

## VBS Updates

The following was written by two of the volunteers who went to help with the Vacation Bible School for Palestinian Christian children in the West Bank. All volunteers paid their own expenses for the trip.

### **Holy Land Update 1**

Safe Arrival

Greetings from Hope School!

Thank you so much for your prayers. I know they worked.

Late Friday night we were busily trying to finish packing, most of it being donated items for Hope School or others here in the Holy Land who desperately need things like medicine, clothing, and other items. This year we took nearly 350 pounds of supplies!

We arrived at Tel Aviv Sunday morning, but one of the bags didn't. Fortunately it arrived Monday evening. We attended an Arab/American church just thirty minutes after our arrival. We were able to see several treasured friends.

VBS camp started bright and early Tuesday morning (at least the kids were bright--we still had jet lag!) We start with singing, Bible stories, and a verse for the day. Then, the children go out for sports, then come in for a break with refreshments. Crafts are next. Yesterday, the children decorated Western hats, and today, they made picture frames, and had their pictures taken, to go into the frame. Tonight we 'dashed' in to Jerusalem and bought the photo printer towards which so many of you contributed. We will print out the photos soon. The VBS camp ends with a new favorite, Bible Bingo. At about 1:00, the kids review their Bible verse, and get some water then go home, or at least they are supposed to. Some of the campers want to hang around, and some have even asked to stay overnight.

On Monday we will be back at Hope School to have a full week of camp.

We are having a wonderful, busy time. There are some more wonderful stories of God's love and provision. We will share some of these in future emails. We just wanted to let you know that we have arrived safely and appreciate your prayers and thoughts for us.

Love,

Roxanne & Karen

### **Holy Land Update # 2**

Dear friends:

The photo printer is a HUGE success! We hooked it up today to see if it works, and it does. We do not even need to use the computer to print photos: just the memory card from the camera. What's more, it will print out an index (thumbnail sketch) of each photo on the card as well as the number. Then we can choose the exact photo we want, specify the size (in centimeters), and print! Solomon, the headmaster, said this will not only save the school more than \$1,000 per year, it will also save on time.

Thank you again to all who contributed toward this project. Before we leave we hope to buy replacement ink cartridges so the school will be all set for the upcoming school year. We will also leave an extra memory card for their camera so they can store the children's pictures until time to update them.

We would like to tell you a little about what's going on in the life of Ala' Q., who was a teacher for VBS camp last year. He would have liked to help with the camp again this year, but he was on his way to Spain for three months as an evangelist. Although there were seemingly insurmountable difficulties in getting permission to travel, the Lord overcame the insurmountable and Ala' left today.

Before he left, we prayed with him and gave him a small donation towards his ministry from his brothers and sisters in America. Your generosity made it possible for us to bless this young man. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers as he travels.

Tomorrow morning we leave bright and early for Masada and Petra, so we will be out of computer range for the next three days. We still can't believe we're really going! In the 10 years since Roxanne has been coming to the Holy Land, we have talked about making this trip, and it has never happened. And now not only will we get to go, we will also enjoy the company of good friends.

Love,  
Karen & Roxanne

### **Holy Land Update #3**

Dear friends:

Thank you for all the emails you have been sending. We have enjoyed hearing from all of you and hope to be able to respond to some of your questions when things calm down a little here! It is currently 10:35 p.m., and Mom and I have been helping to get ready for Bible School tomorrow

Today Bible School resumed. The students were quite hyper, since they had had three days to recharge. While we adults were out expending all our energy, the kids were collecting all the energy they could find! It was a very successful day, though.

Let me give you an updated, brief schedule for Bible School.

Singing, Bible lesson and memory verse.

Sports (usually games. Tomorrow [Tuesday] we'll have a scavenger hunt: one of the items is a bag full of trash. That way they will be cleaning the school grounds while having fun!)

Snack. This is much larger than a snack in the States, usually consisting of a sandwich (half a pita with tuna, hummus, hard boiled egg, etc.) and drink. Tomorrow's snack will be more 'American': plastic gloves with a few Skittles in the fingertips for fingernails, and stuffed with popcorn.

Daily crafts Include plaster of paris, small canvas bags, quilted pillows (for the girls), decorated papier-mâché boxes (for the boys), cowboy hats, etc.

Bible Bingo. This actually started as a craft, and now it's become tradition. Each day ends with Bible Bingo, and if we skip it for any reason, the kids immediately remind us!

Try to send the kids home. Usually a few try to stay the night!

Well, it's getting close to tomorrow now, so I need to go to bed while it's still today. Thank you again for your thoughts and prayers. God bless.

Love,  
Roxanne & Karen

### **Holy Land Update #4**

Dear friends,

This is the second letter that I have started. The first was in Arabic! I thought it best to start over.

It is 2:30 and we just got back from a day of swimming with the children (27 of them) from Bible Camp. I was splashed repeatedly; I think it was a good sign of being accepted.

It was more difficult this year, since the Hope School car cannot cross the check point to go to Bethlehem, so we hired a bus to pick us up on the other side, and we all marched across the checkpoint to the waiting bus. Roxanne and I stayed behind to fix lunches for the group. Each lunch consisted of a cucumber, egg, apple, honey-sesame bar, small bag of chips, 1/2 a pita bread with taco seasoned meat, and a drink. Everyone seemed to have a good time.

Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers. We will try to write more later.

Sincerely,  
Karen & Roxanne