

My dear family & friends!

Okay, I admit it. One of the most distasteful aspects of teaching in Tanzania is that there are always too many people. Oh, yea! Too many students eager to learn, hanging on every word. Because at the end of the training I am forced to watch their faces when they're not selected to receive a certificate and the materials. Aaaargh!

We always tell the host pastor/bishop/presbyter exactly how many students we are able to train in our workshop. And we bring materials for the exact number. In fact, we become almost obnoxious by insisting they limit the number of attendees. You see, the training tools and final use is purposely designed for a SMALL group. In addition, we are now very short on materials and find ourselves forced to ration them. For some reason, the African mind doesn't get it. Word spreads and by the time the materials and certificates are awarded, names are read from the WILL RECEIVE and WILL NOT RECEIVE list. Then the sad faces and longing eyes start. Fortunately we do not make the decision. When they sadly ask me, "Oh, please, mama, could I receive, too?" I point to the host...and say, "Uh, huum.....ask him." So it was at the BGMC Children's training in Dodoma.

Dodoma is the capital city. Shockingly, there are no commercial flights into the city. (Don't EVEN ask why!) Thus, we were destined to travel 14 hours over what, in the USA, should be condemned roads. As the TZ missionaries say, the most dangerous thing you do in Africa is travel.

Our colleagues from Florida, Robb and Rhonda Hawks, joined us for the BGMC training. We loved having them! But it also added one more level of logistics, and logistics in this country are always snarled up. We packed more than half of our stuff to leave in storage because the car was not big enough for five adults, luggage, cameras, food supplies and training materials.

I packed according to the scripture: Nothing will separate me from my wifes. Not space, not packing, not small cars. My sanitary wipes were with me at all times. (Along with mosquito repellent.) I was glad I had the mind of the Lord in this!!!!



Our long trip to and from Dodoma was safe. Thank God! Exhausting, frustrating, and 14 hours each way. Shaken innards, headaches, backaches. Five adults, luggage, and work equipment. No decent potties.....just roadside dirty squatty potties. But we made it. There were many opportunities to pray and prepare to meet God as buses careened head-on in our lane, cows and donkeys

stepped in front of the car, and John was launched airborne as we literally FLEW over a hump in the road. (Fortunately, Rhonda and I grabbed him before he went through the windshield.) If I never travel on a Tanzanian road again, it will be too soon!

Rhonda and I began earnest prayer when the gas light came on. We were miles out in the bush, it was getting dark, and there was no petrol station for miles. Simon, our African translator, didn't seem too worried, but we were. Suddenly he pulled over on the side of the road in a tiny bush village – with no shop, no station of any kind in site. He inquired with much palaver (an African word for many many many words). Within minutes someone arrived with plastic water bottles filled with gasoline! Then he told us that every village has gasoline stored somewhere. Like, duh! Hakuna matata! No problem!

In Dodoma, 350 Children's workers gathered for renewal and training. They traveled to Dodoma from all over Tanzania – by bus, on foot, on bicycle. (I think there were only 2 or 3 private vehicles there.) Barnabas, the TAG General Supt, mandated that every church MUST have a children's program. He was saved through kid's



ministry and he believes the church must value and teach kids. (Amen, go Brother Barnabas!) David and Mary Boyd, of BGMC in Springfield, brought a team of 8 kid's pastors from the USA and all kinds of wonderful materials to give out – from books to puppets. There were workshops on games, ventriloquism, puppets, prayer, kids curriculum, Bible storying, children's church and more.

Our workshop was using Scriptpix to teach children the Bible. We designed and brought some awesome 'playing cards' with Scriptpix pictures on them. We taught them how to 'read' and 'teach' with the pictures – and then how to play games with the cards to enable children to learn the verses. They loved, loved, loved it! The only problem was that our materials are not 'self-explanatory tracts' - it has to be taught. So only the 40 students in our seminar were meant to receive the Instructor's Manual and a set of playing cards. The word spread, however, and in the end, we delegated the task of **who receives and who does** not to Simon. By the end of the three days, there were 40 children's workers trained, armed with materials and eager to get started.

A side note: The TAG church leaders in this country are red hot, on fire for Jesus. They were up much of the night praying. They had early morning devotions, followed by a full two-hour service. Then seminars the rest of the morning and all afternoon, then another worship service in the evening. In one workshop, called Praying with Children, the American woman who taught it said someone asked the question: “What can the American church teach us about more effective fasting and prayer?” She said she did not know what to say. They could teach us a thing or two on that subject!



Newly trained children's workers