

**Tuesday 5-16-06** – Our large gas tank that heats our water ran out of gas last night. Thankfully, Mike came over at 9am this morning and was happy to help me in getting a new one. He loaded it in the truck (no small feat) and then we took it to Origin, the gas company, and I bought a new one. Mike then unloaded the new and full gas tank (a really big, heavy pain) and hooked everything up for me so I could have hot water. How nice of him! Our internet hasn't worked all day and I am feeling rather annoyed by that. Especially because email is my lifeline to the outside world and to Eric and Shawnda while they are in the States. I sure do look forward to Shawnda's emails. Our emails are what we call our grocery-day-conversations. Doing our grocery shopping sets us off talking about everything under the sun and that is what our emails are like.

**Wednesday 5-17-06** – Today started good and ended good, but there were about 2 hrs. in between around lunchtime that I don't care to re-live! I had some errands to run this morning: I went to Asco to remind Job that I am still waiting on my truck, which he assured me would be finished on Friday...we will see. Then, Kaela and I headed to Centerpoint supermarket, the Post Office and to Pheonix clothing store to get Kaela some socks and a long-sleeve shirt. This week has been cool and rainy. The sun has yet to make an appearance for more than 30 minutes at a time. I still have a month to go before Shawnda gets back with my warmer clothes for Kaela so I bought her a long-sleeve shirt to get her by. Pheonix also had fleece pullover and pant outfits for sale, but I just can't bring myself to buy or wear fleece in Vanuatu!

At lunchtime I found a piece of bread with jelly on it that Kaela had left on the mat in Akisa's room after breakfast. I had been sitting there at least two hours and as a result there were about 200 (literally) ants invading the area. I was less than thrilled with that clean up assignment. For lunch I planned to make rice and as I was taking my LARGE container of rice down out of the cabinet it slipped from my hand and the lid came off and I dumped half of it all over the counter and stove. To make matters worse, Kaela was so ready to eat the rice that she felt the need to ask for some about 900 TIMES before I got it cooked! I was severely annoyed (and hungry) and so I set her down with a book to read in the living room. When I went in to check on her I found that she had pulled the front cover off of it. I guess I will be fixing that this week! My baby is losing her baby-ness and becoming very much a two year old! Will I ever make it through?

Akisa came home from netball training tonight and is feeling so bad with the flu that she went right to bed almost immediately. Poor girl – it's never fun to have the flu. After she went to bed I remember that I left the Brandell's front gate open. It was after dark so I just decided that Mike could close it after he left from checking his email. I waited until 9pm, called Mike and unfortunately he was held up at his house and wouldn't be coming over. So, that meant I had to lock up the office (behind our house) by myself – after dark - in the rain. I wasn't thrilled about that, but being the cautious person that I am – I took my big Maglite and figured Akisa could hear me if I yelled for her. However I wasn't about to walk out to the road to close the Brandell's gate that late at night by myself. Forget it. I figured it could just stay open one night.

**Thursday 5-18-06** – This morning I took care of business that I wanted to get done before tomorrow when Aaron gets home. I worked on my journal, checked email, made

a call over the internet and worked on my Bible class lessons for next month. Mike came over about 11am to get on the computer. It worked out well because he need to get some groceries for the fellowship tonight at his house and I needed groceries for when Aaron, Robert and Ken get into town tomorrow. So, I got Kaela ready and we all went to the store. Yea for one more thing being crossed off my to-do list for today! Tonight was the fellowship at Mikes' house. Akisa, Kaela and I left the house at 5:30pm and went and picked up Patrick and Leisava and Fiona. The fellowship went great and we had a good turnout and a fun time together for the Christians in Vila!

