

Brandell e~Scr@pbook

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Happy New Year

We were grateful to ring in the new year with our good friends, the Bruners, in Searcy, Arkansas. We LOVE ni-Vanuatu fellowship, but one of the things we miss most during our cross-cultural work is fellowship with American Christians ... and the Bruners are second to none! We were also thoroughly encouraged by a visit with the Sylvan Hills Church of Christ in North Little Rock. The congregation invited me to talk about the ways in which we have witnessed God at work in Vanuatu over the past decade. It was one of the warmest receptions we have ever received.

From Arkansas we traveled to Colorado for some much-anticipated time with Shawnda's family. We had great fun together sledding, skiing, playing games, eating and watching the Broncos win. I made a quick trip up to Kalispell, MT, to visit with a church there that has signed on to partner with us financially in the new year. It was a pleasure to be with our former missionVanuatu teammate Mike Olson while there, and the whole family enjoyed getting caught up with him as he traveled

Our Gray family
Christmas took place
in one of our family's
favorite places on
earth...Southork, CO.

back with me to Colorado. I appreciated the opportunity to share about the work during the Kalispell AM assembly, and also being the in the homes of four different Christian families for meals and visits.

Our last weekend in the States was spent with the church in Rye, CO, a church that has been supporting us for over 10 years. They have the fewest members of any church we visit, but certainly aren't lacking in the area of encouragement. We enjoyed catching up with many dear brethren there.

Happy New School

It would be an understatement to say that we are *happy* with Titus and Alexis' new school. This is Titus' first go in a non-homeschool environment, and he has truly flourished. We have been praying for a solution to our family's needs, and we praise God for delivering so fully.

Titus is in 3rd grade and Alexis in 2nd. The school's founder and principal is from Australia, with the remainder of the faculty and staff being ni-Vanuatu. It initially began as a daycare and kindy center, but parents liked the environment and philosophy so much that they wanted their kids to continue their education there. As a result the school has been

adding one new grade per year (3rd this year), and so Lord willing, Titus will be able to grow with the school through at least 6th grade. Shawnda is enjoying some one-on-one time with Grayson during the day, and the whole family dynamic has been positively affected as we share the afternoons and evenings together. What a blessing!

“Why do we go to a different church every Sunday in the States?!?”

- TITUS

New for 2016

While we still plan to update our “Afta” blog whenever postable events occur, we are moving the



bulk of our weekly reporting over to a new Facebook Page. You can “like” the page by visiting www.facebook.com/v2brandells (or search “Mission Vanuatu: the V2 Brandells” in Facebook), and thereby keep up with the action via text, pics and videos.



The Brandell kids on the first day of school. Vanuatu schools follow a calendar year schedule, with two-week breaks in between each of the four terms. Inset: Sign on the front of the new school.

Prayer Requests:

- **MV2025**

The new year brings a new focus as we enter into our "MissionVanuatu2025" plans. Our primary activities include regular work with the Etas Church of Christ, annual outer island trips to visit and encourage seven congregations, and our new LaetHaos ministry efforts based just outside the capital city. We are excited about the next decade, were encouraged by the reception we received during our furlough trip as we shared more about these efforts, and covet your prayers for safety and success going forward.

- **Boarding School**

While it's certainly not our favorite part, sending kids to boarding school is a regular part of the Vanuatu culture. Several of the young people we work with and around are now away at school, some of the them for the first time. Please be praying for their wellbeing as they are away from home and the family structure they need.

Prayer Updates:

- **Cyclone and El Niño Relief**

Patrick Kasso lives here on the main island for work, but was recently commissioned to return to his home area of Whitesands on the east side of Tanna Island to distribute food and water containers to the people who are suffering from cyclone damage, drought, and volcano ash. I met with him for a debriefing this month and was very encouraged by his report.

- **New home base**

We have continued to experience significant delays on our house/ property purchase, but all signs indicate that we should settle in February. This move is an integral part of our goals and plans for the LaetHaos.

