

Years ago, a TV weekly show about a radio station did a story in which they dropped live turkeys into a parking lot. In trouble for the "massacre" of birds the responsible announcer said, "no one told me turkeys don't fly!"

Soccer matches have been going on all week on a small area of the beach. Goals are small metal chair frames upside down and fish net around the sides. Officials seriously blow whistles and wave little white pieces of cloth on small branches.

This morning, play was intense with bare feet and tattered red and yellow t-shirts. A small green soccer ball frequently was fished out of the bay as the "big guys" guarded the larger ball. A questionable goal started a war but the kids continued to play. Like any normal little league game.

Walking home the idea struck that a few thousand soccer balls dropped on La Gonave from a low flying plane would be better than food!! Then I remembered the "turkey program" and figured, somehow, something would go wrong. That is not the Haitian way of thinking. After a lifetime of suffering and poverty, they still believe "tomorrow the good fairy comes."

Chickens and lizards pass through the house; things work until you notice them; smiling women the size of a 10 year old come to the clinic 5 months into the seventh pregnancy with no living children; a handsome young man follows me around reminding me he's hungry; we bucket bathe as others spit in the air and step under; it's the rainy season but the new diesel generator went to the pump house as all cisterns are dry; on-line time is brief since a "big wind" rearranged Hughes Network; a zillion tiny fish fry on main street for 5 goudes apiece and Joe figured our food cost this month over \$700.00 US for nine of us and whiffs for 3 starving dogs.

What did I expect when I came here? I expected to learn my limitations; be accomplishing one worthwhile task; and, be beating the computer occasionally at level 2 beginner's chess! Instead, we start things we can't finish; install big solar panels as the dish loses the satellite; our helpful doctor moves to Port a Prince; more people are hungry; teachers are fired; and, I move to check the King with my remaining Bishop (is that a capitalized word in chess?) and am checkmated by a pawn! Please, don't drop a zillion soccer balls on La Gonave! Turkey's do not fly!!

I'm reading Karen Armstrong's book, "A History Of God" and stand amazed at how much we know and how little we've learned. 2000 years ago empires dominated and the poor were powerless. Christian's killed in the name of God, and civilization was an unnatural condition.

In Haiti there is one church for every 10 homes, even in the bush, and people sing with abandon and buy rum and little cakes of bread at small square tables or off a rock with a cloth over it. Louis called today for \$15.00 he needs. We must find someone going to the mainland. That money is his job security.

Why don't turkeys fly? They are birds, aren't they?

Shirley in La Gonave, July 25, 2008

