

CLASS VIII TOUR TO GHANA, WEST AFRICA (2007)

Day 2 - March 16, 2007 – Scribe, Jason Stallman

We were all glad to walk into the airport terminal in Amsterdam after the long flight from Memphis. We had left the States in the late evening on Tuesday and had arrived mid morning on another continent.

We eagerly explored the airport and found that, short of a few perks, it was just like our large airports in the US. There was a small casino near our terminal, but most of us found that the smoke was too thick to play the games. A very noticeable difference between the US and Europe was dealing with cigarette smoke in a public place, something we are not dealing with much in the US anymore.

Before we knew it, it was time to stretch our legs for the last time and climb back aboard another airplane to our final destination, Accra, Ghana.

Our long awaited arrival to Africa was now just one six-hour flight away. Upon our arrival we were met with our first taste of the hot humid air we would struggle to come accustomed to during the next two weeks.



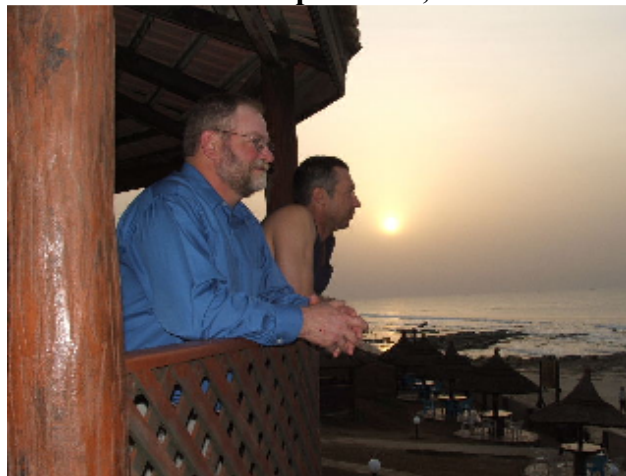
The line formed right inside the building to go through customs, we all filled out our provided claim form and had all our paper work ready to go. Much of the process really seemed like a formality for the agents there. We were all disappointed that no one asked to show the dreaded Yellow Card for the Yellow Fever Vaccination.

Once we loaded on the bus about half of us were hoping that our luggage made it to the hotel, as it was loaded in a separate vehicle (no need to be nervous). From there we headed to Southern Fried Chicken for our first meal, that wasn't on an airplane, in a day and half.

Our first taste of Ghanaian food wasn't too bad; rice, chicken, and some special HOT sauce. We also got our first taste of the beloved STAR brew and had quite a tally by the time we left as the restaurant ran out of the beer.

With our stomachs full we headed off to Coco Beach Resort. It was hard to get a good view of the local terrain, as it was dark. Once we crossed the gate into the resort we all felt a little bit better about our accommodations, even though we would soon have another challenge as the Hotel over booked their rooms. Never fear though, we were in Africa. We soon got our rooms squared away with two or three people per room, and turned our attention to the nearby Atlantic Ocean. We all were excited to test the water and see the sights, maybe some we would regret as soon as first light illuminated the beach the next morning.

**Day 3 - March 17, 2007 – Scribe, Julie Spiegel
Accra and Cape Coast , Ghana**



Our Guide, Teacher and Friend – Dr. Vincent Amanor Boadu



After a good night 's sleep in a far away land, several class members began the day with a leisurely stroll on the Atlantic coast beach looking for crabs, seashells and other miscellaneous items. However, upon reporting back to the group, it was soon discovered that their stroll was not so leisurely and there were more “miscellaneous items,” on the beach than crabs and seashells!



After enjoying our first Ghanaian breakfast at the hotel, which included fresh pineapple and mango juice, toast, sausage, and fresh fruit, we took off on the bus (that we would soon grow quite attached to) and headed in the direction of Cape Coast listening to the words of Wild Cherry singing “Play that Funky Music White Boy”. Accra traffic was bumper to bumper for the next two hours; however, there were so many sights and people to see out the window, that the time it took to get out of town went quickly.





Among the many things we viewed from our bus window leaving the city of Accra were the following:

- Shanty homes and shops along the roadside
- Hundreds, perhaps thousands of people selling things from atop their heads. Items sold ranged from plantains to hard-boiled eggs, to a full kitchen place-setting and utensils!
- Many unfinished buildings as we learned that, due to property rights issues, it is virtually impossible for the majority of Ghanians to get a mortgage for home construction. Instead, homes and shops are built over periods of 10-15 years one cement block at a time.
- Larger, much nicer homes in the hills, which housed entire families (i.e. parents, children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.)
- Goats and sheep along the highway as well as very young children helping their mothers selling fruit, etc.

As we headed southwest along the coast, we began seeing more palm trees, pineapple orchards, and small, 6-foot trees/shrubs called “cassava” that produce tapioca. And, we saw our first Ghanaian cattle along the roadside. Vincent told us that, as the weather gets dry, the cattlemen travel from the north in Mali and Burkina Faso southward nearly 700 miles by foot to sell their livestock, then make the 700 mile trip north again to start the process all over. We passed through numerous small communities and towns – from fewer than 100 residents to a few thousand residents. Vincent informed us that there is an indirect correlation between the number of bamboo tv antennas in a town and the number of children living in that town – the more bamboo tv antennas, the fewer the children!



After a four-hour drive, we arrived at Cape Coast and the Cape Coast castle. The castle is one of the most substantial - historically and architecturally - of all European buildings in West Africa. It was built into a “castle” in 1664 by the British using rocks, oyster shells, and cheap African slave labor, and took over 50 years to construct.



The Cape Coast castle is known for its role in the transatlantic slave and gold trade. Cape Coast remained an English fort throughout the Anglo-Dutch war, and then became the center of English administration of the Gold Coast until the capital moved to Accra in 1877. It only changed hands again at Ghana's independence in 1957. Cape Coast was most definitely the eldest of all Ghana's forts.



Along the West Coast of Africa (Benin, Ghana and Ivory Coast), the British brought their products and swapped them for slaves: usually criminals, prisoners of tribal wars and strong men. Their main destination was America. Between the 17th and the 19th century, it is estimated that the number of slaves deported from Africa ranged from 15-20 million. In 1807, the British abolished the slave trade in England. Before that, slaves were caught in the North, and, as there were not any transports, they walked to the South toward Cape Coast. The journey was very hard and dangerous and many of them died before arriving at the castle.

Upon arrival at the Cape Coast castle, slaves were put in chains, branded and parked in one of five male or two female dungeons. Captives stayed in the dungeons for two to three months awaiting shipment to the New World. While in the dungeons, many of the slaves died of malaria, malnutrition, yellow fever, and heat exhaustion. People who tried to escape from the castle were put in a special cell and died of suffocation. When the boats of the British arrived, the slaves passed into a tunnel through the “door of no return” and went directly onto the boats for overseas travel.



