

Holy Spirit Haiti Mission Trip Jan 2-11, 2013
Bob McCoy – Mission Team Lead

A team of six went to Haiti the beginning of January to participate in the LWW Operators Conference, further support the NDC orphanage in Leogane, visit areas where problems have arisen and install two new water purification systems. All of the above were accomplished and thankfully no delays incurred because we had no spare time on this trip. Jim and Peggy Payne from Holy Spirit, Ashley Broadhurst from Las Vegas and Bill and Meg Mendenhal from Jackson, MS along with Bob McCoy were on the team. This was first time we have had a father-daughter team and we had two on this trip. Following is a daily log of activity.

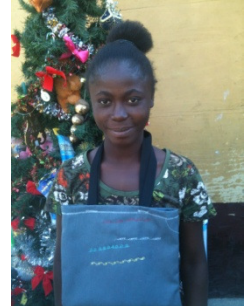
Wed, Jan 2– At the airport by 4:30a to check bags. As usual we go in heavy. Jim, Peggy and I have been jockeying weight around for the past two weeks trying to get our 6 bags all at 50 lbs each. In addition I carried in 35 lbs in my backpack and we each had carryons. Ashley and Bill also carried in equipment and parts for our warehouse. Flights were smooth except the Charlotte to Ft. Lauderdale was delayed and with only one hour there is little room for error. US Air jockeyed the three of us up to just behind 1st class so we could dash off the plane and run to another terminal only to find out we had to go from gate E5 to E4. Thank you Lord and the bags all made it too. Bill and Ashley had arrived in Haiti earlier that day. Ronald met us inside the airport and to my pleasant surprise they have opened the earthquake damaged half of the airport which is a much more pleasant baggage experience. We did get clipped at customs, but I have just resigned to the fact that this is just an entry fee. At least it's negotiable to some extent. Ancy was there with the KIA truck and we all head off to Carrefour to drop off Ancy at his home and we drove the rest of the way to the monastery. We arrive just before dark to the wonderful smile of Fre Olizard and the brothers. A warm meal, a cold shower (better than no shower) and a quiet bed were a welcome respite to a long day. Tomorrow would begin work in earnest.



Thur, Jan 3–As has been our practice for the past couple of years, we pre-build the water system on the 4'x8' board. We can build about four in a day this way, but had only two to do. Some of us were up for morning liturgy of the hours with the brothers at 5a. Breakfast at 7a and then we split teams for a while. Bill, Ashley and Bertone built the boards and I drove Jim and Peggy to the orphanage. Peggy's role on this mission was to teach the girls how to sew. She had 3 projects prepared and we had sent some money earlier for Eliane to purchase some material. At first we had some trouble with the new Brother sewing machine, but Garry solved that problem and Peggy got right into teaching. She is an amazing young lady and when we came back that evening to pick her up there was incredible excitement among the girls. Peggy taught the 6 older girls and they were quick



studies. Project one was finished and now they were teaching some of the others how to make the hand bag. This also gave me the first chance to see the new wall around the new property. I was overwhelmed looking at a dream coming true. First the land and now the wall, well and gate. It really was happening but only in God's time, not ours. Jim and I went back to the monastery to help finish building the boards which we did finish right after lunch. I wanted to visit the St. Anthony Sisters in Fondwa as their water system was down for lack of a generator. As I suspected, the generator was dead with little hope of restoration. I committed to sister that I would find something for her. This was an entirely faith based promise because I had not a clue where the money would come from. The next night just before bed, Chris McRae (my earthquake team partner) and I were having a quite Prestige beer and he asked me if I knew of anyone who needed a generator?



The rest is history. God had answered our need. What an awesome God we have!

Now the hill going to Fondwa is not for the light hearted. It is very steep and narrow and much of it is concrete, it is a serious 35 degree incline. It only takes a fraction of a second to make a mistake and I made one going back up. My water bottle started rolling across the dashboard and was going out the window. My hand jerked the steering wheel too far to the right while going around the curve and the truck went off the concrete and dropped about 1 foot onto loose gravel. Fortunately I had enough momentum to keep going forward (in 4x4 low-low gear) and hit a dirt mound about 50' ahead that got the two off road wheels back on the concrete. That was a testy moment for all of us as the edge was close; thank you Lord for your protection.

