

Reaching the Islands!



very rare blue iguana

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Dear friends,

Susan & I are happy to be back in Fiji to carry on our charity work in the Pacific islands, but wanted to use this newsletter to wrap up our 3-month stay in the Caribbean. Last time we wrote about our drug-awareness programs in Grand Cayman, but before leaving the Cayman islands we decided to also visit the other 2 islands in the group: Cayman Brac & Little Cayman, with populations of 2000 and 150 respectively.

We conducted programs in all the schools, but in the case of Little Cayman there was only one tiny school with a total of 5 students, ranging in age from 6 to 12. On seeing this small audience, we at first decided to just talk about alcohol & tobacco, however teachers asked us to also include cocaine & hashish as both of them have washed up several times on the beach & so students need to know what they are!! In fact, we've heard similar stories throughout the Caribbean: an enormous quantity of all kinds of drugs continually passes through the Caribbean area in yachts, but when navy patrols get too close for comfort, crews end up throwing their illicit cargo overboard & the mystery packages then wash up on beaches!

From the Cayman islands, we travelled on to Jamaica, landing at Montegu Bay. Our one possibility for accommodation fell through & so we arrived with literally nothing except God's promises in the Bible that He will 'supply all our needs' & 'be with us unto the ends of the Earth'! Coming out of the airport, we saw on the hill opposite that there was a large building that looked like a hotel. After confirming that it was indeed a functional hotel, we decided to drag our suitcases up there, (there were plenty of 'friendly' taxi drivers who wanted to help for an exaggerated price, but we declined their generous offers), & ask the manager if he could donate a room for one week! Fortunately he was on the property & kindly donated 3 nights to begin with, that then got extended to one week. As we continued our journey across the north coast of Jamaica, God supplied all our accommodation.....



Above left: Sue introducing our program to all the students of Little Cayman School. Right: common road sign in Little Cayman: 'Iguanas have the right of way'!



Above: on the map, our visit covered from Negril in the west, across the north coast to Buff Bay & down to Kingston.

Some highlights from our 6-week stay:

Negril: we met a very kind & helpful businessman, Sunil, that offered to drive us the 80km journey from Montegu Bay to Negril. As he used to live there, he already had contacts & so arranged a good hotel for us for one week, plus another that would give breakfast for the week. The owner of this second hotel introduced us to the local soup kitchen, (see photo opposite), whose manager used to live & work in Fiji! He took us all around & arranged for us to do programs in all the summer camps.

Falmouth: the same soup kitchen referred us to another Fijian (!) in Falmouth—the next town on our itinerary. Fijians are almost non-existent in this part of the world, but nevertheless we stayed 4 days with Fijian priest Father Mundo & conducted 4 programs in summer camps & vocational schools.

Runaway Bay: Franklyn at FDR resort wins the prize for the nicest place; he donated 3 nights in an all-inclusive hotel by the beach! We did 3 programs there.

In all, we did a total of 40 drug prevention programs during our 12 -week stay in the Cayman islands & Jamaica. Reactions were very good.



Above: our first program in Jamaica at Mt Alvernia Catholic High School.



Above: Susan passing out meals at St Anthony's Soup Kitchen, Negril; below: speaking at a summer camp in Falmouth.



*For more news, please see our website www.pacificoutreach.com that normally gets updated every 1-2 weeks,
Yours, Peter & Susan Kingston*

*pacificoutreach@yahoo.fr
Postal address: Pacific Outreach,
PO Box 15153, Suva, Fiji Islands*