The tour was eye-opening and amazing to think that we were standing at the heart of what was, at one time, the transatlantic slave trade.





After the tour, we headed for a late lunch of rice, chicken, plantains and French fries. Class member Lance Tischauser got up close and personal to one of the crocodiles and almost ended up as lunch himself! The traditional Ghanaian fare was quite good. Late in the afternoon, we disembarked for Accra via motor coach and arrived back in the city after dark.



Upon completion of a late evening meal at the hotel, the majority of the class either jumped or was thrown in the hotel pool. The evening concluded poolside with Star, chicken fights, and revelry.

Day 4 - Sunday, March 18, 2007 – Scribe, Matt Schweer





Day two in Ghana is a travel day. We started the day with a warm breakfast of eggs, sausage, beans, bread, fruit and juice. The good news is we traded the cramped, warm bus in for a comfy large coach bus with hopefully a good A/C. The best news is how much we appreciate our new bus driver and his assistant during our trip to the North. The bad news is – no restroom facility. We left Accra finally at 9:30 a.m. after a couple stops to fill the coolers with water and ice for our journey.



We made our only stop at noon at a roadside restroom facility and restaurant. I have to admit other than a short trip across the border to Tijuana, Mexico many years ago, this was the second time in my life I paid to use a restroom – 1,000 cedes or 10 cents to enjoy the clean restroom facility – it was worth it! In addition it was the first, and after completing the trip, the only place we noticed sign postings that actually stated “PLEASE! DO NOT URINATE HERE”. However, at the same time an individual (not from our group) was urinating twenty feet from the sign. When you gotta go, you gotta go!



As we continue our journey, the vegetation continues to change heading north – it is very green, with very thick, heavy vegetation. There are many road construction stops that were very interesting as temporary markets located to the road construction areas. Many people selling everything you could imagine. We enjoyed a light lunch on the road.





We officially arrived at Kumasi around 3:00 p.m. The Engineering Guest House, our home for the next two nights, gets high praises – air conditioning that works and a hot water heater that provided a hot shower with pressure. However, while in Kumasi we learned to appreciate electricity as we experienced “rolling blackouts” – Jack warned us!





At 4:00 p.m., we are off to what Vincent informed us was “the zoo”. We parked at St. Peter’s Cathedral and were provided our first opportunity to experience “the zoo” or a large open market. We were encouraged to stay in groups and venture out for twenty minutes. It was an amazing sight – everything you could imagine from food to clothing to electronics – they had it all. Street after street, vendor after vendor. It was like Wal-Mart on the street.



After a short walk around part of St. Peter's and some insight from Vincent, we loaded up and headed back to the Guest House. We enjoyed a nice dinner and an evening of socializing and beverages. As always, the Star beer was cold and refreshing.

That evening a few of us got to encounter our first purchasing opportunity as we got introduced to Hector and Isaac, art students at the university, or so we believed. They had some authentic clothing, genuine jewelry, and actual African wood art carvings. Several of us were hooked and couldn't resist. We made Hector and Isaac's night. Oh, but wait, for those that didn't get the opportunity to buy, it was just the beginning of the Hector and Isaac show as they were back at 7 a.m. the next morning and were hanging around upon our return from Mole on Thursday night and our departure Friday morning. They loved us and apparently we loved them. In the end, it didn't matter that Hector and Isaac were not art students at the university, they were entrepreneurs far beyond a college education and I believe only one person found a sticker on the bottom of their purchase that said "Made in China" – and we thought only in America. A special thanks to Hector and Isaac for educating us prior to visiting future markets and the cultural arts center – it was truly a Ghanaian experience.

Day 5 - March 19, 2007 – Scribe, Gabe Schlickau

After a night of rest at the KNUST Engineering Guest House, the morning started with a familiar breakfast. Fried eggs, toast and watermelon were served by the Guest House caterers along with instant coffee and Milo hot chocolate. Unfortunately, Jeff Reinert was late to breakfast due to his roommate's unfamiliarity with the door lock system in Kumasi. To keep a long story short, Jeff's roommate locked the door from the outside and went to breakfast, leaving Jeff helplessly

locked in his room waiting for the return of his roommate. One of many “lessons learned” while in Ghana.



Following breakfast the bus departed for a short Consumer Market Study on the KNUST (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology) Campus. Dr. Vincent’s daughter Judy, a first year engineering student at KNUST, joined us on the bus to lead the tour of the University. We arrived at a small shopping area on campus, which included a bank, university bookstore, and grocery market area. We learned that the banking system is in the process of shifting to a required minimum deposit of 1,000,000 cedis (\$111)/deposit. Students were lined up outside the bank waiting to make their smaller deposits before the new limit was put in place.

Some of the items and their comparative prices in the market area included: Loaf of Bread - 10,000 cedis (\$1.11); 6 pack of beer – 32,000 cedis (\$3.55), New Text Book – 215,000 cedis (\$23.88).

From the market we went to Levine Hall on campus for our meeting with University faculty. Dr. Samuel Ampadu, aka Kofi (Friday born), was our host. He gave us a brief lesson in Ghanaian culture, teaching us that because of the high infant death rate, a child is not named until the 8th day of his life. For the first week he is called the day of the week he was born on. In most cases, friends and family will always continue to call a person by their day-of-the week name. Thus, Dr. Ampadu is called Kofi.



Janna, our chair for the day, introduced KARL to Dr. Momade, the Provost of the College of Engineering, who then gave us an official welcome to the college. Dr. Momade stated he was nervous, because he received word that we came with a mandate from Governor Sebelius to serve as ambassadors on behalf of Kansas while in Ghana. The Provost then talked with us about the college of engineering and the key areas they are focusing on. As the “pillar” of the university, he stressed that the college was working on areas they see as the “pillars” of the Ghana economy, including mechanization of agriculture, energy issues, and water/environmental issues.

The KNUST Public Relations director, Mr. Saveput, then gave us a history and overview of the University. It began as the Kumasi College of Technology in January, 1942. It has undergone a couple of name changes but is now named for the first president of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah. There are 18,721 students enrolled with a 29:71 female:male ratio. The goal is to achieve a 50:50 ratio at some point. KNUST has 6 academic units, including science, agriculture and natural resources, architecture and planning, art and social sciences, engineering, and health sciences. Each unit is managed independently with its own financial and administrative organization. Interestingly, the engineering guest house where we stayed, was designed and built

by the college of engineering faculty and students, with help from the college of architecture and planning.



Students in the college of agriculture can receive a B.S. in one of the following areas : Ag. Business & Extension; Agriculture; Forestry; Post Harvest Technology; or Natural Resource Management. Mr. Saveput said the University is very proud of the engineers that are educated there. KNUST has trained 95-98% of all engineers who are currently working in industry in Ghana.

