

News, Apps, Deals, and Gear from New England and Beyond

HERE

PAY THE TEMPERATURE IN PROVINCETOWN

Here's a good reason to hope the weather remains cool: Starting April 1, the Harbor Hotel is offering a Pay the Temperature promotion. Daily room rates will be based on the Provincetown temperature at 2 p.m., as reported by the National Weather Service on the day of check-in. With an average temperature in April of 55 degrees, this deal could save you a bundle off the Harbor's posted spring rates (from \$99). This promotion cannot be booked online, is based on availability, and stay must be completed by May 20. Guests will be charged a \$50 non-refundable deposit. 855-447-8696, www.harborhoteltown.com

DINE AT 9 CAMPAIGN ATTACKS HUNGER

Plan a getaway at 10 Distinctive Inns of New England on April 9 or May 9 and your room rate will be \$9. In return for this special rate, guests make a \$100 donation that goes directly to the food bank or hunger relief program in the inn's community. Each inn has a designated number of rooms for the DINE at 9 campaign that are reserved on a space-available basis by calling the inn directly. The participating properties: Inn at Harbor Hill Marina, Niantic, Conn.; Camden Maine Stay, Camden, Maine; Captain's House Inn, Chatham (below); Gateways Inn, Lenox; Deerfield Inn, Deerfield; Chesterfield Inn, West Chesterfield, N.H.; Manor on Golden Pond, Holderness, N.H.; Inn at Thorn Hill, Jackson, N.H.; Rabbit Hill Inn, Lower Waterford, Vt.; and Grafton Inn, Grafton, Vt. www.distinctiveinns.com/new-england-inns.html



THERE



TWO JFK EXHIBITS IN DC

On April 12, the Newseum opens two exhibits marking the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President Kennedy. One tells the story of Camelot through images taken by Jacques Lowe, the Kennedy family photographer from 1958-61. The other examines the Nov. 22, 1963, shooting and the news coverage that followed. More than 100 artifacts on display include presumed assassin Lee Harvey Oswald's wallet contents, the clothing he wore that day, the blanket he used to hide his rifle, and more. The film "A Thousand Days" documents newsworthy moments of the Kennedy presidency. Through Jan. 5, 2014, tickets \$12.95-\$21.95. 888-639-7386, www.newseum.org

DOWNTON ABBEY SEASON 3 TOUR

If you can't get enough of the Crawley family and their on-screen shenanigans, Zicasso.com offers Downton Abbey: The Season 3 Tour. The eight-day customizable journey includes a private tour of Highclere Castle; a visit to Shugborough Hall, a mansion whose upstairs-downstairs setup is intact; and the best of London's attractions, including the Victoria and Albert Museum. An excursion through the countryside of Staffordshire, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire includes Bampton, the real Downton Village; the real St. Mary's Church; and Greys Court, the real Downton Place. Departures are flexible but must be coordinated with Highclere Castle's opening dates, July 14-Sept. 12, Sun-Thu. Rates from \$3,250 per person based on double occupancy. www.zicasso.com/luxury-vacation-uk-tours/downton-abbey-season-3-tour

ATLANTA DOGWOOD FESTIVAL

An annual springtime celebration of arts and entertainment blooms in Georgia at the 77th Atlanta Dogwood Festival, April 19-21. The city's longest-running fest features three days of fine art, live music, cultural performances, a disc dog competition, gourmet and festival food options, children's programming, rock climbing wall, and more. Nashville recording artist Sara Evans performs at the Piedmont Park Meadow on Saturday at 7 p.m. Free. 404-817-6642, www.dogwood.org

EVERYWHERE

TRAVEL'S GOT A BRAND NEW BAG

Davek, the company that designs stylish mini umbrellas and messenger bags, has launched a compact bag line that's perfect for carrying iPads, Kindles, e-readers, and tablets. The slim Davek Note Bag is made from durable, high-impact 1680D ballistic nylon with double padded compartments. An aerial hang-glider buckle, made of polished aluminum, creates an easy-to-use side release system. A zippered envelope pocket can hold the rest of your stuff: keys, phone, glasses, and more. Available in black, navy blue, and hunter green. \$135. 212-749-8746, www.davekny.com

FOR THE LOVE OF TRAVEL

Created to promote the beauty and necessity of travel, The Explorateur website shares insider information on worldwide travel, from high-end to quirky, while offering candid, detailed, and sometimes humorous advice about products, resorts, hotels, and more. Gabriella Ribeiro Truman and her team dish tips on unique places to stay, shop, dine, and fly, and provide access to exclusive global travel deals in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and islands in the South Pacific. www.theexplorateurportfolio.com

NECEE REGIS



With granddaughters in tow, volunteering in Tanzania

By Susan Sabin
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

BAGAMOYO, Tanzania — "I'm thinking of volunteering abroad," I told my daughter. My granddaughter, whom I thought was plugged into her iPod in the next room, piped up: "Can I come?" Days later, three of us: Leah, 15, her sister, Kate, 17, and I were committed. But where to?

After many false starts I settled on a two-week program in Bagamoyo. An organization based there accepted minors and had a slot that fit the girls' schedule. It satisfied my needs for safety and basic comfort, housing and feeding volunteers in a dormitory with bunk beds, hot running water, and flush toilets. Additionally, the organization set curfews, rules on sex and drugs, and suggestions on dress.

