



Brandell e-Scrapbook

A monthly report on our life in Vanuatu



From the home-front...

It has been an unusual two months around the Brandell household as Eric was out of town for a month. Titus and I did well - but missed him very much. Titus has grown so much over the last two months. He's already 4 months old! Where did the time go? He jabbars non-stop, sleeps well at night (6-8 hours), rolls over constantly, eats well, smiles, laughs and socializes with everyone. He's very enamored with Kaela - she is quite entertaining with the songs and "shows" she does for us. We even had Kaela and Cindy stay with us for a week and a half while Eric was gone (Aaron was in Ambae). That was a fun time, but I think Titus was glad when Aaron came back because he was missing male companionship.

We started our ladies fellowships again in February. It's been great to be able to spend time with the ladies again. There are some women who have gotten involved and even hosted a fellowship who were not involved before.

Please continue to pray for us as we teach and train here in Vanuatu.

We love you all.
- Shawnda



In this month's issue...

I was in Africa when February ended and March began, so this month's scrapbook will encompass both of those months. Lots of things have happened, and we hope you enjoy getting caught up on our lives...

- 🌀 Fellowship at our house
- 🌀 Arusha, Tanzania
- 🌀 What's going on with Titus
- 🌀 Furlough Schedule
- 🌀 Trip to Emao Island
- 🌀 "State of Emergency" declared

FELLOWSHIP

In honor of the Bakers return from the States, we hosted a congregational fellowship at our house on Thursday night. Several Christians from Etas Village were also able to join us for singing, prayer and snacks. We even had some visitors join us for the occasion, and we have learned how effective fellowships can be at attracting new prospects. Aaron shared a little bit about their trip, and everyone especially seemed to enjoy getting reacquainted with Kaela. Nothing brings more joy than Christian fellowship!





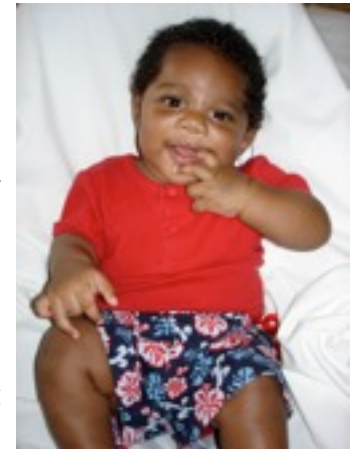
UPDATE ON TITUS



I know that some of you (especially the grandparents) have been going through some Titus-withdrawals since his website has not been updated for almost a month. Well, rest assured that it has now been updated and you can get caught up on all that's happened over the past few weeks by visiting www.missionvanuatu.com/brandell/titus.

The keyword for Titus these days is: "growing." At his checkup last week he weighed in at just under 17lbs... that's in the 120th percentile here in Vanuatu (only the 75th in the States)! He is rolling like a log, and jabbbers happily most of the time (when his gums aren't bothering him...he seems to have started teething).

We are very excited to announce that we have received our court date for the finalization of Titus' adoption: April 18! Lord willing, he will officially be "ours" as a result of that meeting. Next we will get his name changed on his birth certificate and apply for his Passport. Once those tasks are completed, we will be able to pursue acquiring a non-immigrant visa, which is required for him to travel to the United States with us (according to US law, he will not be a US citizen until he has been in our care for two years). We hope to be able to do this in Auckland, New Zealand on our way back to the States in May. Please be praying that all this will go smoothly and according to schedule. Titus is really looking forward to meeting everyone in May/June!



MISSION TRIP TO EMAO ISLAND

I took my regular monthly trip to Marou Village February 9-11. You will recall that Marou is on the island of Emao, just northeast of Efate (the island we live on). After the 2 hour truck ride and 45 minute boat jaunt, George (a native of Marou who works in Eton Village) and I arrived safely in the village. As usual, I received a warm welcome from the locals.