The University is developing a distance learning program. Faculty will travel to Accra to give initial lectures, then follow-up with students by phone and e-mail. A few of the new academic majors available now at KNUST include Telecommunications Engineering, Aerospace Engineering, and Post Harvest Technology. Post Harvest Technology is key, as approximately 50% of all crops harvested in Ghana are currently lost to spoilage before they can be processed. Mr. Saveput then discussed the strengths and weaknesses of KNUST. While the university has a strong reputation for quality education and qualified faculty, funding continues to be inadequate and faculty wages are very low. However, he feels KNUST is poised to lead the socio-economic advancement of Ghana in the future if granted the proper resources.

We were then briefed by Dr. Forson about the work KNUST is doing in the area of energy. The college is working on a solar energy project that would create battery charging centers for a community to charge lamps and other battery operated devices. They have a long ways to go before this is feasible, as a 50 watt panel, enough to power 5 light bulbs or 1 black and white t.v. would currently cost 7.2 million cedis (\$800) to install. The college is also working on biofuels and other renewable energy projects as well as a new chemical to improve the performance of a diesel engine.



Following the College of Engineering, we met with faculty from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. We were welcomed by the Dean of the College who gave us an overview. There are 750 undergraduate students and 50 post graduate students in the college of agriculture. The college has 45 lecturers, 75% with PhD's. The Dean emphasized this is the premier faculty of agriculture in the nation. The Ministry of Food and Agriculture is the largest employer of agriculture graduates. It was then emphasized again that training in post harvest technology is critical as there is a major need for improvement. When asked, the dean stated there are no good cooperative efforts taking place between the University and private industry for development of efficient processing. The University conducts research in Animal Science (primarily focused on feed efficiency), Crop Science (Tomato, Casava, Rice, Black-eyed Peas), and horticulture.

After being briefed by the faculty, the floor was open for questions and answers. The KNUST faculty had as many questions for the KARL class as we had for them. Most of them revolved around the use of subsidies to strengthen agriculture, which led to a fairly lively discussion regarding the use and intent of U.S. subsidies. The World Bank brought an end to agriculture subsidies in Ghana, which seems to have slowed progress in the country according to the faculty. It came to light in the Q&A session that 60-70% of Ghanians' income is spent on food, versus 11% of U.S. income. Genetically modified crop technology was also discussed. We were informed that Ghanians in general are afraid of G.M. crops, so they have been slow to develop in Ghana. Most farmers today are still subsistence farmers, who lack the capital to adopt any new technology.



At noon we toured the Agriculture and Horticulture farm, where research is being done on Vegetables, Fruits and Ornamentals. The commercial sale of crops grown at the farm produces income used to fund further research. Students at KNUST don't specialize in a major until their 4th year. At the research farm, students entering the horticulture major are required to grow 4 crops (cucumber, okra, lettuce and onion) to gain practical knowledge prior to being employed by the Ministry of Agriculture. The farm had one area devoted to ornamentals, but had no greenhouses. Several of our class members were treated to a "Miracle Berry" which is a small seed that when sucked on, changes your taste buds to make everything you eat for the next 30 minutes taste sweet. It removes the sour or bitter taste from food. Farm faculty said it is used for diabetics to make food taste sweet without the use of sugar.





At 1 p.m. we toured the livestock farm, where cattle, sheep, goats and pigs are raised. One faculty member showed us her project using dyed chicken feathers to make things such as a wreath, belt, lamp shade, and dusting brush. We toured the meat processing unit, where beef, pork, ostrich, sheep and goats are processed for commercial sale. Equipment in the unit was 20-25 years old. The unit has biogas digesters on the property, but they are not currently being used due to a lack of funding for upkeep. We looked at the cattle herd, which includes only breeds

indigenous to West Africa (West African Shorthorn and Ndama). We then toured the swine barns.



At 2 p.m. we went to lunch at the KCCR Cafeteria on the KNUST Campus. Lunch included a choice of either Grilled Chicken, Saffron Rice and Tomato Sauce, or Tilapia (whole) Beans and ripened plantain.

At 4:30 we arrived at the palace of the Ashanti King. This king is a leader of the Ashante Empire, which occupies Central Ghana surrounding Kumasi. We toured the museum, which is the former palace of the king (he now lives next door). We learned about the significance of the golden stool in the culture. The head of the nation sits on the golden stool. Also included in the palace tour were gold artifacts, Crystal Glassware, and paintings of current and former Ashante leadership. There were a set of ceramic vases which were given to the King in 1980 by Pope John Paul when he visited the palace.

At 6 p.m. our tour guide, Peter took us to the Ashanti Cultural Center where we learned more about the culture and history of the Ashanti Empire. Most of the artifacts in the cultural center symbolized the Ashantis' tradition of being strong but peaceful. We then had a chance to do some shopping at local artisan shops prior to going back to the guest house.





We arrived at 8 p.m. at the Guest House for our social with faculty and students from KNUST. We were served appetizers of BBQ chicken, shea nuts, chips and banana bread. As always, our conversation with the faculty and students was accompanied by cold Star beer. At 9 p.m. we were served dinner of grupper, chicken, rice, plantains and ice cream with bananas.



Day 6 - Tuesday, March 20 -- Scribe, Jeff Reinert

Today was supposed to be simple, kind of like a walk in the park. Okay, more like a ride on a bus. Little did we know that this day would be full of trials and tribulations. The group was under the assumption that we would have an 8 hour bus ride to the northern part of Ghana, called Mole National Park. The scribe notes would be, we got up and ate breakfast, then got on the bus. Eight hours later we arrived at Mole. That's not quite how it went.



The 8th class of KARL all arouse around 6:30 a.m. to eat a light breakfast and load the bus by 8 a.m. After a few members did some negotiating with Hector, the shirt vendor, the bus departed Kumasi on time. That is simply all there is to say. Until around 10:30 a.m. when some of the members of the board noticed a smell coming from the back of the bus. This would be the first time we broke down.



After about 30 minutes of sweating their “you know what” off, our driver, Dan, and his amigo got us back on the road. Thanks to a little help from our resident KARL Class VIII mechanic Jeff Morgan pointing out that the idler pulley had a zerk and therefore could take a few shots of grease.



We were back in business and like Willie says, “on the road again.” To bad it wasn’t for long because after about 30 miles or so we broke down again. This time we were at a Kwik Shop, Ghana’s version anyway. The group did however clean them out of Pringles and Snickers bars.



It would be the same song and dance throughout the day. Several times the bus would stop along side the road to replace belts. This would lead us to a diamond in the rough. A coco plantation ran by a local farmer. He was kind enough to show us his operation, consisting of sheep, chickens, and numerous coco trees. We were also able to see his own home where 11 of his family members reside. He also had water available with his own well located next to his home.