While reassured about practical issues, I worried about the cultural leap. Kate had never left the country; Leah had been to Rome, where bidets constituted cultural enlightenment. How would they handle whatever came our way?

Although more than 30,000 people live in Bagamoyo, it is compact, and on the first day we explored both the port and town center by foot.

In Swahili, Bagamoyo means "lay down your heart," a name purportedly linked to the town's slave trade, one of the busiest and longest-lasting in East Africa. Today the port is used by a handful of fishing boats, which, between hauls, lay in various states of disrepair on the sand. A fish market operates out of nearby shanties and about a half mile up-beach stands a gated resort among the palms.

But the life of the town lies away from the shore, along a web of hard-packed dirt roads that wander inland. Deep trenches for rainy season runoff separate the roads from the buildings, most of which have attached thatch- or tin-roofed lean-tos serving as kitchens or small retail spaces. Electricity is spotty and running water, a luxury. To look at the place objectively is to know that the town is poor.

But from the start, Kate and Leah seemed not to see the poverty. It was as if the garbage-strewn streets, the single-pot open-air cooking, the stick-and-wattle housing, and the four men guarding our compound were unremarkable.

Indeed, the girls slipped into the African way of life effortlessly. No cell-phones, no texting: no problem. We washed our clothes by hand. We walked everywhere. We began to live in the moment, taking time to chat with a familiar face and greet strangers.



SUZIE SIKORA

The author's granddaughter Leah Sabin Kanzer, 15, rear left, with Editha Massati, director of the primary school where Kanzer volunteered, in Bagamoyo, Tanzania. Below, a view of Bagamoyo's fish market and historic slave market on the shores of the Indian Ocean. The town was a busy trading port in old East Africa.



KATE PERKINS

As enchanting as this was, our group of six volunteers, all assigned to teach English, held onto the notion that we were there to work.

The teaching felt like driving without a map. The schools were nothing like ones we knew. None had running water, electricity, or doors to muffle sounds between classrooms. Two kids squeezed at one bench and desk — or, in Kate's case, many onto floor mats. There were no window screens, no libraries. Pencils, paper, or crayons were not provided, although volunteers could borrow supplies from our home base.

We'd been told not to give anything to our students. Only after seeing the

children in the tourist-heavy Kilimanjaro area begging did we appreciate the wisdom of this advice. However, many of our kids stole what they could: bits of crayons or snippets of chalk. I could understand the desire for these tools, but couldn't overlook the behavior. Leah and Kate reacted differently. "They're babies," said Leah. "They don't know better."

Our biggest challenge, though, was that none of us knew what to teach. Earlier volunteers had left notes, some helpful, some not. At first, it looked as if Kate and Leah had lucked out because their classrooms each had a local teacher. But the women deferred to the girls as if they were visiting professors.

As Kate said, "It was almost like the teacher was a student in the class."

With young students, the girls could start at the beginning. Kate taught her 5- to 7-year-olds "under, over, and around" using a jump rope, and "through" with a hoola hoop. Leah taught basics: drawing letters and reciting the alphabet. Their students loved them unreservedly.

My situation was harder. My 10- to 12-year-old students were at very different levels of English. I took an earlier volunteer's advice to teach adjectives, verbs, and nouns. Only two understood. I watered down the lesson the next day, and again the next. Finally, when it was almost time to leave, I figured out which child needed what, but it was too little, too late.

Then, a small incident put my disappointment in perspective.

On Fridays our school went to the beach. Even the short walk there was a happening, as we fanned out across the narrow roads, hands linked, feet in synch. At the beach the kids played a mean game of dodge ball or waded in the water to scoop up shellfish. The outing was terrific until, on the way back, I misstepped, skinning the heel of a little girl in front of me, drawing blood. These kids don't cry, but I knew I had hurt her.

Concerned about infection, I led

If you go . . .

The nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs, listed below **welcome teen** volunteers when accompanied by a participating adult.

Cross Cultural Solutions

www.crossculturalsolutions.org
The program we volunteered for was one of the **most expensive**. Our fee of \$3,182 per person **paid for** accommodations and three meals a day in the organization's compound; emergency health care and evacuation insurance; lessons in Swahili plus occasional ones in dance, batik, and drum; information on dress, behavior, and health issues; and visits to nearby historic sites.

Additional costs for each: airfare, work permits \$200, visas \$100.

Global Volunteer

www.globalvolunteers.org
IVHQ
www.volunteerhq.org

Coyote Communications
www.coyotecomunications.com/volunteer/international.html

Lists **types of volunteer organizations** and how to investigate them.

the child to a nearby well. As I washed the cut, I noticed a cluster of workmen looking on with great interest. I realized then that what I taught in my mere two-week stay was not what mattered most. I was on a cultural exchange, observing, being observed, learning, and teaching in all sorts of everyday ways.

Embraced by the generous people of Bagamoyo, the three of us had merely responded in kind. There was nowhere — even the dangerous, drug-infested neighborhood where Leah worked — where we did not feel welcome, even if we weren't truly safe.

My granddaughters felt purpose in their work and admiration for African ways of coping and living. At the well where Leah drew water for her young pupils' porridge, she saw the camaraderie of the neighborhood women — not their hardship. Kate loved the civility of strangers greeting strangers.

When the time came to leave, none of us was ready. Leah was so sad I feared I might not coax her onto the plane. Instead of worrying how the girls would react to the cultural challenges, I should have worried that they might leave a bit of their hearts in Africa.

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