**Friday 5-19-06** – Well, the day of Aaron, Robert and Ken's return finally arrived! I had planned my day very carefully in my head – working out how to get everything done that I wanted to get done. However, things did not turn out as planned. Kaela woke up this morning and was very, very fussy and clingy. So much so that I knew that she either didn't sleep well or she wasn't feeling good. It turned out to be the latter, which I didn't find out until *after* breakfast. So, I put her back to bed for an hour and hoped she would be feeling better when she woke up. Unfortunately, she told me that she wasn't feeling better...all over Akisa's shirt. So, I spent the morning holding and tending to Kaela who was also running a fever. I did manage to get a few things done, as she started feeling better later in the day. But, then, after her nap she woke up and threw up again. My original plan was to leave for the airport at 4:30pm, go to Fiona's on the way and take her some medicine. Aaron called me from the main town in Ambae and told me that it was raining pretty hard there and he didn't know if they would cancel their flight or not. So, I had to wait until 4pm – then I knew for sure that he was on his way home. With Kaela puking and still running a fever after her nap I knew I couldn't haul her to the airport with me, so I had to call Ure (bless her heart for coming over at the drop of a hat!) and ask her to come stay with Kaela while I went to the airport. However, when I went to call her on my phone – I found out I was out of credit. So, Akisa had to run down to the corner store for me and buy a phone card then she headed out to her netball training. By the time I called Ure it was 4:20 and Aaron's plane was getting in at 5:00pm. Ure had to take a bus to our house (which takes FOREVER if you get on a full bus) and she ended up arriving at 5:10pm. My only hope what that his flight was late – which it wasn't. He called me on the way there (at 5:30) and asked where I was! I'm coming! When I got there he didn't even recognize me with my new haircut and driving our new truck! He was pleasantly surprised with both and it is so GREAT to have him back home again!

**Saturday 5-20-06** – As much as I would have loved to hang out at the house with Aaron all day, there was work to do this morning! Today for our women's devotional and fellowship we are going to Etas. Kaela is determined not to let Aaron out of her sight so she is staying home to hang out with him. I got up, got ready and left that house at 9am. I picked up Ure, Fiona, Leisava and her kids, Rose, Mabel and Rema. Then, we headed out to Etas. We had a nice time fellowshiping with Ruth and Leimawa and I gave a devotional talk on Psalm 139. Afterwards, I took everyone back home and also brought Leimawa and her 4-year-old daughter, Barbara, home with me. Leimawa had an errand to run in town so Barbara came to the house and played with Kaela for about an hour then they caught a bus back to Etas. The rest of the day, Aaron, Kaela and I

just cleaned up around the house and spent quality time together. Robert and Ken came over for dinner (they are staying at the Khaviti motel) and we had a good time visiting with them. It was nice to get to know Ken and also to be encouraged so much by Robert. He has such a depth of wisdom about mission work in the South Pacific (as he has been working in this part of the world in various capacities for over 30 years). He has been a great source of encouragement and strength for our whole team and we so appreciate the relationship that we have built with both him and his beautiful wife, Mary. What a blessing!

**Sunday 5-21-06** – We arrived for Bible class at nearly 9am this morning. Gomon and Ure and their clan arrived at 9:15 and no one else showed up until 10:15. At 9:45 Gomon and Aaron decided to forego Bible class and just have worship. This is the second week running and a little discouraging for us all. Some of our members were out of town, however, as for the rest we aren't sure what happened to them. Ken preached a great lesson and it was so nice to be able to sit and listen to a lesson in English. I could listen so effortlessly – without having to translate in my head! Even though we had a small group we went ahead and had our Matthew video after worship and a few snacks too. Then, we parted ways and Aaron and I, Ken, Robert and Kaela went into town to get some “real” food to eat for lunch. We had fish and chips at Olympic Burger and they were quite tasty!

At 3pm Aaron, Kaela and I went and picked up Ken and Robert and we headed out to Eton village. Robert was scheduled to speak out there at 4:30 or so. We stayed and sang with the Christians there, visited with them and also had some hot tea and cookies before we left. It was a very nice time and I was glad to be able to see some familiar faces that I hadn't seen in a while.