The last 60 miles of the trip would be the most trying as it would be on a dirt road that has little to no maintenance. We would spend the better part of four hours bouncing up and down while swerving all over the road to find the smooth places. Once we finally arrived at Mole National Park we were given our room assignments and treated to a delicious meal of spaghetti and grilled chicken. After that, the group members retired to their rooms to get some rest for the Safari in the morning.

Day 7 , March 21 -- Scribe, Matthew Welsh



The day started out warm and with some excitement about the future of today's events. As the sun crested over the West African horizon, we arose to baboons scurrying in the yard outside our quaint sleeping accommodations. This was the big day to go on a walk about of the game reserve or to take a drive of the park. The group that I was with opted for the walk.



The native wildlife was not overly abundant due to it being the dry season. However, we did see a species that represented our antelope, as well as an opportunity to see the crocodiles in the watering holes, an African python, and a bachelor party of bull elephants. The walk took roughly an hour and was close to 2 miles in distance.





When the group was finished it was time for breakfast. By this time in the morning (9:30 a.m.) it was hot enough to go swimming. This was what most people did until it was time to go get debriefed on the specs of the park. The park manager and park ranger came to our group gathering and gave an overview on the park size and species that are in the Mole game reserve. What stuck out most to me was poaching seems to be a big problem from the local villages that surround the park.





When the speakers finished, we went to a neighboring village called Larabanga. It contained the oldest mosque in Ghana. The people seemed to be fairly westernized in their speech and salesmanship in an effort to collect donations. KARL donated 50 dollars to the cause and moved on to our task at hand.



MOGNORI



The task was to go to Mognori, the village that was promised our help. Only our elders and leaders could greet the chief. Once we were welcomed to the village, get this, the regional economic development directors stepped in to give us the tour of the village.



The best word picture I can give is to think of an Eastern US Indian village around the mid 1800's. That truly is the life style they lead, other than their clothes are of a modern fashion. The huts were sod and the roofs were thatched with palm. There was no electricity, no running water and no sewer system.





By most people's standards Mognori would be considered a very primitive village. The cooking is done on an open fire and tribal dances are still performed. Several members in our group actually learned how to dance African style.





As hundreds of photo's were taken, including Polaroids for the villagers (to keep), we prepared our gift presentation. Doug Gerber, chair for the day, presented a large duffle bag full of reading, math and science books for the headmaster. We also presented a basketball and two soccer balls brought from Manhattan, Kansas. The sports equipment was to replace a plastic bag filled with rags that was serving as their football.

Our group then formed a line and, with much ceremony, laid our gifts down before the chief. The collection included dynamo flashlights (no batteries needed) Kansas/KARL and K-State t-shirts for the kids plus pencils, pens and other assorted supplies. Class banker Matt Schweer then presented a collection of nearly \$500 in cash to be used for the village's fledgling enviro-tourism business. The director was nearly in tears. After many minutes of applause and formal thank you's we headed for the motor coach with children at our sides, holding our hands. We watched with great smiles as Scott Vander Hamm gave away his cowboy hat to a teenage boy.



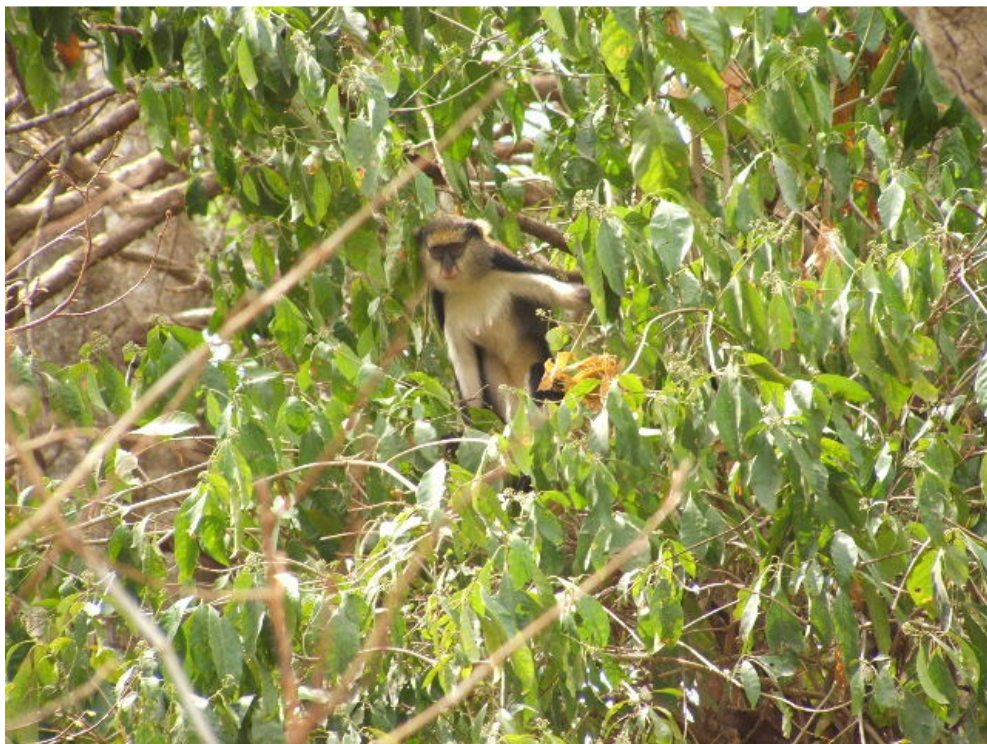
Jack found the older brother of a little boy, Abu, that had befriended Lindy during the Advance Team tour. Abu was summonsed and a happy reunion took place for a great memory.



We waved as we drove out of sight knowing we had changed lives on both sides of the globe. Diplomacy was at its very best in the Northern Territory of Ghana - it was person to person. We headed back to the Mole Game Reserve to rest for our 12 hour trek the next day. We got back at dark with dinner discussion centered around our experiences when it was announced our departure time was 4 a.m. We quickly made our way back to our rooms with a thunderstorm approaching. Many of us had our baths from pails and buckets and fell asleep to another hot restless night in north Ghana (90 degrees indoors).

Day 8 March 22, 2007 -- Scribe, Marcine Moldenhauer

We departed the Mole Game Reserve at 4:00 am for Kumasi. Everyone was pretty much on time but not wide awake. The bumpy two and half hour drive back to the highway didn't allow for much sleeping either.



