

12/4/83

Well my nose didn't fall off and though we are peeling now, it was nice (in retrospect_ to soak up all that sun. We didn't get as much sun this weekend but we had a different weekend just the same.

Deb brought home Alan who is a 13-year-old patient of hers. He has been in the hospital for almost a year now. Both his legs were severely broken when a pile of blocks fell on him. The attending Orthopedics man Dr. Hudson was the same doctor who shortly thereafter took a permanent vacation out of here leaving all his patients "in the lurch". Since he was Dr Hudson's patient, Alan was not treated after Dr Hudson left. Even though the staff knew he wasn't coming back, they didn't reassign his patients. Meanwhile, Alan had two mal-union fractures that needed orthopedic attention. He wasn't treated until Dr Harvey arrived in February. Harvey did an amputation on the worst leg and plans to do a bone graft for the other. Anyway, Alan has been at KGH for a long time. Deb & I thought he might like a break and come over for a day. Leave the hospital behind for a while.



It was a very low-key visit. Alan isn't very talkative and he's difficult to understand when he does speak. Spent most of the day sitting and watching the sea or reading magazines. We put him to work helping us bake cookies and fix dinner (pizza). I kind of like the guy and we will, no doubt, have him over again. The only tense situations were in wheeling him over and having the children visit. The indifference that some Vincentians have for other people sometimes themselves is amazing. At the Special Olympics a few weeks back, the bleachers were packed with folks who came to watch, not because of the inspiration gotten from watching those with handicaps enjoy themselves and compete, but simply to laugh at the "gimps", "retards" and "weirdos" out in the field. It hurts. And betrays a callousness I cannot fathom. Anyway, Alan's amputation was no exception and many kids came by to see "the boy". Outside of that, and the initial discomfort in having a silent visitor in the house, we had a good day.

We got a letter from another PCV yesterday. Alan Gamble wrote us about the PCVs in Dominica. It was nice to hear about them all and to know that they are doing well. It triggered another round of soul searching for me though. I'm still struggling with the lack of activity in the job and guilt I feel for not doing much. I just feel that if God brought me 6,000 miles to St. V, he brought me here to do or learn something special. I'm trying to figure out what that is. Round and round I go (where I'll stop only God knows). Stemming from that feeling is also a bout of homeless sickness. Gads I wish that would go away. I'm tired...

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