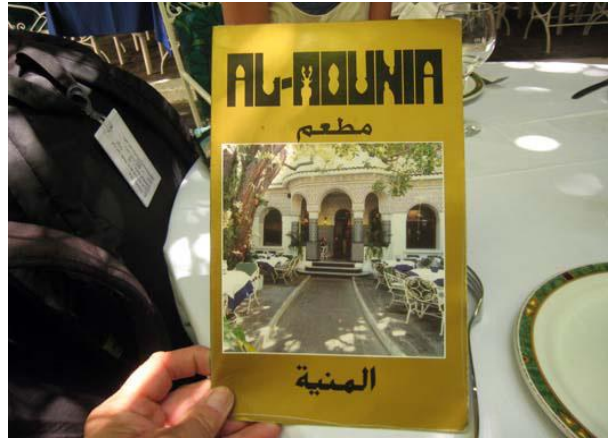


CASABLANCA--2009



This year, the trip included two American students, two sisters, Ann and Katie Nakamura. Anna was a student in several of the courses that I taught, and in them I spoke often about the improvement of the economic lives of cocoa farmers. Anna spoke in her church about my plans and thanks to her communication abilities, she was able to collect over \$2,000 in donations. With this, I was able to purchase four humidity meters, enabling villages to earn a higher price for their beans because they could sell them at the preferred 7% humidity level.

I met Anna and Katie about 4 AM at the LA airport. They and their parents were beginning to get nervous as I was running just a little late. But it worked out fine. However, once we arrived at the Casablanca airport, things got interesting. As we left the airport, I chose a local taxi instead of a Casablanca taxi. The driver, eager to make the extra money, jumped into the front and revved the engine. Almost immediately, our car was surrounded by more than a dozen Casablanca taxi drivers, mad as hornets. They picked up the front of the car and dropped it-over and over. A little worried about how my companions might take this, I turned around. They both smiled. At that point, knowing that they would make good travel companions, I said, "Welcome to Africa."

Once we arrived in Casablanca, I asked the driver to take us to a good Moroccan restaurant. So we dined at Al-Mounia, one of the best. After lunch, we toured the Hassan II mosque, which is extraordinary in size and beauty. Afterwards, we walked around in the old medina, which is near Rick's Cafe, where they play clips of the movie Casablanca. That evening, we returned to the airport and embarked on the 8 PM flight for Accra. We arrived at 3 AM. Alex and Peter were not there! A little worried, I found us a hotel and asked one of the young men hanging around the exit to inform Alex, our driver, once he showed up. At about 5 AM, Alex and Peter knocked at my door. It seems that they had been detained by the police because Alex was driving with slippers on, which the police associate with thievery, since slippers allow you to enter a house without being heard. I'm sure Alex and Peter had to pay a fine.

ACCRA

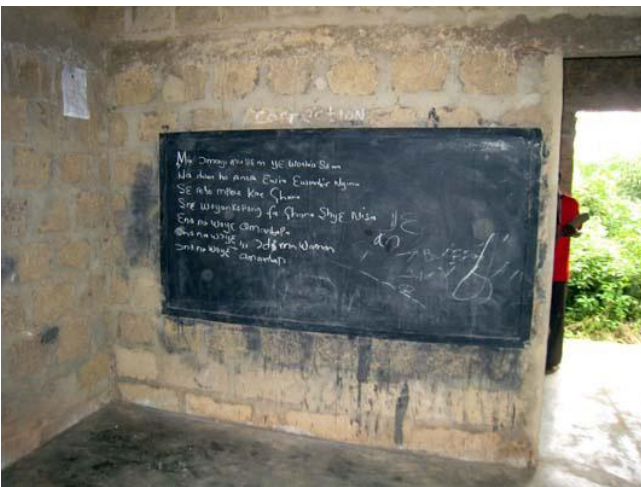


The next day we bought boots, machettes, sharpeners, and plastic bags at the agricultural tools store. They also sold chemicals such as insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides. At left is a picture of insecticides. In Ghana (but not in Ivory Coast) the majority of cocoa farmers use chemicals, which can double yields. But they also cost extra, and that requires planning ahead and having a savings account.