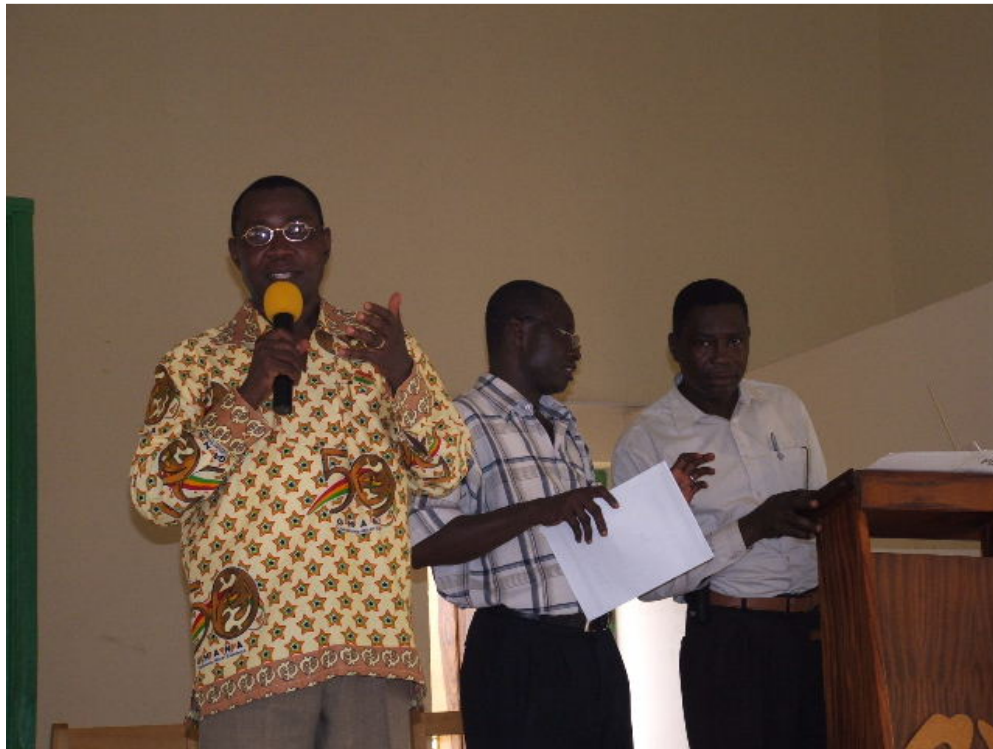
The unplanned stop to the Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary was a welcome relief to get off of the bus and stretch. There were two species of monkeys that we observed. One was black with 3 foot long silver tails – they were beautiful. These monkeys are rather shy and spend most of their time up high in the tree canopy. The smaller brown monkey, known as the Mona Monkeys, are very friendly social creatures. They were discovered by a priest and the people who settled the village. These monkeys would come into the village and socialize with the people. They were thought to have “God Like” powers as they seemed to bring good fortune to the people. The people embraced their existence and came to almost worship them. In the sanctuary there is a small grave yard where the past priest’s of the village are buried as a memorial to the monkeys and many monkeys are buried at the same site.



Additionally, we discussed several tree species of the 91 species in the jungle. Several are thought to be over 200 years old with one over 600 years old. The “Field Guide for Trees at Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary” fully describes the trees and their domestic uses.

After spending an hour or so at the Sanctuary, we headed for St. Joseph’s College/School in Bechem. True to Ghana, we were welcomed with great hospitality, cold drinks, a wonderful buffet (chicken, rice, beans, pasta, spinach, bread, and ice cream for dessert).





St. Joseph's is a school, but more well known as a Teachers College. We were welcomed by Father Mathew and a host of college dignitaries. They presented the basic structure and history of the college. Several key learnings: the government's proposed commitment to education is that every child Age 4 – 15 has 11 years of compulsory basic education. Though this might sound like a limited education system, it far exceeds the standards required under various international conventions on people's rights to which Ghana has subscribed, such as the UN Millennium Development Goals. Additionally, pupils in Junior High will be introduced to the concepts and training in vocational, technical, agricultural, and general education. This training most likely will be embraced through apprenticeships.





St. Joseph's teachers college has 835 students, 130 – 140 do their student teaching at the village they have either selected or they have been assigned to after they graduate. During their student teaching, they are to learn the cultures, language, customs, and become integrated into the village as one of them. This is normally not difficult, but can be a challenge if the student teacher comes from a “clan” which is very unfamiliar with that villages customs.



We presented the President of the college with a State of Kansas T-Shirt that everyone had signed. It was late in the afternoon when we finally headed on to Kumasi. We were eagerly looking forward to the air conditioning and nice shower facilities at the Engineering guest house, as it had been a long, hot day. True to form, not long after we all got checked in, the power goes off. It was off for several hours, so the wind up flash lights came in

handy again. Bugs had not been much of an issue until this night. Unbeknownst to Barb and Marcine, their bed linens were infested with bed bugs. The bites were obvious the next morning with welts everywhere.

Day 9 - March 23 -- Scribe, Gary Millershaski.

I, Gary Millershaski, of sound mind and body plan to enlighten you of what took place today. We woke up to the sound of electricity or a light that was left on the evening before. We have all agreed that electricity is a luxury that we take for granted. The first person I visited with outside my room was Vincent. Our wonderful leader and cultural guru asked how I slept and I commented that the last three nights were a little warmer (90 degrees plus) than my target temperature. Vincent went on to say that if you make your towel wet and lay it on your body it will help moderate your temperature. I told him that would have been useful information earlier and he went on to explain that it was good to experience African heat or he would have told us sooner.

When we met in the morning there were several bites to be shared about at breakfast, guess the mosquitoes were glad to see us back. Hopped on bus number three this morning, decorated nicely with school girls and lavender curtains. When we were getting loaded on the bus there was not enough room for the suitcases under the bus so we had to exit off and they put luggage on the back of the bus. There were a few locals selling items and they were making out pretty good. Doug Basset traded his shirt off of his back for two of the local style shirts.



We got on the road from the college to the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) at Bunso. However when in Ghana you are on Ghanaian time and there are several people making comments on how long it takes to get from point A to point B. That is in relation to what we Americans are accustomed to! While on the road Vincent challenged us to invest one thing in Ghana that would give us a return on our investment and to share with your neighbor. Meanwhile Vincent stopped the bus and purchased Roasted Plantains and Peanuts. A few were

skeptical but those who tried were impressed. I know the thought of a warm banana may not sound good but these were tasty and we learned plantains were definitely not bananas. I wrote as fast as I could and apologize if this is not accurate. Chris went with Broom stick handles. Jeff Morgan opted with Tractors and more mechanization. Brian and Marcine wanted to take old steel from wrecks and plastic scrap and recycle making plastic roofing. J.L. and Jeff Reinsert went with Post production and with cement trucks and the Styrofoam forms. Hallie and Julie went into canning mangos and Mole tourism by air. Janna wanted solar panels to produce electricity. Harmony and Jason were into recycling to start at households then sent to waste and recycling plants. Doug Gerber, Jim Basset and Ginger were into post harvest and infrastructure improvements. Mary Ann and Don thought street corner trash pickups and hire labor to pick and sort. Mark Winger wanted to use credit and borrowing capital. Lance, Thad, Alan, and Todd came up with a plan to use helicopters to transfer products and people from Mole to Accra. Barb and Matt were going to start a business “so far so good” with entities such as “get canned”, which was a mobile canning facility, and “get loaded” which was a trucking firm. Verle and Carolynn were into solar powered refrigerators and bicycle powered chargers for there cell phones and a goat that eats plastic. Deana and Ray wanted to get a resort on the beach and get cruise ships to stop by. Dan and Gabe wanted a high class place at Mole with a golf course and nicer transportation, along with peak power electricity production. There was further discussion on culture blocks or what would be stumbling blocks so we also talked about long term leases. We were told there is a 5000 acre farm close to the Monkey sanctuary were the village is leasing land.