We had good attendance for each of the nightly meetings on Friday and Saturday, and the normal group on Sunday morning. My lessons, based on suggestions Mike made after his last trip to Marou, were focused on issues the local Christians are currently dealing with there: "What is the Lord's Supper?" (we especially focused on what it is *not*), "What Should We Do On Sunday Morning?" (a practical look at worship), and "How Does the Holy Spirit Work Today?" Each of the two evening lessons were followed by a question and answer session. As usual, there were several well-thought out questions discussed.



I took 9 more song books and gave them to the congregation. Susan immediately wrote the church's name in each of them [photo], in an effort to keep them from "growing legs and walking away." It rained almost the entire time I was there, which had us wondering if we were going to be able to return to Vila as scheduled or not. When the time came, we had no problem at all. In fact, the seas were the best they have ever been...I didn't get wet at all for the first time.

This trip was also positive from another aspect: I was able to spend a sig-



nificant amount of time with the men of the village. When the rain slowed for the first time on Saturday afternoon, about 5:00, George and I ventured out for a walk. There were several men gathered in the nakamal, so we went over and joined them (these men are similar to what we might call "village elders"). They were cooking some traditional food, and fixed me a plate right away. It was far more than one person should eat, but I did my best to down it all. It was nice to be invited into their meeting. Then on Sunday, George and I took our food to eat lunch with those men once again. I am grateful that these men have started to consider me a part of them, and hope that it will lead to more fruitful relationships, especially opportunities to share God's word with them.

The church in Marou continues to grow stronger. They have a lot yet to learn, but they are willing to study and make application, which is a key characteristic. I look forward to my next trip to spend time with these brethren in April. Since both Mike and I were out of town in March, I asked Eddie Karris (from Eton Village) to travel to Marou to encourage the Christians that month. He went the last weekend of the month and I look forward to hearing his report.

TEACHING IN ARUSHA, TANZANIA

The bulk of my time over the past two months has been spent preparing for and teaching in the Andrew Connally School of Preaching in Arusha, Tanzania (East Africa). The two year school is an extension of the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver, and the students graduate with a Bachelors Degree upon their successful completion of the curriculum. The class I taught (pictured) consisted of 16 men ranging in age from 25 to 60.



I was enlisted to teach two "short courses" (30 hours of lecture in one week): 1, 2, & 3 John, and 1, 2 Timothy & Titus. I thoroughly enjoyed teaching, getting to know the students, and visiting with the missionaries there. It was also a pleasure to get to spend so much time with my good friend, Wayne Burger.



I was also honored to have opportunities to teach and preach numerous times at various congregations in the area, ranging in attendance from 6 to 180. On my way back home, I had a three day layover in Denver and was able to preach at Columbine that Sunday morning.

On the Saturday before we left, 16 men graduated from the School. Please be praying for these men and their new ministries, as well as the school's continued work. Twenty-four men are scheduled to start the new school year in late March. This ministry is making tremendous strides for the spread of the gospel throughout East Africa.



FURLOUGH PLANS



We are already getting ready for our furlough trip back to the States to report on the work here in Vanuatu. We have tentatively planned to be there May 8 thru July 19. These dates hinge upon the successful completion of Titus' non-immigrant visa process.

We have already made contact with all of our supporting congregations, and are eagerly waiting to hear back from them as we solidify our schedule. We are especially excited for Titus to meet everyone back in the States. Our schedule should be finalized and published next month. We look forward to seeing you all then!

"STATE OF EMERGENCY" DECLARED IN PORT VILA

The declaration was made by local government officials in response to tribal violence in the capital city on March 4. The altercations apparently started when a woman from one of Vanuatu's many islands died. Her death was attributed to "black magic," or voodoo. Members of the woman's family accused a man from another island of casting the spell on her. This set off a series of attacks here in Vila: everyone from Ambrym Island vs. everyone from Tanna Island. The initial melee resulted in 3 deaths and 11 hospitalizations. In the ensuing days, hundreds were arrested in relation to several more attacks. While all the fighting is a bit unnerving and has caused us to be extra cautious, we feel relatively safe. Things seem to have cooled off since, and the state of emergency should be allowed to expire soon. We are grateful that none of our brethren were involved in any the attacks. We will be sure and keep you updated as things progress. You can learn more by searching "tribal violence in Vanuatu" at www.google.com.