Fri, Jan 4-This was the first day of the 3rd annual LWW (Living Waters for the World) Operators conference where the operators from all over Haiti come together for fellowship and further education about the water purification systems. It's an overnight affair starting at noon and going to noon the next day. We had contracted with Fre Olizard to put up 60 people. Unfortunately 82 signed up and 92 showed up. But those who lived in the Leogane area opened their homes up very generously so it all worked out. Chris, Ashley, Bill and Surpris pretty much ran this event and I will be billeted for a session on how to run the water system so it would pay for itself. This is all part of the sustainability education we continue to impart on our Haitian brothers and sisters. In the afternoon while I standing around, I met Emmanuel Moliere who is the head engineer of DINEPA. DINEPA is the Haitian organization responsible for potable water and sewage in Haiti. He was there to speak briefly to the group and then would leave. As it turned out, the water systems we had prebuilt were sitting against the wall in the dining room, so I grabbed Bertone to give Engineer Moliere a short lecture on how the system works. He was very impressed and later told the group that the work LWW is doing with these water systems supporting small communities of 2000-3000 is exactly what Haiti needs. With that endorsement, I felt we had made great headway into unofficially staying on the good side of the government. After dinner I gave my lecture on running a business which seemed to be a great success and another day comes to an end.

Sat, Jan 5-As I try to do each day at the monastery I began with the morning liturgy, rosary and communion. I have found no better combination that gets you prepared to face your day. The brothers were all working like crazy to get breakfast ready to feed the 100 or so people so I pitched in and did some kitchen duty. After breakfast I took Peggy back to NDC for another day of sewing lessons and teaching the kids games. Her dad Jim had stepped up to the plate and volunteered to clean up and paint the new warehouse space. Jim said he loved to paint. How many of those people do you meet in the world? So we picked up a local Haitian Xontious who turned out to be an incredible worker. He of course spoke no English and Jim spoke marginal French and no Creole, but the two of them worked together beautifully and by the end of the day the space was beautiful. I was so proud of them both. Pere Delma from Baudin asked to meet with me that morning to discuss a plan of funding young people in university that want to then return to their community. We had been working on this plan for a couple of months and I was anxious to meet the four young men he brought with him as the first possible prospects for the program. I spent two hours getting to know these young men better and encouraging them where I could. Their next step is for them to write a paper with answers to specific questions that Pere Delmas and I have come up with. I am presently awaiting this information. The conference finished with lunch and all went home. The afternoon was filled with preparation work for our installs. We had mass at the chapel with Pere Blot presiding that evening and then dinner. Peggy wanted another session at the orphanage and this time wanted to do an overnight so we hastily made arrangements and drove her there that evening. She had a great time and fared well until we picked her up Sunday afternoon. That would be her final trip because the rest of the time we would be installing the two systems. She had the kids making skirts and almost making blouses by the time she left.

Sun, Jan 6-Even though there was no mass , we still had a full day ahead of us taking Surpris into PAP and doing a site inspection at Adventist University in Carrefour. Surpris is a Haitian American and this was his old alma mater. He's very involved with the Rotary Club and is working with them to put a water system into the university. I was a little uncomfortable about this trip as Surpris would be with us half way, but coming home we were on our own as Surpris would stay in PAP for the rest of the week. We were supposed to meet the university directors at a nearby hotel at 9a. By 10 they had not showed up so we went to the university which was close by to see if we could find them. They of course thought the meeting was at the university. We had a great meeting and while most site reviews where we look at the potential site and set expectations usually take 1-1.5 hours, this one took 3 hours. When it was over, Surpris was very pleased. Just before we left the property, the truck did not feel right and sure enough, flat tire. This would not surprise you if you knew the terrain we drove in. We had a spare, but where was the jack? Part of it was under the back seat, but it took a call to Ancy to discover the jack was under a small hood in the front of the truck. The KIA's engine is mounted in the middle of the vehicle, so there is nothing up front – except now we know – the jack. It