**Monday 5-22-06** – I spent a lot of time today thinking about my parents and Eric and Shawnda. The Brandell's are in Tulsa today (Sunday in the US) and will worship at 29<sup>th</sup> and Yale where Eric will teach class, preach and make a presentation. My mom and dad drove to Tulsa on Saturday to see them. So, I spent plenty of time imagining what it was like being there in Tulsa, with my parents and the good time they will have together! This morning Aaron, Robert, Ken, Kaela and I all headed out at 9am to make a trip almost around the island. We actually drove to Paonangisu village (about halfway) and then back to Vila. We stopped at Epau village on the way there and visited with the Christians, had lunch at Paonangisu and visited with Harry and then stopped at Eton village on the way back home. We picked up some Christians that are from Emau island and needed a ride into Vila. It was a nice day, although a tiring one. It's amazing how sitting in the truck bouncing (literally) along the village road can wear you out! We dropped Robert and Ken off at their motel until dinnertime and then came home and Aaron, Kaela and I all took a nap!

**Tuesday 5-23-06** – Today is Ken and Robert's last day here in Vila. From here Robert will go to Fiji, spend a few days and then onto American Samoa to visit Randy English, a missionary there. Ken is headed back home to the States. We spent the morning doing some souvenir shopping in town and then ate lunch together at Jill's Café. Afterwards, they went back to the motel to get packed up and ready to while Aaron,

Kaela and I did a little bit of grocery shopping in town. We then took a bus to their motel to say good-bye. Unexpectedly, our truck is in the shop fixing all the things that were supposed to be fixed 2 weeks ago so we didn't have transportation to take them to the airport. We visited with them a while then said our good-byes at the motel. They went to the airport at 1:30pm.

Afterwards, Aaron and I came home, I put Kaela down for her nap and Aaron down for his. He seems to have caught some kind of flu bug and isn't feeling so hot. I then left and took a bus to Nambatu supermarket to get groceries and then took a taxi back home. I spent the rest of Kaela's naptime doing Bible Correspondence course work.

**Wednesday 5-24-06** – Today was clean up day at our house. I did laundry and cleaned house. Aaron and I had some errands to run in town this morning so we spent until lunchtime getting those things done. When we came home our front porch was adorned with several people from the village. Eddie from Eton, George from Emau island, and Leimawa, Marina, Tino and Barbara from Etas were all waiting for us. Eddie and George came to see Aaron and Leimawa and her crew came to see me. Aaron told Leimawa that since he isn't feeling well we weren't going to stay very long at Etas tonight. We usually go at 4pm and stay until sometimes 9:30pm. We did want to meet with the Christians there and talk over a few things so we are going from about 4-6pm. We ate lunch and then Kaela took her nap and we left about 4pm for Etas. It was a great time visiting with the Christians there! Aaron got to talk with Sam, Timothy, Philip and Pbles for a while and also Tom (who has studied with Aaron). Sam told Aaron afterwards that Tom and Alice (who I had been studying with) both want to be baptized and are trying to make arrangements to get rid of the kava bar that they operate and try to find different means of income. Whenever they take care of that they want to be baptized. We were very encouraged to hear of their desire and had an idea that the kava bar was what was holding them up. Also, I told Sam and Leimawa that I will start my school for teaching the kids to read and write on June 2. I will run it every Tuesday and Friday from 8am-10am. At Sam's suggestion I set the fee at 200vatu to cover the materials that I will need for the kids. Exercise books and pencils for each one of them and some teaching supplies. I am really excited, and a little scared, to get this school underway! I told them that I will take 15 students for the first round of teaching. I think that is a manageable amount.

**Thursday 5-25-06** – This morning after breakfast Kaela and I headed over to Shawnda's house to do some cleaning. While the Brandell's are out of town I am trying to keep house for them. Today I went over and swept the house, opened some of the windows to let some fresh air in and watered the plants. Also, this morning I did some computer work that was waiting for me! After lunch Kaela and I stirred up some sugar cookies, let them chill for 30 minutes and then baked them. They were yummy and remind me of Christmas because they are mine and my sister's favorite kind to bake at Christmas time! This afternoon I reviewed my material for school and am going to make some minor adjustments on it.

