



Mission Vanuatu

A newsletter published by Aaron and Cindy Baker * Eric and Shawnda Brandell * Mike Olson

June 2009
Volume 6,
Issue 6

Special points of interest:

- Nearly 50 kids attend PBK children's program in Vila
- Puppets wow kids in Vila
- A door is opened for the Gospel in Tanna
- Don't miss the kids' update!

Inside this issue:

Pikinini Baebol Klab (PBK)	1
Mission Trip to Tanna Island	2
Kids Korner	3

Pikinini Baebol Klab (PBK)

By Cindy Baker

PBK is like a Vanuatu version of Vacation Bible School (VBS). PBK, however, is done on a much smaller scale—held once a month on the last Saturday. Nevertheless, the impact of teaching the Bible to a group of eager children is just as strong.

June 27th was the selected day for the kick-off of PBK in Port Vila. The church's first program of its kind to reach out to kids ran from 8—12 on Saturday and was well attended. Here are the details:

Our day may have started 30 minutes late ("island time", you know!) but, it was a day of great fun and excitement! We had 49 kids present (and a few assorted toddlers), 7 visitors, approximately 15 teachers, 2 transports for the kids/teachers from Etas, a stray dog, and loads and loads of fun!

Alice and Leimawa ran the registration table where kids gave their name, age (or approximate), where they live, how they heard about PBK, and a name tag. To start off the day, Salome led everyone in a stomping-clapping Pikinini Bible Klab chant. Then, Leimawa took over and led the singing with Salome, Shawnda and I available to help with leading some of the new ones. After singing, Shawnda and I did a puppet skit. From what we have been



Above: Shawnda teaches the kids some new "American" songs. What fun!

girl" made their first appearance in the puppet stage window, it took us about 3 or 4 minutes to get



the kids quieted down sufficiently to be heard! It was an immediate eruption of giggling and talking and exclaiming! Everyone seemed to really like the puppets!

After the skit, we split the kids into two groups: Older kids (ages 8 and up) and younger kids (7 and under). Having two different groups doing two different activities seemed to be a relatively new concept for a lot of the women and children, but it worked out great! While the younger kids were in lesson time, the older ones were taught their memory verse and then had a snack. And then they switched. I was in charge of teaching the lesson this month, and really tried to hit home the concept of taking care of God's world. I was very pleased with how well the kids listened and participated during lesson time. Although, by the end of the day with all the teaching and singing and talking and "projecting" my voice was about ready to give out! Rosemary was in charge of teaching the memory verse and Fiona handled the snacks and drinks. Our Vanuatu style snacks included: a cookie, a few Cheetos-type chips, a piece of pineapple, and cup of fruit drink.

Next, the older kids went to game time and the younger to craft time and then switched. Ruth was in charge of game time and our game was essentially a scavenger hunt for trash that earned each team points toward winning a prize. I came up with this game and thought it was rather brilliant

told—many of these children had never seen a puppet skit. So, when our little "boy and

(Continued on page 2)

Below: The women meet together to plan for PBK, looking forward to a large turnout.



Below L to R: Ruth and Cindy color signs and get everything ready for PBK in Vila. Great job ladies!



Below: Like a couple of Picasso's, Shawnda and Rosemary paint plywood used as a puppet stage for the kids.



Below: Getting to Imaki is rough! Riding in a truck 2 hours is nothing compared to having to cross this creek! If the truck cannot cross, the passengers get out and fix the road—myself included!



(Continued from page 1)

idea and the local kids seemed to really like it too! However, Kaela my ever-so-American daughter, informed me that, “Picking up trash isn’t really a game, Mom. It’s just a trash hunt.” Ah, nothing like being humbled by a 4 year old! Ha! Oh, well. At least the other 48 kids liked it!

Salome and Shawnda were in charge of crafts where kids made a “Litter-Looker” out of a toilet paper roll and blue cellophane that they decorated with stickers and glitter. They turned out really cute and the kids had a fun time playing with them and showing them off to each other...except for the little boy that threw his on the ground outside and stomped on it...I don’t think my lesson on littering made much of an impression on

him...but, I’ll let it pass this time since he’s only three! :o)

We finished the day off with combined singing and giving out prizes for the game. And by 11:30 we were all (kids and teachers) exhausted from our busy day of organized chaos! There may have been a few bumps in the organizational road, but, we figured that was to be expected since a Vanuatu style VBS was a completely new concept for most everyone. Overall, it was a fun day and a great success! We are convinced that next month will bring even more kids (once word gets out to their friends) and we are hoping for even more visitors from the area surrounding the church building. We’re coming up on July now and have much work to do to get ready for our next PBK!