EBEKAWOPA



We visited the usual five villages--Ebekawopa, Adiyaw, Gyaware, Mmaniaye, and Jukwah. Top, left: Katie et Anna pose with Peter and Padmore. Bottom, left: Pastor Sampson demonstrates how to harvest from the upper branches--using a machete attached to a long pole. Top, right: a rotten pod. Right: we exchange gifts.



Top: a local palm oil factory. Top left: palm fruits being boiled. Top right: palm fruits ready to be boiled. Middle, right: cooked palm fruits are pressed to extract their oil. Middle, left: this man has shot a monkey for dinner. Bottom, left: blackboard in the Lutheran Church with a hymn written on it. Bottom, right: the cooks are bringing us dinner.



Left and right: pictures of the solar drier one year later. We should have fastened it to concrete blocks as the termites smelled the fresh wood and ate a lot of it. Pastor Sampson borrowed the fan and solar panel for his house.

MAKERFAIRE



Once we had visited all five villages and distributed the gifts, we left for the airport. At the counter, we were told that our names were not on the passenger list. This may have been the fault of the airline or of the travel agency. They put us on a flight leaving the next day. I called a friend who worked for the American embassy. He offered to let us stay at his place. Since we had an entire day to kill, we accompanied him to a Maker Fair, where many of the participants were students at MIT. The point of Maker Faire is to design tools and machinery from basic components such as wood, bicycles, and old tools. The new tools are supposed to accomplish tasks that are normally accomplished with new equipment.

CHAPTER 8



Top, left: a solar drier. I think its design is deficient: it lacks a solar powered fan which would prevent the growth of mold. Top, right: a refrigerator that consumes no electricity. Instead, breezes blow through a heavy wet fabric that hangs at the side and the evaporation of water molecules pulls heat out of the interior. This cooler can maintain crisp textures and bright flavors long enough so that fruits and vegetables maintain their freshness before going to market. Middle, left: an incandescent lightbulb produces enough heat to vaporise citronella oil in the surrounding coil. Citronella chases away malarial mosquitoes. Middle, right: a toilet seat. You dig a hole and put the seat over it. Once full, close the hole with dirt and dig another. Of course, you have to know where the water table is so you don't pollute the water supply. Bottom, left: tools for hulling corn from the cob. Bottom, right: tools for pressing charcoal briquets from carbonized corn cobs. Charcoal burns slowly and evenly--perfect for cooking.

COTE D'IVOIRE



Albert Konan was our guide this year.

Albert Konan, Chief of Production, Kavokiva Cooperative, from 2003 to 2017.

Scales



We visited the man who made the dozen or more scales (each costing \$450) that we donated to villages recently. This man (at left) emigrated to Ivory Coast from Togo.



Two big scales designed to weigh things in the tons.



ABEKRO



Abekro is the village of Eugénie, whom we first met in 2004. Unfortunately, she wasn't available this time. Top, left: this woman is making foutou, which is similar to fufu in Ghana, except that it's made mostly of pounded plantain with a little cassava. Above, right, two cocoa pods, one healthy and the other ruined by a disease called "black pod." Left, a scale that Albert ordered and delivered to the village before our arrival.

BROGUHE



This year, I delivered a moisture meter and a scale to Broguhe. This represents a gift of more than \$1,000. Both the meter and the scale represent power to the farmer because the information they provide allows the farmer to bargain effectively with the pisteur or middleman. (see page 61)



This year, Chief Dédé expressed his appreciation for my work by making me honorary chief.