**Friday 5-26-06** – This morning Kaela and I got ready not long after breakfast and left to pick up Ure at 9:30. Ure and I thought it would be good if we tried to go visit one of the new Christians, Selina. Selina lives a little ways out of town and hasn't been to worship in 2 weeks. First, we went by Fiona's house to try and take her with us also. Fiona and Shawnda are the only two women in Vila who know where Selina lives. However, Fiona was in the middle of doing a rather hefty load of washing (by hand) and couldn't come with us. She gave us more directions in addition to Shawnda's and Ure, Kaela and I headed out to Mele-maat to visit Selina. Selina lives far enough out of town that it took us a good 20 minutes just to get to Mele-Maat and then another 10 to figure out where she lives. We asked a few of the neighbors in the area and found out that Selina had gone to the garden. So, unfortunately, we didn't get the chance to see her today. We did leave a message for her to let her know that we came to see her. I hope she is doing okay – with it being more than just a simple phone call to get in touch with her it is hard to know. If she doesn't make it to worship again this Sunday Ure and I plan to try to go visit her again on Monday afternoon. Aaron got sick with what we thought was a cold shortly after Robert left – long about Tuesday afternoon. Now it has turned into the full-blown flu – fever, cough, runny nose – the works! He is miserable!

**Saturday 5-27-06** – Another early morning for Kaela and I. Aaron is continuing in his zombie-like state from the cold and sinus medication and went back to bed not long after Kaela and I left at 8:30am. It's women's devotional and fellowship day at the farm. We went and picked up Ure first, then to Fiona's. We tried to pick up Leisava and Rose but Leisava couldn't make it and Rose wasn't home. There were six of us at the farm also including Rema, Mabel and a woman that I met for the first time and can't remember her name right now. It will probably come to me in the middle of the night! It was a nice time and Kaela and I ended up getting home at 12:30. We were all worn out today – for whatever reason and spent the afternoon taking it easy. Aaron has gone from miserable to worse than miserable this evening! I am hoping he can shake this flu over the weekend. He has a big week ahead of him with Preaching in the Park and with Mike and Eric both out of town the responsibility for setting it up and running it falls to him.

**Sunday 5-28-06** – Aaron and I worshipped out at Etas today. It was a fairly decent day weather-wise although it did rain while we were out there and things got a little muddy. Of course, Kaela, being almost 2 thought it would be great fun to play in the mud! However, I had other ideas! We had good attendance at worship and several visitors! Afterwards, Ruth fed us lunch: simboro (manioc wrapped in island cabbage and then boiled) and also boiled chicken with manioc. Kaela refused to eat anything but a cucumber. After lunch the men wanted to practice some of the songs in the Bislama songbooks and learn some new ones so we spent about 45 minutes singing together and sometimes humming around trying to find the right tune to a few of the songs that none of us knew very well. It was a good time together! They are a great group of people at Etas!

**Monday 5-29-06** – Aaron needed to take the truck to Eton village this afternoon so I had to get busy and do my grocery shopping this morning. I hopped in the shower right

after breakfast and Kaela and I headed out at 8:30 for Nambatu supermarket. After my grocery shopping, I came home and Aaron left for Eton village. Preaching in the Park is scheduled for Wednesday so he needed to go confirm with Eddie and Morris that they are on the speaking line-up. At 11am Kaela and I left to go to town and meet Rose-Hanna and Ure for lunch. We took our lunch to Seafront Park and had a nice, long lunch (gotta love the Vanuatu 2-hour lunch break!). It was so nice to sit and chat with them and catch up. Rose-Hanna and Steven have spent a lot of time in the village lately so I have hardly seen her. It was especially good to catch up with her!

