

Brandell e-Scr@pbook

A MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE BRANDELLS IN VANUATU

email: brandell@missionvanuatu.com

blog: www.missionvanuatu.blogspot.com

✧ More Fun ✧

As you'll see from some of the photos included in this edition, we had more fun with Mema and Papa this month. After a week together in Malekula, we all returned to Vila for three more weeks together. We were all sad to see them go, but comforted by the fact that we'll get to visit them in just over six months!

AN "OLBAOT" MONTH

"Olbaot" is a commonly used word in Bislama, and literally means "all about." It's used to describe someone or something that is all over the place, and that's a good way to describe our month in Vila.

July is traditionally a slow month for us work-wise, because Vanuatu's independence is the 30th. However, the party begins at least a week before and usually lasts for a few days after. Everyone is in a playful mood, which means things move that much slower than usual.

We enjoyed visitors again this month. Mema and Papa got to spend a lot of time with the grandkids (reading, playing, swimming), and also enjoyed some "adult time" with a meal out, and

later a trip to Secret Gardens (similar to an outdoor cultural museum).



We also enjoyed spending time with Robert Martin, a Christian



Team Update

The Bakers reported three more souls added to the kingdom this month - Martha, Kume, and Mariana [photo below]. All three have been attending weekly studies.



We enjoyed another month of seeing a lot of Mike, as he was in Vila teaching PIBC classes for a couple of weeks. Upon his return to Santo Island, he was very pleased to hear from the Christians of what had taken place in his absence.



from Atlanta who was here for a few weeks teaching in the Pacific Islands Bible College. He taught for 13 days on Galatians, Philippians & Colossians, while Mike Olson taught on 1&2 Thessalonians. Classes were held in Vila from 6-9pm Monday-Friday.

This was the first year since we arrived that our team really let go and let the local Christians plan and promote the PIBC classes. While the number of students wasn't great, I was personally very encouraged by those who came, because it was obvious that they came of their own volition. Leaders from Vila and Etas had perfect or near-perfect attendance, which is a testimony to their dedication and desire. Please continue praying for these men (Claude, Flexon, Kal, Kelly, and Sam) and their families as they continue to grow into their leadership role. Pray that they will all reach their potential and do great things for the Lord and his church here on Efate Island.

Additionally, Shawnda sat in on a week's worth of these PIBC classes while I stayed home with the kids, and then we traded for the second week of classes. We both enjoy being with our Christian brethren in these more intimate settings, and of course benefitted from the Bible study.

Our month in Vila always consists of catching up on "things" and getting "other things" ready for our next trip to Malekula. This month was a little different in that regard, because I had trouble finding someone available to retrieve our shipment of goods at the wharf in Malekula (mainly due to a schedule change made by the shipping company). So at the last minute, I made the daring (for me) decision to accompany our items on the ship - daring because I am extremely susceptible to motion sickness. The MV Havannah is a relatively large ship, and since the voyage takes place over night, I figured I could just sleep through the rough waters. And sure enough, it worked out. I took Dramamine, wore my wristbands (thanks, Darla Ewing!), and slept relatively well on the floor under my seat. I woke up a few times during the night with my head bumping into the wall because of the waves, but each time went right back to sleep. It was an adventure, and one that I might actually try again.

If you are curious, we still have to make these shipments before every trip because things we need are either not available or too expensive in Malekula. This month, our

shipment included milk, Ramen noodles, peanut butter, canned goods (tomatoes, corn, beans), snacks, wood for a new outdoor shower room, home-school supplies, books, mosquito repellent, toiletry items and a wheel barrow. And of course, we usually have 7-10 requests from the locals as well (blankets, cell phones, tools, etc.).

Our whole family enjoyed the opportunity to worship with brethren in Vila, Etas, Eton and Epau this month. Titus and Alexis especially enjoyed getting caught up with their friends, as well as making new ones.

Last but not least, we were "helpers" this month. One thing that living in Vanuatu has taught us, is that we Americans are very individualistic. Our culture is such that we can be quite independent and self-reliant. However, ni-Vanuatu (and those of similar cultures) are very group-centric. That's because you need the assistance of others in almost everything you do. Our family has been helped out in numerous ways in the past, and so we were glad to be able to "pay it forward" a bit this month, including:

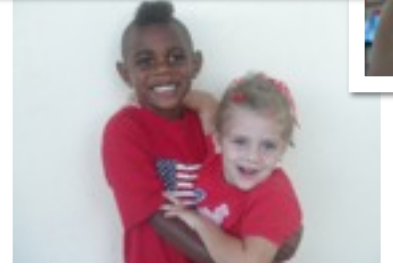
We were able to acquire and ship two "orders" to the Bakers working in Tanna. I assisted a medical clinic in Unmet Village (near Tulwei) in purchasing a solar panel system that will allow them to function more effectively. We cleaned out and sold (garage sale) an entire house full of stuff for friends who unexpectedly had to move back to the States.

Whew! Indeed, an olbaot month. We look forward to sharing next month's report from Malekula.

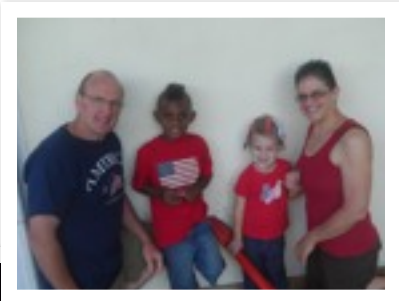
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***One month, two independence celebrations:  
America's on the 4th and Vanuatu's on the 30th***

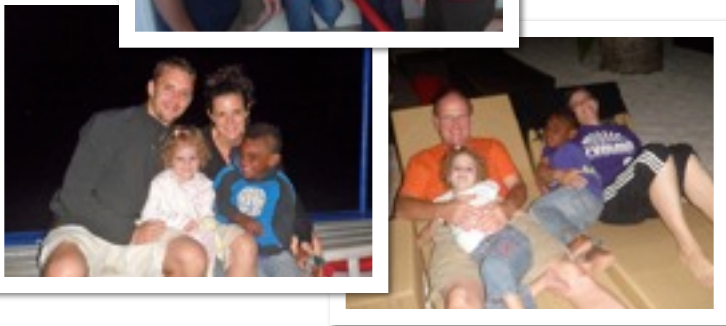




**Fun-and-Games:**  
*Like most Pacific-Islanders, Titus is very athletic. His abilities really shined through this month as he learned to maneuver the monkey bars, played baseball and football, and mastered his new bicycle.*



**Lunch with "Mr. Robert"**  
*We all enjoyed time with Robert Martin, with Pacific Islands Bible College. He's been a mentor to our team since our first survey trip.*



**Only bad thing about being in Malekula?**  
*For Lexi, it's not getting in her weekly visit to see Fiona and Renzo. She made up for lost time this month.*

**JULY BLOG-POSTS**

**Q&A**

*Take a look back at our Q&A session from June's Good News Meeting in Tulwei.*

[7/6/11]

**Tankyu tumas**

*We thanked those who helped us building our house with a Vanuatu-style feast.*

[7/12/11]

**Sounds easy enough**

*An account of two activities provides a look into "daily life" in Vanuatu.*

[7/27/11]