

From ^OR ^OF Point ^OF View

the Ladies of Mission Vanuatu

Shawnda's Journal
September 2007

Saturday, September 8th - Well, we've been back from the States for almost a month now and I'm finally getting around to starting my journal. Titus has had a hard time adjusting back to Vanuatu. I think having as many as 8 adults sometimes surrounding him and giving him full attention in the States has "spoiled" him. Eric and I try to be entertaining, but we also have stuff that has to be done. He wants our constant attention (because that's what he's been used to) and we can't always give it to him. Also, we moved him into his own room when we got back. We figured that he would be adjusting anyway, so he might as well adjust to his own room at the same time. It was a really tough road of crying (Titus did the crying, although I must admit that there were a few times I felt like crying myself!) but...he is finally used to sleeping in his own room. He naps well during the day and sleeps well at night (waking only once for a bottle). So, we are happy with that. We knew it would be difficult, but it was worth it. He had to learn to sleep in his own room.

Another change since we've been back is that Titus is no longer interested in baby food. He has been refusing baby food almost since the day we got back. So...I thought he was regressing. But Cindy said that Kaela did the same thing when we moved here and it was b/c she was wanting table food. So...we have been giving him table food (in addition to formula). He definitely is interested in whatever we're eating and I usually let him try whatever it is (as long as he won't choke on it).

It has been nice to be back with the Christian ladies here. We had a large fellowship at Cindy's house the day after we got back. It was so nice to see everyone. We also had a fellowship in Etas a couple of weeks ago and had a nice group.

Eric, Titus and I have worshipped with the church in Vila twice and the Christians in Etas once since our return. We plan to go to Epau village this next weekend to spend the night and worship with them on Sunday. It will be Titus' first overnight stay in a village...so we'll see how he does. :o) The church in Vila had a fellowship meal last week. There was good turnout, lots of food and some great visiting.

Paul Phillips, a young Christian man from New Zealand, arrived to do a rotation at the hospital here. He is in his last year of medical school and chose to do a rotation here. He stayed with Mike the first week he was here and then moved to the Baker's house when they left for the States. He eats dinner with Eric, Titus and I most nights and we are glad for the company. He is a nice guy. He's also been helping Mike and Eric with the building project when he can.

Mike and Eric started the building project again. Like I said, Paul has helped when he can (mostly on Saturdays with mowing, pulling weeds, and has dug a few holes. Mike has been busy getting the yard cleared out and helping Eric with the septic system. Eric has been busy on the toilets (the separate building for the toilets/sink/shower. Patrick (a local Christian who we haven't seen for a while) has been helping with the toilets as well. They have averaged about 3 days a week...which is a nice amount of time to devote to the project (much better than the 6 days a week in the beginning). Both Mike and Eric are able to get other things done as well as work on the building.

The Bakers left for the US and we sure do miss them. We only got about two weeks with them after we got back until they left. But, we knew it would be that way. Cindy had to get back with plenty of time to spare before

the due date. :o) We weren't there when Kaela was born and we won't be there for this one either. The Bakers were also gone when Titus was born and will not be there when our new baby is born either! It's really strange to think that we miss that special time in each other's lives since we are so much a part of each other's lives normally. A little disappointing, but necessary nonetheless.

It is finally sinking in that I am really pregnant! Thankfully I have had a really smooth pregnancy thus far. No morning sickness to speak of and I still feel like I have energy to play with Titus. That was one thing I was worried about. I didn't want this pregnancy to take over so much that I couldn't do the things that I wanted to do with Titus. I am still taking it easy, but I feel great! I do have to eat a lot more often than normal, but if that's all I have to complain about, I have it really easy!

Thursday, September 13th - Titus says his first word. "Uh oh" - repeats it over and over...now we just have to teach him how to use it appropriately. :o) I am looking forward to hearing what his voice will sound like. Right now it sounds a little raspy when he says a word, but I think that's from lack of practice. When he wants to jabber, he's not raspy at all...he can do that quite loudly and clearly! :o) He's growing sooo fast!

Tuesday, September 18th - Ultrasound...the coolest thing ever. I've seen ultrasounds before (even Titus') but it wasn't a long look and the tech didn't really explain anything. But today as soon as we saw the baby on the monitor...he/she started jumping around (like they had the hiccups or something). We saw him/her move their arm and "scratch" their face, and we even saw the heart beating. It was awesome. It's so real now. Our first ultrasound just looked like a little spot...but this one was amazing. The doctor took his time and let us "ooh" and "ahh" over the baby. It was really special. I like the doctor a lot. He's really nice and was easy to talk to and knew what he was doing. He wants to see me every month from here on out and I go tomorrow morning for blood work. :o) This is neat.