After lunch Kaela and I went to Centerpoint supermarket so I could buy some milk and some steak for dinner. Next to the butcher area, is where they keep the bread. All different kinds of bread fresh from La Parissienne bakery in town and stacked on about 12 wooden shelves. The lowest shelf comes to about Kaela's chin so it isn't very high. While I was putting my steak in a plastic bag (that I had to take from the bread area), I looked down and there was sweet little Kaela having a toddler moment. On the bottom shelf there were 2 long baguettes sticking straight out. And what do you imagine Kaela was doing? Oh, yes. The little dear had her mouth around the end of one of those baguettes! I had to laugh – what else can you do at a time like that?!

**Tuesday 5-30-06** – Today Aaron and I had several errands to run in town so we loaded up Kaela and spent all morning in town. On our way home we stopped by the Post Office and found a letter saying that while we wanted to reserve that stage at the park for tomorrow it has already been reserved by another church group. Tomorrow was supposed to be our monthly Preaching in the Park and Aaron is trying to get it all organized. Now, he has to post-pone it until next week. It is kind of a pain but the only way to reserve the stage is to write a letter to a man at the municipal building. If it is previously reserved then they send a letter to you telling you that you can't reserve it for that day. Don't ask me why you can't reserve it on the phone or in person because I would think that would save a lot of hassle and stamps. But, I guess they didn't ask me for my opinion! Look at me – giving it anyway! While we were in town the sky opened up and it started to rain. It rained and rained and rained all afternoon today! Not just a drizzle or a sprinkle either! It went back and forth between a steady rain and a huge downpour all day! Our yard is well on the way to becoming a lake!

**Thursday 6-1-06** – Today I spent a good portion of the day trying to get my stuff organized for my first day of school at Etas. It is tomorrow. So, I gathered my supplies and got everything ready to load in the car tomorrow morning. I also practiced my class to a bunch of fake students and worked on BCCs. It has been a busy day! Tonight was our mid-week fellowship at our house. We had an average turnout but only 2 families came. Gomon, Ure and Sesky and then Steven and Rose-Hanna and their children came. We still had a good time though singing, playing games, eating and talking. Kaela was especially glad to see her friend, Aleina (who is almost a year old now) and to play with all the kids!

**Friday 6-2-06** – Well, today was my first day of school at Etas! I woke up before my alarm went off at 5:45am! I guess I was just raring to go! It was a good thing too because when my alarm didn't go off at 6:00 I realized that I had set it for 6:00pm

instead of 6:00am! I had plenty of time to shower and get ready, eat breakfast, pray and review my lesson plans. I also tried to get a few things done for Aaron like feed the dog and set out his and Kaela's breakfast stuff. I left the house at 7:15 on the nose and drove out to Etas. I planned to start class at 8am and even though I wasn't expecting it most of the kids showed up at 7:35 and were ready for school! Originally I had told Sam and Leimawa that I would only take 15 kids, but I ended up with 21. I just couldn't turn them away when they were looking at me with their sweet little faces, money in hand, ready to go to school! So...21 students it was. We will see if that changes next week – if some kids will decide they don't want to come back or what. Who knows. Anyway, we had a good turnout of kids for the first day! Each one is required to pay 200 vatu (about \$2) to pay for their exercise books, pencils and some teaching supplies for me.

Our first day of class went great and kids were so excited when it came time to write their letters. Since I am teaching Bislama I have chosen (with some good advice from a teacher friend in the US) to teach the letters out of order and then teach new words as I go along. For example: today I taught them the letters A and P and then how to spell Papa. A very simple word to spell and it uses the two letters that we learned today. Each class time we will learn 2 new letters and new words that use the letters of the day and one or two letters from previous class times. Coming off the first day helped me to realize what worked in my lesson plans and what needed adjusting to help the kids understand better. Almost everyone did really, really well writing their letters – only 2 or 3 struggled and that was mostly because they were the youngest in the class – just barely 6 years old. I have kids from 6 years up to about 14 years. It is hard to tell because village children in Vanuatu rarely know how old they are and neither do their parents. It just isn't something of importance. Families don't have to keep birth records for their children or anything like that. And because estimating time (or numbers) isn't something people in the village do very often no one really knows how old some of these kids are. I just have to look at them and give my best guess! It was a great day! I am already looking forward to Tuesday!