Mission Trip to Tanna Island

By Aaron Baker

As the Gospel continues to spread throughout the country of Vanuatu, we have many requests from villages for us to come teach the Gospel. Some requests are sincere and genuine, and there also have been some requests from self-serving individuals looking for money. The majority, however, are people just looking for the pure milk of the Word, having never tasted it before. They long for their first taste. This is the case for the South Tanna village of Imaki.

In March of this year we were invited to the village of Imaki by chief George Kapiere to teach the Bible. Being an exclusively Catholic area we were surprised at this invitation because previous attempts by any group had been frustrated by villagers wishing to stick with their “mother” church. Chief George, however, had other plans for Imaki.

We were able to make the trip to Imaki this month, June 22-29, and were invited to run Bible studies every afternoon. It was evident from the start that this would be a long road, because many people had no clue

about the Bible. In fact, when I told the people to find the book of Genesis, none were able. This is because the Catholic church in Imaki is the only church in that area, aggressively excluding any other group. As far as the Bible, the Catholic church has for hundreds of years attempted to exclude its members from searching the scriptures for themselves.

The culmination of all this was a hunger by the people in the village for some real meat from the Word of God and to be taught what, indeed, the Bible said.

Accompanied by Patrick Kasso and Claude Kalsakau, we ran studies each night teaching on the topic of “The Plan of God.” The topics all fit well together and helped the people to see that God does have a plan for their lives and that plan involves Christ and His church! Many were surprised at these teachings because they had never heard simple Bible teachings like these before.

During the days we were able to visit many villages and discuss with many people about the Bible, and then run studies at night. Electricity was accessed by running a gen-

(Continued from page 2)

erator each night and one single light bulb provided the light we needed to study (barely!).

Though the church was not planted on this trip, we are still thrilled with the progress made. Into an area that was like the Iron Curtain, blocking any religious groups from coming into Imaki, we made huge strides for Christ and His church. Our goal is to continue to follow up with studies and hopefully one day plant the church in this community. Until then, we will do our part in planting and watering

the seed of God's Word and allow the Word to grow in the minds and hearts of the men and women of Imaki village.

Pictured Left: Pbles, a Christian from Etas village, Efate, is originally from Imaki and helped us open the door to the Word in his village. Now we need to labor for the growth!



Below: The group of villagers in Imaki are eager to hear God's Word. Please pray that they will be able to listen, learn, and do what the Bible teaches.

Kids Korner

This section of the newsletter is dedicated to the children on the Mission Vanuatu Team. We hope you enjoy these updates.

Titus Taylor Brandell

Titus waited and waited, prayed and prayed ... and they finally made it! JJ, GramB, KK and Coco "came on the airplane" and everyone had a great time together this month. Titus loved all the extra attention, and learned lots of fun, new things from his aunts. The entire family visited several tourist sites throughout the country, which meant lots of opportunities for Titus to play with his diggers in the sand. What fun!



Alexis Lynae Brandell

Though Lexi didn't understand the excitement that was about to take place in her world, she has equally enjoyed having family visit. Lots of playing, reading, bubbles and desert, and always someone willing to hold her (think: spoiled rotten!). She was especially fond of JJ, often choosing to have him hold her over mom and dad. Of course, JJ couldn't resist her, which meant the two of them spent LOTS of time together.



Kaela Sue Baker

Eating ice cream is what Kaela does best! A reward for doing her chores for a whole week, Kaela got an ice cream cone from the store. She chose raspberry, can't you tell? Kaela is working on many pre-reading activities at home and at school. She is able to recognize many short words like "off" and "on". It won't be long now until she will be reading. Kaela loves school and enjoys playing Pirates and Princesses with the boys and girls at school.



Melia Madelyn Baker

One of Melia's favorite words to say is, "funny". Being the youngest, she really loves to get people to look at her and laugh. She still loves to drink only water and refuses any kind of flavored drink, but she is branching out slowly with food and has tried laplap with much reserve. This month was a bit rough for Lia because she had a bout with Impetigo, also known as School Sores. With two rounds of medicine the sores cleared up and she is looking good as new, as you can tell from the picture. Also, Lia had quite a scare this month. A rooster wandered into our yard and crowed really loud. She is now scared of chickens and clings closely to Mom and Dad's legs any time she hears a rooster, even if it is a long way off. Silly Lia!



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Address Correction Requested

Check us out on the web!

www.missionvanuatu.com

Mission Vanuatu Team



Mike Olson

(Left side of picture)

**Aaron, Cindy, Kaela and
Melia Baker**

(Middle of picture)

**Eric, Shawnda, Titus and Lexi
Brandell**

(Right side of picture)