Wednesday, September 19th - Eric was feeling awful last night and woke up this morning feeling even worse. He has a cut on his leg that got infected. He's running fever and feeling achy all over. I feel bad for him. He slept all morning until I had to leave for my appointment to get my blood work done. He stayed with Titus so I could do that. When I got home he immediately went back to bed. Poor guy. It's tough being sick and having lots on your plate still.

Titus is doing great. He has been sleeping so well lately. I don't know if it's because he's hot or just doesn't want to cuddle anymore, but he won't really rock to sleep anymore. I have gotten to where I just put him down, tell him "night night, it's time to go to sleep," and walk out of the room. He usually cries, but never more than 5 minutes and usually less than a minute. He sleeps all night..waking between 5 and 6 in the morning and naps well during the day. It's amazing...I never thought we'd get to this point after such a rough couple of weeks when we got back from the US.

Wednesday, September 26th - Eric, Titus and I went to Etas this evening. Eric did a study on parents and raising children. The Bakers usually go out to Etas every Wednesday, but since they are gone, Mike and Eric are switching off weeks. It was really nice to be with the Christians there. Anytime I am feeling discouraged, those Christians in Etas make me smile! They are such a great group of people. They really are trying to live a life devoted to God and following His word. They are interested in studying the Bible and want to know more. They are also reaching out to their family and friends and want them to know the truth. It's great. Titus enjoyed being in the village. He loves playing in the dirt. He literally sat still for over 30 minutes just picking up dirt, letting it sift through his fingers and then picking up another handful. It was cute. He was filthy by the time we headed home, but he kept himself busy and wasn't distracting during the study, so I'm not complaining. He washes. :o) He also really enjoyed the chickens that were walking around everywhere out there. Eric and I started making chicken noises (while we were just sitting there waiting for everyone to get there) and Titus started repeating us. He isn't great at making the noise, but he tries and it's hilarious!

Thursday, September 27th - This morning a Christian man called and asked us if we could counsel he and his wife this afternoon. So, we went and talked with them and prayed with them. It all ended up being a misun-

derstanding, but we were proud of the way that the two of them handled it. They are both Christians and genuinely have the desire to do what is right. It was a good visit and we were glad that we could help in a small way. When we got home, Alice and Dalton were on the porch. Tom (Alice's husband) had been at our house all morning doing some yard work (we needed it done and he needed the work). Alice (they are Christians in Etas by the way) had been to the hospital to get something for baby Dalton and they were just going to hang out here until Tom finished. So, Titus and I hung out on the porch with them for a couple of hours. Dalton and Titus played pretty well together. Titus is a lot bigger (but over two months younger), so he was a little bit of a bully. He didn't mean to be, but when he "pushes" Dalton, Dalton's so light that he just topples over. Things like that...Titus isn't used to sharing his toys, so it was good practice for him. It was a nice time.

Friday, September 28th - We had team dinner tonight. Fajitas! With Cindy gone, it's tough to do it all on my own, but thankfully Eric takes Titus and plays with him and the guys grill the meat, so I just have to plan well to get everything done in time. It's tiring, but man they were good, so it was worth it! After we ate we played the card game "golf." It's lot of fun. Titus did pretty well entertaining himself...it helps that he enjoys his Baby Einstein DVD now....that occupied him for 30 minutes. But I know he'll be glad when Kaela is back and can play with him while the adults are otherwise occupied. :o)

We spent some time talking about the group from Columbine that is coming in late October. We planned several things we want to do while they are here and got the scheduling done. So, that was nice. We're looking forward to them being here.

Sunday, September 30th - We had a nice group there today and a really good time of worship. Everyone stood around and talked for at least 30 minutes afterwards...it was really nice. There has been a lady and several kids (a few teenage girls too) visiting for the last three weeks. She seems interested in studying and I am hopeful that she will agree to study soon. I just don't want to push her into it if she's not ready yet. Her name is Carol. There was also a man there who is in Vila for a year. He's from the Banks islands (a group of islands within Vanuatu). Someone who lives close to him had heard the radio program and called and asked for some information. Somehow this man who came today got ahold of some tracts that Mike sent to him and found us when he got to town. We were all glad to meet him and Patrick (from Tanna) talked to him for quite a while and ended up setting up a study for him with Mike. So, that's really neat.

Titus was really well behaved for the first 30 - 45 minutes, but then he got distracted by some other kids. They weren't even doing anything, he just thought they were funny and started laughing at them. Needless to say I had to get up and leave...but even in the back he could see them. So, I ended up having to go outside for a few minutes for him to calm down and then back into the building so I could hear the sermon. I know training Titus in worship is so important...but it sure is tough to be consistent and firm. I know in the end it will be worth it though. :o)