**Saturday 6-3-06** – Our women's devotional and fellowship was held at Fiona's house this morning. And unfortunately Ure and I were the only ones that showed up. Even though we three had an enjoyable time talking and laughing it was still disappointing that none of the other women came. Sometimes I get so frustrated by people's lack of participation! They don't realize the amazing relationships you can build with your Christian sisters if you will just make the effort to participate! Ure and I talked about whether Tuesdays at lunch or Saturday mornings were better for our women's time. And we agreed that it doesn't matter too much what time we choose – it all lies with the women's commitment to be an active part of the church. To be more than just a Sunday-worship-Christian, but to really *want* to spend time in the company of your Christian sisters. I guess that is why God has placed our team here – to try and encourage the Christians here to grow not only spiritually and in numbers, but in fellowship with one another.

**Sunday 6-4-06** – Well, Aaron went to Paonangisu village yesterday for his monthly trip. Akisa came last night and stayed with Kaela and I. Kaela was so excited to see her that she wouldn't stop hugging Akisa and more than once I had to call her away from the

bathroom door while Akisa was in the shower. She kept banging on it and calling, "Akisa! Akisa!" She just loves Akisa!

Akisa, Kaela and I arrived for Bible class right about 9am this morning, followed not far behind by Ure and her group of kids (Gomon was out of town). A few more trickled in between 9:15 and 9:40 and then finally Steven and his family arrived at 10:05. Needless to say we didn't have any Bible class. It was a small group this week for worship. Afterwards, was our monthly fellowship meal at Steven and Rose-Hanna's house. Not many came, just Kaela and I, Ure and the kids, Shem and Rose and then of course, Steven's family. Even though we were small in numbers we had a nice time of fellowship including a good long story telling time all about the different shark attacks that have happened in the near past. Such lovely dinner conversation! Only in the islands...it would have been funny (the subject matter) if it weren't for how tragic the stories were.

**Tuesday 6-6-06** – Yesterday it started raining about lunchtime. Wow. It rained a lot. A huge downpour all afternoon. I went to Nambatu Supermarket soon after lunch with Kaela and was fortunate to catch a break in the rain when it was time to leave the store. It was a good thing because unlocking the car, unloading the bags and loading up Kaela can be a little bit of juggling act! Thankfully, we made it home before the next downpour hit. I put Kaela down for her nap and then I needed to go to Centerpoint Supermarket, also, so I left to go there. By the time I got done shopping there it was raining hard again. Downtown was nearly deserted since no one wanted to be in town because of the rain. The streets and sidewalks were just pools of water. I braved the rain and walked over to the Post Office (getting soaked and almost slipping and falling twice on wet tile on the way!) only to find that we had no mail. Figures. By the time I got home my clothes and my purse/bag thing were soaked through. I was cold so I put on long pants, my long sleeve t-shirt and made myself a cup of coffee to get warmed up!

That was yesterday, today we woke up to yet another gray day and lots of rain. However, I had to teach school at Etas this morning so I dressed for the village and headed out at 7:20am. We had another great day at school! Even though I didn't really want more students Leimawa took money and found places to sit for 8 more kids. Now our total is up to 29! That's it! ---no more! We just don't have the room for them all especially with the rain and our leaky roof problem we had to squish them close together. They didn't seem to mind too much and everything went well despite the rain. I had 5 kids that didn't come back – 2 of them were sick and the other 3 I think didn't come back because their parents couldn't pay their school fee. We will see what Friday brings.

**Wednesday 6-7-06** – Preaching in the park was scheduled for today but with it raining hard for the 3<sup>rd</sup> straight day and all through last night we knew it wasn't going to happen. I woke up early this morning and saw the downpour. I let Aaron and Kaela sleep in (rainy days are so good for that!) and I sat in the living room and read my book and drank my coffee. Aaron is post-poning Preaching in the Park until next Wednesday. Maybe we'll be able to have it before the month is out!

