laughing. They have me down perfectly! The person playing JP then showed the kids to their new homes and introduced them to their house mother, counselor and volunteer. The kids couldn't get over how beautiful the house was and one broke down sobbing in tears of happiness. The End. Tonight was simply a gift. It doesn't get any better than this.