was hot and dusty and we had good clothes on and just then a couple of nice young men came along and changed the tire for us. God just watches over us all the time! I felt the tire was shot, but finding another proved to be impossible. Since we have two KIAs in Haiti, Ancy met me that evening and traded the other spare with me as we were going to be doing a lot of driving the next 4 days. Thank you Ancy! Back on the road again with a prayer for no more problems. We were trying to get back to the orphanage to pick up Peggy and back to monastery before dark if possible. We took advantage of this trip to buy the girls ice cream. About 18 months ago we discovered that the Total Gas Station outside Leogane had ice cream and it has been a MUST DO stop each trip since. There was Peggy playing more games with the girls. She was really at home in this place of great love. Ice cream was a big hit and our time with Eliane had to come to a close. We hugged everyone and made our way back to our home in the mountains. That evening Fre Olizard and I finally got a chance to discuss the NDC building plans along with some other projects we have been working on together. He also informed me that he had a conflict tomorrow and could not go with us to Jacmel to install the system, but since I had been there once (albeit 6 months ago) I could find my own way; besides Bertone knew the way. Well not exactly, but we made it.

Mon, Jan 7-Peggy and Jim are not morning people but bless their hearts they were doing their best to meet the early requirements; leaving at 5:30a took a special effort, but we made it. Ashley, Bill, his daughter Meg who had just come in yesterday completing the second father daughter team, Jim, Peggy, our trusted Bertone and I took off well before light. The ride to Jacmel goes from the north shore of Haiti to the south shore over mountains which are incredibly beautiful. Seeing the sun come up at 3400 feet made the day that much more special. No chapel that morning, so we all said the rosary on the way. The trip takes about 1.5 hrs and we showed up at the Spiritian Sisters just in time for breakfast. We had a board to put up, two tanks to mount on the roof, electrical to attach and a well pump to drop, so the day was full. This is really the time you find out how well the team is going to work together and I could not have been blessed with a better group. We had one hitch when we found out that there was no generator on site as there had been when we did the site visit back in July. The good news was they now had city power, but the bad news was it did not come on until noon. This didn't matter as we didn't need the electricity until late in the afternoon. By 4pm we were ready to begin testing, turned the well pump on and water began to flow. 5 min later it stopped. Same thing happened again. All I could imagine was bad connection on the pump but if you saw the way we wire the pumps and then seal the wire in electrical tape to keep water out, you would know this was not likely. I then looked at the label on the pump box and what was supposed to be a 120V pump was a 240V pump. I remember Fre Olizard telling me he had taken one and he got the wrong one. We would rewire it the next day. Sister was pleased with the progress. Our intent was to come back the next day and finish, but we only had Bill and Meg one and a half more days and so decided to do the DuFort install while we had the most people power. This was God's plan all along because when I spoke to Sister, she then told me

Thursday was better for her because she worked on Tues and Wed. Because Haitians are so polite, she would not have told me that unless I had asked her directly. Now, we just had to get back to the monastery before dark. We came close. After dinner it was lights out for most.

Tues, Jan 8-Dufort is only 20 minutes away, so we didn't leave until right after breakfast. This install was a close replicate to yesterday's; a board, two tanks, well pump and electrical. After the first day, the team had gotten used to working together, so this one went in even smoother. So much so that once the board was mounted I was informed by Ashley that the girls were taking over the inside assembly. They did and they did a wonderful job. Just as we started though, Bill discovered that he had lost his smart phone. Bill's a MS lawyer, quiet and well mannered and said it is just a phone. I knew better and was sick to my stomach because I knew how valuable the information on the phone was. On the drive to St. Andrew's, Bertone took us on a back route and at one point it was so narrow the right side of the truck got so close to a tree (if I hadn't done this the left side would have been in the ditch) that I took off the right rear view mirror. Bill was in the back seat, got out and picked up the pieces. It was there we thought he had dropped the phone. But in Haiti what are the chances of a) finding the spot and b) it still being there with all the people around. I offered up a quick prayer that God would keep the phone from others eyes if that was where it was. Bill and Bertone took the truck and backtracked. Praise God I got a call 30 min later that they had found it right where we thought it was. By then, the girls were in full swing on the board assembly and they did great. By noon we had pump dropped in well, the board assembled and the tanks about 75% done. Bill who has led other protestant teams in Haiti, could not believe how smoothly it all went. This is the first time he had been introduced to the pre-building technique that we use. We went back to the monastery for lunch and then in the afternoon finished the tanks, tested the electrical and began pumping water. In July during the rainy season a test on this well had been made and within 30 minutes it had delivered almost 450 gal of water and not stopped. Now, within 5 min we had no water. Through some trial and error we found we could pump for 5 min, rest 10 and do it again. This is how drastically the dry season can affect your water table. Once we had enough water to test the system we did so and Praise God, not one leak! This was clearly a first. We dropped powdered chlorine (pool shock) into the tank, ran it into the system, so would kill all bacteria and left it overnight. We would return the next day to do training and finalize the installation. That night at dinner we celebrated Douyan's 42 birthday. Douyan is one of the brothers whose duty is the kitchen, serving and food purchase. He is quiet, unassuming and always there serving. He is a true man of God. We got the brothers to all sing in English and had a great time together before retiring for another day.