I really wanted to go with him to Etas tonight to our Bible study since I hadn't been in a while. With all the rain I really don't like to take Kaela because she wants to



play in the mud and I don't really want her to, so battling that can be miserable! Instead I called Ure and asked if Kaela could come over and spend the evening with her family and she said that was fine. So, Kaela was glad to go see her Auntie Ure and Akisa! Aaron and I had a great time in Etas. That group is SO FUNNY!!!! They are always doing and saying crazy things and we laugh a lot when we are with them! It is so refreshing to see such a great group of new Christians so on fire for the Lord! We love being with them – especially Sam and Leimawa, our good friends.

**Thursday 6-8-06** – This morning we got a break from the rain. It was overcast, but not raining and then the sun came out so I did some MUCH needed laundry. I should have done it Tuesday but, with the rain I put it off...and put it off again...and today I finally washed and hung our clothes. I had big plans for Kaela and I to go to town as soon as I had all my clothes hung. However, the SECOND I went to take the second load out of the washer it started pouring down rain! So much for my trip to town and dry clothes!

Thankfully, after lunch I made it to town and then spent most of Kaela's naptime getting things ready for school tomorrow. It's a big day – we will learn S and T! Tonight is the mid-week fellowship at Steven and Rose-Hanna's.

**Friday 6-9-06** – We had a break in the rain for school today and that was SO nice! However, when the rain stops the mosquitos come out and I got eaten alive! The kids were a bit rowdy – talking a lot mostly, and getting up and walking around and stuff. I am pretty sure that they were feeling ansty to get out in the sunshine and play since it isn't raining for the first day this week.

After school I came home, made lunch for Aaron, Kaela and I. Then after lunch we went to town. First to go see Rose and Shem – Aaron needed to talk to Shem about some church related things. And then we went to Centerpoint supermarket so I could get eggplant for dinner tonight and then to the post office to pick up the mail...just our electric bill. Oh-joy. We always dread getting that every month. Interestingly, the electric company, Unelco, has a monopoly in Vanuatu and holds a contract with the government that it will be the sole provider for 50 years. I'm not sure when the contract is up, but in the mean time they are raking in the bucks off our electric bills!!! It is ridiculous!

Mike called about 7:00 tonight and asked if Patrick, Ruth and Sophie could come stay the night with us. Patrick and Ruth are two new Christians that Mike studied with and baptized at the end of last year. Sophie is Patrick's younger sister. They live out on a farm between Port Vila and Eton, so when they come into town they usually stay the night at Mike's house and go home the next day. However, with Mike in Santo his house wasn't available so he called us to see if they could come stay with us. So, they came over and we had a nice time visiting with them and Aaron spent a good deal of time answering Patrick's Bible questions. When Aaron came to bed he commented on how Patrick asked some really hard questions --- that says a lot about him that he is a deep thinker and really wants to know the truth about difficult subjects.

**Saturday 6-10-06** – This morning we hopped out of bed early and Aaron went to the bakery to buy some bread for breakfast. We were lucky and he came home with fresh, hot bread and it was SO GOOD! At 8am, Aaron left with Patrick, Ruth and Sophie.

Patrick and Aaron were headed to Etas to a Bible study and Ruth and Sophie went to see some family. Aaron started a Bible study --- a Christian growth series for men --- in Etas. It runs from 8:30 am to about 10:30.

At almost 10:00 Kaela and I left and walked over to Rose-Hanna's house for our ladies' devotional and fellowship. It was small numbers again with only Rose-Hanna, Ure and I and then Rose came about an hour late. We discussed trying to put into action a new plan for meeting to hopefully get more participation from the women. We will discuss it more next week when we make the plan for the month of July.

I spent the evening working on my lesson plans for school – there is always something to prepare for school so I have to stay on top of things!