After further discussion Vincent then challenged us to take the country as given not how we wanted to make it more like the U.S.A. and see how we chose to proceed with our investments.



Almost to the “CRIG” (Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana) approaching 12:00 here and as you read these minutes it would be 7:00 am back home and yes we have been up for six hours already. The Institute was established in 1938 at Tafo as the central Cocoa Research Station of the Department of Agriculture of the Gold Coast. It was to investigate problems of pests and diseases which had reduced cocoa production. In 1944 the Institute was upgraded to cover West Africa and also to investigate soil fertility and agriculture practices with a view to increasing

yield. Since 1966 the CRIG has been further widened to include coffee, kola, Shea nut and more recently cashew.

We were given a tour on the steps on producing cocoa. Due to an unusually dry and hot spell, flowers on the trees had dropped and production was very low so it was a verbal tour. We were enlightened on the processing of fresh beans. The pods are harvested Monday thru Thursday then on Friday you break pods with a stick - no knives. The beans are then run through a fermentation process which lowers the p.h. from 6.8 to 4.5. There are several ways to accomplish this with a pile and banana leaves, or baskets and leaves or box fermentation or tray fermentation. They all produce the same product and end up with beans at 40 % moisture.



Next is drying which takes 10 to 14 days. There are several byproducts from these procedures. Animal feed from husks, and if burned a high concentrate of potash. The sweating from the fermentation process can produce pectin, jams, wine, vinegar and alcohol. The beans that have germinated or are diseased are made into soap.



The CRIG is also into selling nursery stock to people wanting to put in an orchard. It is not uncommon for a cocoa tree to produce for fifty years. Each tree needs a 10' square to grow. Only two thirds of the country is conducive to raise cocoa. We finished with a drive and saw the golf course, tennis court and the country club. We were then refreshed with a cold cocoa drink and on to Matthew 25 in the city of Koforidua.



Matthew 25 House is an AIDS care project in Ghana helping those infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Their mission Statement “ Fulfilling Matthew 25:31-40 of the New Testament,,,”I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, in prison and you came to visit me...what you did for one of my least ones, you did it for me”.

We were assembled and we sang the national anthem and we were treated to them singing the Ghanaian anthem. Mathew 25 House strives to be self-sustaining and to decrease its dependency on donations by tie & dye and Batik making which was demonstrated to us. We were showed how they use wax to prevent the dye transfer and how they use color dye with chemicals to get their desired product. We then broke into smaller groups and asked questions. Currently they were helping 70 adults and 40 children. We had an interpreter to help but you could see the answers in their eyes or in motions such as when asked when they first were sick what was it like and the reply was very bad body aches. Another problem is how everyone is isolated once sick and the majority of the people only inform one family member. This was a very tough and touching segment. We then reassembled after a shopping spree and gave them our donation that we had collected amongst ourselves, about \$2,200 which was going to be used for start up seed capital for sustaining businesses within Matthew 25 House.



Next- on to supper at director Father Bobby Benson's home. The menu consisted of rice, fish, fried plantain, red beans and Ice cream. It's kind of funny how after a few days the food starts to grow on you.



We then had a horticulture lesson from Vincent on native plants and how they utilize them. The evening meal was very relaxing and in probably the most beautiful settings we had been in. The weather was comfortable. Then it was off to Accra.

There were a few dares to sing some Karaoke on the way so they hooked the P.A. speaker to an IPOD and listened to music until the batteries went dead. Made it to Accra and I don't know how to explain the lack of street signs. Anyway we were getting directions from street vendors

on how to get to the hotel and all of a sudden Thad bursts out “Coming thru” as he hurdles the Ice chest in the aisle “man on a mission”. Sure caught us by surprise when he got back on the bus with a relieved look on his face and stated “I bet I lost 30 pounds”, then on to the hotel. Welcome to our surprise when we only had rooms for about half of us and after several minutes of discussion we split up and half went to a sister hotel. After the separation they all agreed they went to a better place so all’s well that ends well, then the saga continues.

The evening entertainment was mostly centered on Todd due to the fact he was single and some other hotel guests were looking for a good time. Let me rephrase that as “another local cultural learning experience”. Todd learned to practice the “Just Say No” response. We finished the evening with a refreshing swim and the manager told us to be sure and shower because of the extra chemicals they had put in the pool -- and that’s all I have to say about that. We ended the day quite thankful and very fortunate to have Vincent as our tour guide.

Day 10 - March 24 -- Scribe, Ginger Kopfer



Saturday, March 24th began with breakfast at the hotel. Many enjoyed some toast which Gary Millershaski coined “the other white meat”. Those who spent Friday night at a newer, neighboring resort rejoined the group. Vincent gave us three options for the evening’s entertainment: attend a play, go to a dance club, or do both. Bill Wood voted to do both, so the rest of us agreed, hoping to see the “wild” side of Bill finally emerge in Africa.



We were then onto our favorite bus with our favorite driver (they had returned to us after a day furlough of bus fixing fun) and off to visit the Volta Dam at Akosombo. On the way, everyone gave money to Matt Schweer to be exchanged into cedis and Vincent enlightened us about the port city of Tema. Tema was a small fishing village 50 years ago at the time of Ghana's independence. It changed into a port and industrial city for "hard" goods, including cocoa. "Soft: goods (produce and fabrics, etc.) go through the other port city in Ghana. The city contains the only concrete highway in Ghana that was constructed in the 60's and is still in good condition. The government built 12 communities in the city which also contains a cement factory, feed mill, Cargill cocoa facility, and other industrial facilities.