Wed, Jan 9-Chapel, breakfast and then we pack up Meg and Bill. They have a flight at 4:30p so will work with us in the morning and then leave at noon where Ancy will bring them into PAP. After we check out the St. Andrew's system, Ashley starts her community training with the kids and some other adults. We have some small details to still fix, but by noon we are ready to begin the 3 hr operators training that Bertone does so well. We take Meg and Bill into Leogane to meet Ancy, go back to the



monastery to grab a quick lunch and begin training. For the rest of us it is down time, so we talk or try to entertain the locals for the afternoon. Bertone finishes the training and now the final step is the board signing ceremony where we all sign the board and turn over the first 5 gal bottle of water to Pere Blot. He is so excited and proud of the system because he now has a way to be sure that the water distributed within the community is really clean. It is an incredible feeling of confidence that he conveys to us. We head back to the monastery with just one day left which is all we need assuming all goes well which is not always the case in Haiti.

Thur, Jan 10-Off to Jacmel early in the morning again. The rosary is now a standard part of our passage over the mountains before the sun rises. We greet sister and after breakfast, Ashley does her community training. As is sometimes the case, we have a more difficult time getting people to attend as was the case here, so we did not get in front of as many people as we would have liked. For the next hour we work through how we will rewire the pump. Soso was the electrical guy there and he knew his stuff and I was glad to have him. We got the wiring



redone, but now we had to wait on Jacmel to turn on the power. Noon came and went and it was not until 2:30p did it come on. Thankfully the pump worked correctly and we began filling the tank. We still had to shock the system and Bertone had at least 2 hrs of training to do, which meant driving on the mountain road in the dark. We didn't get as lucky on this system and had 2 leaks to deal with. One required quite a bit of rebuilding and we were running very short on parts. But we

made it. Bertone did his training; we signed the board and turned it over to sister. As we were about to pull out of the property, a woman from the community came through the gate and sister proudly said to her, "Come over here, I have some water I want to sell you". The drive home proved as treacherous as I had feared, but by God's Grace we made it. The last of the goat stew for dinner and the Prestige beer never tasted so good.

Fri, Jan 11-Sorry Jim and Peggy, it's up at 4:15a; Ashley's gotten used to it by now. We must leave at 5a to meet Ancy at 6p and then drive the rest of the way to the airport. We were at the airport just before 7a which was really good time in the highly unpredictable traffic of PAP. We hug Ashley who is leaving 30 min after us to go to Miami and then Las Vegas. She will actually beat us home. Jim, Peggy and I start the long trek home through Ft. Lauderdale, Dallas and Huntsville. We were supposed to be back by 10p, but with an hour flight delay and the new Huntsville luggage conveyors getting stuck, it was after midnight. And yes, my bag was the last one off. It was a good trip. Much was accomplished and all goals were met. The Holy Spirit was always watching over us as is obvious by some of the things that happened, so it doesn't get better than that. Thank you all; Bill, Meg, Ashley, Peggy and Jim for being a part of this adventure. Lapi mwen se a fres.