**Sunday 6-11-06** – We had a good turnout for worship this week and that was very refreshing! In fact we were pretty well packed in together and Aaron delivered a good sermon on the Biblical relationship between a wife and husband (including not ever, ever, ever hitting your wife – a common problem in Vanuatu). It was a good day!

Aaron had a Bible study with Charlie and his family at 3pm and he came home in a hurry about 6pm. He had picked up Harry (from Paonangisu) at his daughter's house in Vila and Harry went to the Bible study with him. Then, he took Harry to the hospital because he was going to have some minor surgery tomorrow morning. When he got to the hospital Flexon and Fiona were getting out of a bus. They had come to the hospital because Fiona was having stomach pains (that she has had now for quite some time). Fiona asked if I would come be with her so Aaron ran up the hill from the hospital to our house and came and got Kaela and me. We then walked down to the hospital. Harry's daughter, Leisava and three of her kids also went with Aaron and Harry because one of the kids had a fever. So, there was quite a crew of us there. Then, while Aaron and I were standing near the front door of general admittance, a woman (a tourist from Australia, I believe), came and told us that they thought her son had malaria and what should she do about getting him a blood test. We felt so bad for her – it had to be scary for them to be in a foreign country and needing medical help (especially for malaria) and not speaking the language and not knowing what to do. So, I sat with Fiona and Aaron went and helped her and her son and even went in to see the doctor with them to help make sure she knew what was going on. After Leisava and the kids saw the doctor then Aaron took them back to their house and Harry went to his room on the surgical wing. Flexon and I waited on Fiona and it ended up taking quite a while for them to check her and to get her some medicine. Afterwards, we walked back to our house and they waited with me for Aaron to get home (which took all of 3 minutes, as it turned out). Then, we all piled in the car and took Flexon and Fiona home and then came home and all three of us fell into bed.

**Monday 6-12-06** – Fiona was supposed to come at 6am, bright and early this morning. At least that is when I hopped out of bed and got ready to go to the hospital with her. However, she didn't arrive until 8:00 and so I just continued on with my morning until she came. It turned out that she hopped a bus at 6:00 and while she should have arrived at our house about 6:30 the bus driver was SO slow that it took her 2 hrs to get here! Crazy. She was very annoyed with that bus driver. Kaela, Fiona and I went to the hospital not long after 8:00 and we spent all morning there until almost lunch time

waiting in line, getting Fiona's sonogram done, waiting in line again, seeing the doctor and getting medicine for her. After lunch, I put Kaela down for her nap and then I went and did my grocery shopping.

**Tuesday 6-13-06** – School today did not go as well as other days. The kids were quite unruly and that was a little frustrating. Plus, several of them didn't come to school for whatever reason. That is the general attitude towards education here: if you don't feel like going – you don't go. Anyway, I was glad to be done with class and headed home at 10am. I gave them good lecture before I let them go about their behavior in class and then Leimawa followed it up with a lecture of her own. By the end of both of our lectures almost all their faces were looking a little somber.

**Wednesday 6-14-06** – This morning we woke up to rain and for the third week in a row we had to cancel Preaching in the Park. It had rained all night (we had hoped it would stop in the middle of the night, but it didn't) so the ground was well soaked. Aaron didn't try to reschedule it this time since next week Antony comes into town and things start getting really busy with all the finalization for the building project. Fiona had another Dr. appointment at the hospital today so she came at 12:30pm and I went with her. The general admission closes from 11:30-1:30 so we had an hour wait. She wanted to be sure that the Dr. got her appointment slip first so she could go in directly at 1:30. However, when they took her slip at 1:30 the admission guy left for about 10 minutes and then came back and told us that the Dr. had his schedule switched and wouldn't be in until nighttime. So, they rescheduled her appointment for the 18<sup>th</sup> and basically we waited an hour for nothing. What can you do? It wasn't like they could call her and let her know --- they don't do that here because so many people don't have phones.