Vincent then challenged us with his proposal to save Western Kansas. He justified the fact that Western Kansas needs saving by saying that economic problems exist and that maintaining the status quo is actually falling behind. He mentioned that people are important for the economy and that Las Vegas is the fastest growing city with their "What Happens in Vegas, Stays in Vegas" logo and their "sin" business. Vincent thus suggested camel racing as a way to save Western Kansas. This would be ideal as it is unique, would get Arab money and freeze their assets, and would have a large spillover effect including building the track, adding an airport, hiring veterinarians, etc. The problem with this is a moral issue, not anything else. Some concerns would be cultural differences and homeland security issues. Some people in Western Kansas do not want to see more people come into their area. Vincent asked how we, as leaders, handle issues such as this. A suggestion was made to work on keeping young people in Western Kansas instead of working on a plan such as this. The "not in my backyard" feeling was expressed by many. Vincent encouraged the group to think of the world as being flat and concentrate on competing globally. He asked us to look at our own communities and how we preserve culture and have economic success as well.



The group made a stop at the only suspension bridge in Ghana located at Atimpoku. It was a very pretty area on the Volta River and many took the opportunity to take some photographs and stretch our legs a bit.



We were then back on the bus until our next stop for a restroom break only three hours into our trip. It was a short ride from there to the Volta Dam where we met our guide, Nii. We learned many facts about the dam and Ghana, including:

- Lake Volta is created by the dam and is the largest artificial lake in the world at 2.1 million acres (1/4 the size of Holland)
- Africa also has the longest river and the deepest lake in the world
- The Mountain House, a presidential retreat, overlooks the dam and belongs to the Volta River Authority
- The dam has an interesting combination of history, science, and geology
- In 1915, an Austrian found a gorge with the potential of creating a dam
- Further studies were done on this potential from 1939-49
- Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah even met with President Kennedy to discuss the idea of this dam
- Kaiser Engineering wanted to establish a bauxite smelter and helped with construction of the dam because they needed the electricity, they got cheap electricity while they were operating and used 80% of the electricity created by the dam
- Excess electricity is now sold to other countries for revenue
- The dam was built between January 1962 and September 1965, this was a relatively short period of time as it now takes 8 years to build a two kilometer stretch of road
- In order for the dam to be constructed, 720 villages and 8,000 people were resettled - every year, \$500,000 is given to these people to help them meet their needs
- The countries of Benin, Togo, Burkina Faso, and Cote d'Ivoire all contribute to Lake Volta
- The White, Red, and Black Volta Rivers all feed into Lake Volta
- The lake is used for transportation, electricity, and fishing
- Low water levels are happening in the lake currently due to poor rain in the north, but electricity still has to be supplied
- 40% of the electricity created in Ghana is wasted
- Volta means "to meander" in Portuguese
- The dam is a six unit plant with each unit creating 170 megawatts of electricity, the turbines have been changed to up the production and turn 115 times per minute
- the water must be 252 feet deep to run full electricity and is currently 238 feet deep
- by August, Ghana hopes to have some thermal plants to augment the electricity created by the dam
- electricity is supplied by the dam based on demand through the System Control Center



- the dam is an embankment dam which means it is constructed of rock, sand, and/or clay
- the dam's dimensions are 114 meters high, 570 meters long, and 340 meters wide

- the dam has a seismograph which is monitored 24/7 because of potential earthquakes
- 120 workers are below water level at any given time, working happily!
- the dam has gates that open in the case of too much water
- a two hour pleasure boat cruise is available on Lake Volta on weekends and holidays

We then headed to Rothmann's Maritime Club for lunch. Menu items included rice, chicken, tilapia, french fries, salad, and banku (which Don Beesley compared to the taste of playdoh). After lunch, a quick stop was made at a bead market where bracelets, necklaces, and loose beads could be purchased.



It was then time for the bus ride back to the Cocoa Beach Resort. A short distance from the resort, the bus pulled over and we found out that the play started earlier than was originally thought and we turned around to head for the University of Ghana. We arrived at the university quickly, after turning on our hazard lights (signaling an emergency) and driving down the wrong side of the road. It was interesting to see how other drivers would just pull over and get out of our way.

Upon arriving at the university, we found out the play didn't really start until 7pm, so we were taken to a Guest House for bathroom breaks, beverages, and a french fry snack. A small group elected to return to the hotel while the rest of us stayed for the play, which actually didn't start until 8pm. The play was about the history of the Ashanti Kingdom and was entitled "Eto Ato Bare". Those in attendance witnessed great dancing, drums, and a very interesting story line. The women appreciated the fine physiques of the men in the production. The group then got back on the bus and returned to the Cocoa Beach Resort where pizza was brought by Vincent and enjoyed by all. Another day in Ghana came to a close with the sound of the ocean waves lulling us to sleep.

Day 11 - Sunday, March 25 -- Scribe, Mary Ann Kniebel



A few brave souls wanting to experience more culture were up early to attend church. After a leisurely breakfast, the class held a short executive session to handle pressing business and we then departed for touring and shopping with queen Harmony (very appropriate for shopping) leading the way.



Vincent pointed out different buildings and offices and we unloaded in Independence Square for a few photo opportunities. This site has the tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the parade

grounds recently used for their 50th birthday celebration. Vincent also told us of how he 'lost' a government job after he finished his master's degree, by literally talking himself out of it! The employees thought he would make them look bad since he was so eager! He also said that as a child he was not chosen to lead his school during a parade ceremony and refused to participate at all if he couldn't lead! Hard to imagine! Of course, he was chosen by another group to lead, so he won anyway.

We then proceeded to the Masazi Visitor and Arts Centre. I am not sure what I was expecting, but this was not it. I actually thought it was some kind of museum or cultural center, it was however, an open air marketplace. As Jim Bassett put it, capitalism still works! Many of us were suffering the lack of physical contact from those we are close to; we still pined for those we are close to, but not the physical contact! As Thad said, we were worked over!

The market is a highly competitive shopping experience where the top barterer wins. Sometimes that is you, and after you talk to your neighbor, you realize sometimes it was they. There were some unique partnerships formed to challenge the experts who operated the different stalls. Ginger employed Douger to reel in eager operators who scoured the entire place to bring back what they thought she wanted. She then just pointed and let Doug do the negotiating. In the face of such extreme persuasion, Todd became several ladies husband, as they would point to him and say 'My husband won't let me', and then turned and ran as they accosted Todd! I was everybody's sister or mommie and they insisted they would not cheat me. Barb had spent all her money, and after playing with African balls on a string in a desperate attempt to gain rhythm, had to borrow money from her husband 'Todd' to purchase them. One shop owner deemed Marcine the empress and Don said he was 'homeboy'. Carolyn was heard telling one person selling who knows what kind of snack 'It is Sunday, I cannot eat this'; luckily no lightning came forth from the sky to smite her. One cloth buyer was heard saying if this is such good quality why can I see through it! But there were several very beautiful prints and dresses purchased. We were actually shown up by the Purdy's in overall trade. Being a banker for years obviously trains you well on negotiating. Dena must employ some unique practices to make elementary children behave as well! They returned to the bus with out their watches, purses etc. but willingly since they traded them for things they wanted. Overall, everyone was very happy with the assortment of woodcarvings, jewelry, clothing etc., that was purchased and the overall experience of shopping at the arts zoo.