DEPA



DJAHA KRO



We visited Djahakro, which is more than 5 km into the bush at the end of a dirt road sprinkled with holes filled with water. Top, left: corn in the process of drying. Top, right: two cocoa seedlings. Left: this woman is grating cassava. Middle, right: a gasoline-powered grater mounted on a bicycle. Bottom, right: much of the village is attending our ceremony.

GBETITAPEA

See p. 150 to see details about this village.



ZEREGUHE



Left: Albert inspects the scale that we had delivered three years before. Right: I donate a moisture meter.

SAF-CACAO



This is our fifth visit to Saf Cacao. Above: bottles of cocoa butter. Above, right: jute bags of cocoa beans infected with a moth. Right: the new factory for manufacturing chocolate liquor and cocoa butter and for fermenting and cleaning coffee beans.



Child Labor (Le Travail des Enfants)

Opposite the dirt road to Djahakro is a big piece of land owned by Lebanese investors from Abidjan. The cocoa beans grown on these trees, of which there are thousands, are certified Rainforest Alliance, which means that they will command a good price. Although I did not inspect the land up close (I would have been trespassing), this certification struck me as dishonest because there really is no rainforest to preserve. Instead, the land is sprinkled with a few crooked trees left from removing all the valuable ones, and then the remaining land is used to plant cocoa. So the implication is that rainforest was preserved. But it wasn't. And then, they put this sign up as both a non sequitur and a lie. Non sequitur because no one had brought the subject of child labor up and a lie because child labor is associated with the cocoa business (see pages 6-7).

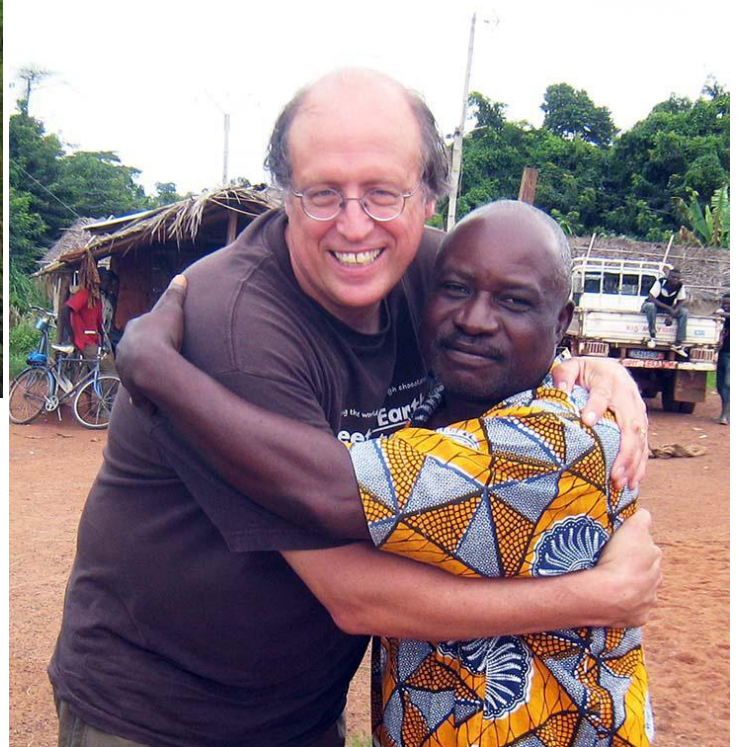


Right: another example of child labor (again, see pages 6-7). The young man shows no evidence of protective clothing, although the chemicals are neurotoxic.

ACCIDENT



On the road between San Pedro and Abidjan, where it is especially badly paved, Albert drives a little too close to the edge. We end up rolling over and hanging upside down from our seat belts. A crowd assembles around the car and several thoughtful persons help us out of our tomb. Meanwhile, an old man takes off on his bicycle and comes back a few minutes later with a machette. He cuts down the grass in front of us, Albert starts up the motor and we drive back up onto the road. We are free--although lacking a few windows!



This trip started with a Moroccan misunderstanding and ended with a rollover à l'Ivoirienne. But it was a success!