

Brandell e-Scr@pbook

A MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE BRANDELLS IN VANUATU

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✕ Finally Made It! ✕

After months of prayer, planning and preparation (and a few delays), we finally made it to our new home on Malekula Island. Our new surroundings took some adjustment, especially for the kids, but with a month under our belts we are quite comfortable with our village life. Hope you'll enjoy reading our experiences.

OUR NEW SURROUNDINGS

Our main focus during our first two-month rotation in Malekula is simple: get settled. This includes getting everything set up in and around the house, getting to know our neighbors, spending time with

local Christians, and getting into a daily routine (homeschool, fetching water, washing clothes, cooking, washing dishes, study time, play time, etc.).



Team Update

The Baker family reports that things are going well in Tanna. Aaron and Cindy are both studying the Bible with individuals in Loun and Lorakau Villages. Kaela and Melia are enjoying their new home and adjusting well to island life.

Though we haven't seen him yet, we were happy to welcome Mike back to Vanuatu at the end of the month. He'll be traveling to Santo Island early next month to prepare to move there, and plans to stop back through Malekula on his way home.



The church that meets in Tulwei Village

I made a bed for Shawnda and me - extra high so that we can store our big Rubbermaid containers underneath, and a set of bunk beds for the kids - to conserve space in our lone bedroom. While we have a small RV "cassette" toilet in our house, we also wanted to have a local-style "long drop" toilet outside. The local brethren helped me complete that, which we use during the day time (we save the RV toilet for the kids and nighttime visits). Our house sits on a slight decline, so I also had to move quite a bit of earth to keep our house from flooding during the torrential downpours of the wet season. Titus was a big help on that project - he loves anything that involves digging in the dirt.

Shawnda was quick to adjust to her new surroundings - cooking, cleaning and keeping house in the village is indeed a bit different than anything we've experienced before. We have to be very conservative with our water, wash clothes by hand, heat water in the teapot to take the chill out of our bath water, and sweep the house at least once a day. I have been very impressed with her creativity in the kitchen, especially since we only have fresh meat three days a week (that's how long the ice lasts in our cooler). She even kept up our tradition of having fajitas once a week!

We'll let the photos tell the rest of the story...

Traveling, island-style:

Left, our crowded ride to the village; Right, we met this group on the road



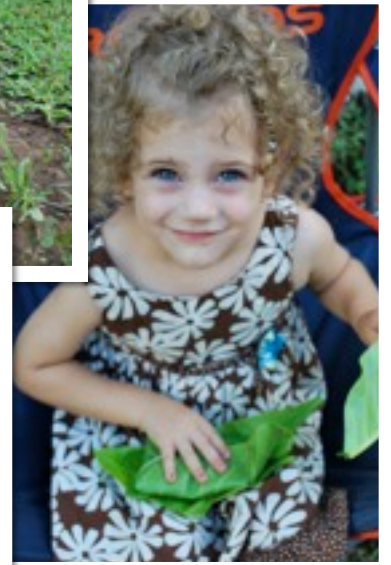
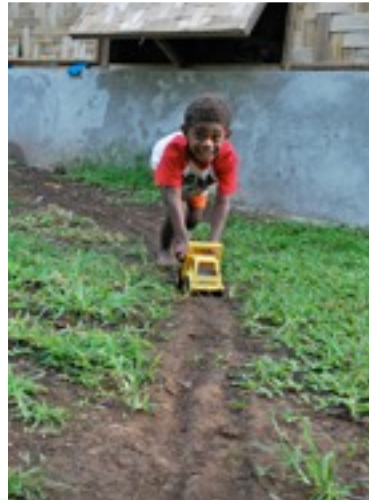
Making new friends:

Left, kids gather in our sandbox almost every afternoon to play; Right, Titus with his friend, Flexon



Making our own fun:

Left, all the boys in the village make trucks out of sticks, saying “beep-beep” whenever they meet each other on the road - Titus doesn’t leave home without his; Left-center, Lexi enjoys “cooking” with sticks in her outdoor kitchen; Right-center, Titus has worn out the grass pushing his dump truck through the yard; Right, Lexi rolling lap-lap in leaves, just like mommy does it; Below, playing in the rain



Working outside:

Left, clearing out ground; Right, weaving bamboo walls for our toilet room





Around the house:

Clockwise from left, New bunk-beds for the kids, painted in their favorite colors (how appropriate!); The kitchen; Shawnda making simboro laplap with the local ladies; Fajitas!; Cooking together; [Center] washing clothes

FEBRUARY BLOG-POSTS

Long Road Home

Read about our adventure getting from the airport to the village - quite an experience for our first day.
[2/10/11]

Home Sweet Home

Here we present a detailed description of our humble abode in Tulwei Village, and later post photos too.
[2/18/11]

What's Happening

We highlight some of the things we're involved in, including a family mission trip to Rano Village.
[2/23/11]

Shawnda's Thoughts

See things from a female perspective - life and the church in the village.
[2/24/11]

*click on a title to view the full blog post