We then departed on the bus toward lunch. On the way we passed Dr. Kwame's final resting place in Accra, after burial in Guinea, being moved to his home village, and finally to a national site. We arrived at Lindicott Ventures on the beachfront. It had a beautiful Kansas-like stiff breeze and wonderful rocks and scenery. We enjoyed the ever-popular Star beer and had a chance for many photo ops. We were getting close to having lunch when a black plume of plastic-rubbery smelling smoke erupted upwind of us. It turns out the neighboring restaurant was feuding with our restaurant and was upset at having a busload of people show up so they burned a big pile of flip flops. It was a senseless loss, albeit hilarious. The flames were banked and we had the best chicken of the whole trip. One thing you have to give the African, they make the best French fries. Go palm oil. We have pictures of the French fry vultures waiting for the next platter!

We drove around town then in true tourist fashion. The old part of town had the James fort prison just 2 blocks from the restaurant. We saw the old parliament building and the new one, the Ghana Lottery building (which was huge), which Vincent said, made quite a bit of money for the government. We passed many embassies and I had to laugh at the differences. The fence around the American embassy was at least 20ft high and you could not see in. The Canadian was very similar. Most other embassies had the equivalent of a picket fence around theirs. We drove by the president's house and there was one lone guard at the driveway. The Mormon Church is very actively recruiting in Ghana and their temple sported a large golden trumpeter on the roof of a beautiful church. Driving by elite houses we were still struck by the shanty that was outside of its wall. It appears the rich and poor live very comfortable together with no apparent animosity. That is very different.

Just when you think that the only way to buy things in Ghana was from street hawkers, we went to a high-end supermarket. I copied a few prices down and will list them in table form below.

Item	Price in Cedes	Price in Dollars
Potatoes	20,000/kg	\$.95/lb
Cucumbers	12,500/kg	\$.63/lb
Tomatoes	10,000/kg	\$.50/lb.
Onions	16,500/kg	\$1/lb
Pineapple	6500 each	.72 each!!
Instant oatmeal	70,700/box	\$7.85
Corn flakes	60,000/box	\$6.60
Butter	17,700	\$1.96/lb
Yogurt	8800/4pak	\$.97
Campbell's Soup	22,700 can	\$2.52
Mayo	95,300	\$10.58
Frozen corn	29,300/lb pkg	\$3.25
Dog food	202,000 for 17.6 lbs	\$22.44

Owning a pet in Ghana would be very expensive. I did not have time to go upstairs, but they had Wal-Mart like items there such as big flat screen televisions (\$5200) and you name it. The most important thing was a diet coke fix was finally had for a mere 6500 cedes. At the hotel a diet coke cost 18,000 cedes per can and a large bottle of water was 14000.

There is a new American Embassy being built which gives the impression that the US is planning on Ghana being a base of operations for all of West Africa.

We motored back to the hotel for some free time spent around the pool. A farewell dinner, co-sponsored by Class IV graduate Brian Dunn and his wife Carolyn, was enjoyed by all. We celebrated March birthdays with cakes purchased at the grocery store visited earlier in the day. It was our last night in Ghana and the group enjoyed stories and beverages while floating in the pool.

Day 12 - Monday, March 26, 2007 -- Scribe, Harmony Kistler

Our day started as any other in Ghana, a few hours behind schedule. We finally boarded the bus around 10 am, and waited for our speaker to join us and we were on our way. Taco Terheijden, a Commercial Director for Cargill Ghana Ltd boarded the bus at our hotel and we headed to Tema to the site where the cocoa processing plant was being constructed. Along the way we discussed the reasons for Cargill's interest in Ghana and also some general information regarding cocoa farming and processing. Approximately 45 minutes after we left the hotel it started raining; Taco said this was the first rain in several months and was the official beginning of the rainy season.



Taco told the group that Ghana's cocoa production is typically low-yield and high quality. They produce about 15% of the grinding cocoa in Africa. He went on to explain that an average cocoa farm in Ghana is about 3 acres and have a yearly income of approximately \$600-1000. The government provides fertilizer and insecticide. Harvest is still done by hand and due to the nature of the cocoa plant, mechanization is not an option.



He went on to explain that Africa produces 65% of the cocoa in the world. The products made from the cocoa beans are cocoa powder and cocoa butter. The shells of the cocoa are burned for energy. This spurred questions regarding how the plant will be powered since there is an electricity shortage. He explained that there will be a full generator backup in place for that reason. Their goal is to have one million tons production by 2010.



The clouds unleashed a horrendous torrent of rain and a class member yelled...Ghana is being flushed! We would not likely have a plant-under-construction tour today.

We continued our Q and A: One of the class members asked about wages. Taco explained that mid management would expect to make \$1000-1500/month, daily workers \$1000/month, and factory workers \$400-500/month. They would also be provided insurance and other benefits. Someone else asked about transportation to the plant, since traffic was so bad. He explained that they would provide transportation to the plant as well.

As we pulled off the main road to head to the construction site, it was decided that we would definitely not go mudding in the charter bus. So we pulled along the road as close to the site as we could and continued to discuss the cocoa processing facility.

After we turned around and headed back to Accra, Taco told us about the community citizenship programs that Cargill has in place. Together with Mercyships (hospitals on boats) they constructed a maternity ward on land. They felt there was a gap to be filled in this area due to the high mortality rates of women and babies during labor. It contains 20 beds and is managed by Ghana Health Services. Cargill invested a total of \$120,000 in this project. He also went on to tell us about several other projects that are in the works such as rural education projects and child labor projects. Children and health are both big focuses of the Cargill community citizenship programs.

We dropped Taco off at his hotel and headed to Frankie's to enjoy a lunch of Americanized dishes of pizza, hamburgers, onion rings, French fries and ice cream, which of course shocked our rice and chicken addled systems. After lunch we headed to the airport, where we arrived a little before 4pm for our 9pm flight. After going through customs and immigration we proceeded to the lounge where we played cards and chatted until time to board our flight to Amsterdam. Some took advantage of the duty free shops or stopped for last minute Ghanaian souvenirs at the souvenir shop.

Tuesday, March 27, 2007

Our flight arrived in Amsterdam early Tuesday morning. Coffee, pop and McDonalds were consumed and then we boarded our flight to Detroit where we ate breakfast for at least the second time that morning. Ten hours later our flight landed without incident in Detroit and we headed to our gate to board the plane for Kansas City. We boarded the flight but sat aboard for 45 minutes while they made repairs to the brakes before taking off. We arrived in Kansas City to be greeted by several spouses and children waiting to see their missing family members. After collecting our luggage we parted ways to head to our respective areas of the state, concluding our international tour.



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