

# From <sup>O</sup><sub>R</sub> Point <sup>O</sup><sub>F</sub> View

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## the Ladies of Mission Vanuatu

Shawnda's Journal  
November 2007

**Thursday, November 1st** - Having the group from Columbine here has been such a blessing. George and Mike Olson left for Santo this morning to visit some Christians there (George had been to Santo in 1997 on another mission trip and was actually involved in Steve and Primrose's conversion). They will come back on Saturday. Eric and Mike Ewing should have gone to Emau island this afternoon, but it didn't work out. You do have to learn to be flexible here, but it was frustrating since this was the only opportunity Mike would have to go. Thankfully he was understanding. Mike and Eric had an opportunity to visit quite a bit in regard to the work and different things. Brenda and I had some really good visits today. It's so nice to have another Christian woman to share things with (especially with Cindy gone). She has been a really big encouragement to me.

This evening we went and got Leila to have a planning session for Bible class. We had a nice little dinner together (just the ladies...the guys went to town to eat). Then we went over some things in regard to Bible class. Leila said she thought it would be good if we "switched off" months. So, I am teaching in November, she's in December, I'm in January, she's in February, etc. Because of the planning, I ended up telling her that we are going back to the States in February to have the baby. She was so extremely excited about me being pregnant and about Titus having a little sister or brother! It was neat to share that with her. I told her that when we go to the States Cindy can take my place and teach every other month. She said, "If she is too busy with the two girls and can't do it, it's no problem, I'll just teach all of those months.

She is a really great young lady...and will be a great Bible class teacher for the kids. I'm so excited about her teaching. Hopefully her teaching will inspire some of the other women to get involved.

**Friday, November 2nd** - This morning Brenda, Titus and I headed into town to do a little Christmas shopping (I am sending some things back with them so I don't have to mail them). It was tiring, but good to have it done. When we got home, Fiona was waiting on us and we went out to visit Selena (in Mele Maat). She hadn't been to worship in a few months. She's been sick. I think she really appreciated us visiting her and wish we would have known sooner that she was sick. We prayed with her and encouraged her to continue studying and praying on her own until her body was well enough to worship with us again. She said she thinks she'll be better soon.

**Saturday, November 3rd** - What a great day! We had ladies fellowship at Fiona's...Brenda presented a great lesson. She really encouraged the ladies to study the word for themselves and allow God to change their lives through His word. It was a great lesson and the ladies all seemed to really respond to it. We had a nice little lunch and then headed over to our house to bake some cookies. Brenda suggested several months ago when we were in the States that she'd like to teach the women to make something "American." So, she brought a chocolate chip cookie recipe and we taught them how to make cookies. Everyone had a great time and the cookies turned out really good. It was nice because we would all just sit around and visit while each batch was baking. In fact, during one of those visiting breaks, Fiona said, "Shawnda, your belly is getting too big...it's like you have a baby in there or something." I said, "I do," to which she replied, "Don't lie." It took a few minutes, but when I finally convinced them that I really was pregnant, they were all ecstatic. Everyone had questions and we talked about it till the cookie timer went off. It was neat to share that with all of the ladies. :o)

We all went out to eat at Erakor island and boy was it yummy! We enjoyed the atmosphere and the good food. And it's always nice to have a break from cooking!

**Sunday, November 4th** - What a wonderful Lord's day. The Etas Christians (and I mean all of the Etas Christians) were in Vila today to worship with us. It was so encouraging to see the place packed with Chris-

tians and visitors alike. The singing was so uplifting, the preaching was great, and everyone seemed to be encouraged and renewed. It was great.

After worship we had a fellowship meal. With so many people, we had to keep a steady line at the water spout to clean plates as others finished with them so that everyone could eat. It was good food and we had great fellowship. Mike Ewing also had a short lesson after the meal which encouraged the Christians there to love one another and be servant-minded.

By the time we got home, I desperately needed a nap, and did get to rest a little. Man, this being pregnant in the hot sun and "wrestling with a one year old" will wear a lady out! :o)

**Monday, November 5th** - Today we went around the island so that George, Mike and Brenda could see the sights and meet the Christians in some of the villages. We stopped in Paunangisu for them to meet Harry. He wasn't expecting us, but was glad to meet them and be encouraged. Then we made our way to Epau. They had a big lunch ready for us with many different kinds of local food for the visiting Christians from the US (and Paul from NZ) to try. We enjoyed some good fellowship with them. Mike Ewing also shared a short lesson about the wide and narrow paths. It was a good time. A few hours after we got there, we headed out to complete our round island trip. We stopped at Eton beach and enjoyed the sand and waves. George, Paul and Eric headed out to do a little snorkeling (well, Eric mainly played with Titus in the water) while the rest of us "combed the beach." Titus sure enjoyed getting sand on every conceivable inch of his body! It was a sight. :o) We didn't stop in Eton because we were scheduled to be with them the following night. We got home, rested a few minutes, and then started on dinner. Since we were having fajitas, Mike had to run home and make some salsa and I got started on the tortillas. Mike Ewing even made us some really, really good peach cobbler! It was all delicious, but let me tell you, I was ready to hit the bed when the time came that evening!

After dinner we had a little devo. We sang for about an hour...it was beautiful, uplifting, and a good time of praise to our Lord.

