

HOSPITALITY - UP WITH PEOPLE

by Beth Voinovich

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. (1 Peter 4:8-9)

In 1983 I traveled with an international organization known as Up With People. As a group we put on a show in each city we traveled to, promoting peace and working together to bring the world a brighter future. We participated in community activities in those cities and stayed with a host family in every city. We traveled to 26 states, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. It was an experience I will remember forever.

My fellow cast members came to be a family for me. The host families that I stayed with were a source of comfort and delight. I stayed with 96 families throughout the year. I knew a little about being a host family because growing up we were a host family for several different casts traveling through both Fort Smith, Arkansas and Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

As I began my journey, our first month was with one family during our staging in Tucson, Arizona. This family had never done anything like this before. They opened their home to not one or two of us but three of us. They had lived in Ar-

izona all their life and were a hard working family with humble means. To let us in and love us and teach us about their life was such a joy for me. I had never been away from home for any long period of time. The caring and the hospitality they showed us was immense. It was like this throughout the year. Each family was different. They all welcomed us into their homes with “Open Minds, Open Hearts, and Open Arms.” I learned so much that year about love and family, about giving of yourself without expecting anything in return. We all learned what it means to give of yourself to show hospitality to everyone and do it with a good heart!

**DEAR HEAVENLY FATHER,
WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE HOSPITALITY YOU HAVE SHOWN US.
THE EXAMPLE YOUR SON HAS SET US HIGH. HELP US TO SHOW HOSPITALITY TO ANYONE WE MEET
AND LET US FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE AND LOVE EVERYONE. IN JESUS AS NAME WE PRAY, AMEN**