**Tuesday, November 6th** - Everyone else headed out at lunch time to hand out fliers in town (for the Bislama Bible correspondence course), but Titus and I stayed home. I was really feeling tired from all of the activity and I knew it wouldn't be good to get out in the midday hot sun. Titus also needed a break from the "going, going, going." We were scheduled to go to Patrick and Ruth's, but since Patrick is in some kind of meeting all week long, he couldn't "host" us. We all loaded in the car at about 5:30 and headed out to Eddie's in Eton where we were scheduled to eat dinner. But, we got there and they weren't expecting us. We found out later that it was because Eddie thought we were coming on Thursday, not Tuesday. So, he was at a school board meeting and the ladies hadn't prepared any food for dinner. They felt terrible, but we assured them it was no problem. So, we headed back to Vila (Eton is about an hour drive away) and just had a "snack" dinner. Thankfully we had fajita leftovers and pb&j sandwiches and chips. It actually turned out to be a good dinner. :o) We enjoyed it.

**Wednesday, November 7th** - We had a great time at the waterfalls today. We ate lunch at the "lookout" point and then spent the remainder of the afternoon enjoying the falls and gorgeous scenery along the way. Titus really enjoyed it too...but was completely worn out on the way down...he fell asleep in Eric's arms. This evening we went to Etas. It was nice to have some time with the Etas Christians before the group from the US headed back. The Etas Christians prepared some gifts for Mike, George and Brenda which they presented to them after the lesson. Mike Ewing presented a lesson that really touched the hearts of the Etas Christians. Tom stood up afterwards and thanked Mike and George for the wonderful lessons they had shared with the Christians there and assured them that they would share these truths with the Christians who weren't able to make it. We ate and then talked for quite a while. What a great group of Christians! :o)

**Thursday, November 8th** - The Columbine group left this morning. We had such a great time with them! Ann came over this afternoon (she had taken Jonathan to the doctor for his shots/weighting and stopped by to visit on her way home). I always enjoy visiting with her. Titus spent some time in his "pool" this afternoon too. It's getting hot!

**Saturday, November 10th** - Well, last night Paul took us out for dinner at the Saloon (good pizza and steak). Tonight we took him out to eat at The Waterfront (great ribs). We enjoyed our last two meals together. Paul is a great Christian young man and we really enjoyed him being with us for the last couple of

months. What a treat. He is headed back tomorrow, and we'll miss him. Titus loved Paul being here and will miss him being around all the time for sure.

**Tuesday, November 13th** - This morning we had another Bible study with Carol. We studied baptism/salvation in Christ. She is "considering the cost" this week. We told her we were ready to baptize her anytime, but told her that she needed to really think about it before making this life changing decision. She is a special lady...and we pray that she obeys the gospel soon.

I went to the doctor today. I really do like him alot. I'm comfortable with him and he seems to know what's up. Anyway, I asked him lots of questions (probably questions I'd be asking Cindy if she were here, but since she's not, I just ask him). I only gained a kilo this last month, so that was encouraging. I felt for sure I'd gained a couple of kilos with all the good eating I've been doing lately! :o) We also did an ultrasound and we could see the fingers, legs, heart beating, stomach, bladder, etc. It was really neat. We also got a "face shot" of him/her. We told him before we started that we didn't want to know if it was a boy or girl and he said, "Fair enough." :o) So, he didn't say anything about sex...and I sure couldn't tell! I have a hard time telling what anything is until someone points it out for me! He said everything looked perfectly normal, that I'm just the size I should be and that everything looks great. So, that's good.

**Thursday, November 15th** - Ben and Tara emailed to say that baby Kate was born today! :o) I called her at the hospital and talked for a while. Both she and Ben are on cloud 9 right now. They are so excited and we are excited for them. Can't wait to meet that precious girl and hold her in my arms.

**Wednesday, November 21st** - We are going to pick Carol up today for her to be baptized. Mike and I went and studied with her yesterday and she said she was ready, but she hadn't talked to her husband yet. She was going to wait until after he'd studied and was baptized before she did it. When we emphasized that it was an individual decision and not just "to follow your husband." She said, well, then let's do it now. That was great with us. Except, she realized that she hadn't told her brother (Carol is the storekeeper for his store) that she needed to leave, so she asked if we could come tomorrow morning instead. She also said she'd like to at least tell her husband that she was going to do it too. So, we made the plan to come back today at 11:00. She said she'd have everything set up so she could leave for a while to be baptized. She's a great lady. She's a thinker...not just a listener...you know what I mean? One thing she said (that made me realize that she for sure was ready to be baptized) is that she lays awake at night and thinks, "What if I died right now, or had an accident? I would go to hell. I don't want to go to hell." She said everytime she gets on a bus or walks by the road, she is alert b/c she doesn't want to die in an accident before she has a chance to obey the gospel. Wow...most people wouldn't admit that or even think it. Anyway, so we are headed there in about an hour to pick her up and baptize her. Claude is going to baptize her.

We just got back from Carol's baptism. She is so neat. You could see such a peace in her face after she obeyed the gospel. I am so glad to know her and that she was willing to study and obey what she learned. I'm looking forward to how God is going to use her to further His kingdom here in Vanuatu. :o)

**Thursday, November 22nd** - I don't know if I said this earlier, but our washing machine is broken. It won't spin. After being at the repair shop for a couple of weeks, they called and said they couldn't fix it. So, Eric is looking online for the part we need and hopefully the Bakers can bring it back. So, in the meantime we have been washing clothes at Mike's. Thankfully he doesn't seem to mind and he has even done several loads for us (and brought them back to us too). It's so nice to have his washing machine...otherwise we'd be back to hand washing (NOT FUN) or Laundromat (not convenient here since there's only one of them)! Anyway, sometimes Titus and I will go over and hang out with Mike while one load washes and then put another in and head back home while it washes. That's what we did this morning. It's good for Titus to get out of the house, and I try to take him somewhere once a day...he enjoys being at Mike's. His new thing is to climb up onto Mike's coffee table. Oh, this boy keeps me on my toes! :o)