

## Holy Spirit Haiti Mission Trip Report - October 18-25, 2016

Excerpts from Bob McCoy's Facebook page reports



Haiti Day 1 Oct 18. Six of the Holy Spirit Haiti Mission are leaving tomorrow to install a water purification system in Fond des Negres an area hit by Hurricane Matthew. Four days ago one of the team had to back out because she not only was told she had cancer but they had to operate immediately. Her bag had 20% of the water system in it. When we called and pleaded with American Airlines to be able to bring an extra bag (and pay for it) we were told adamantly NO and that 2 - 50 lb bags per person was the absolute limit. Normally this is an uneventful trip

assuming all our bags make it. There are times in our lives when God shows us who our true friends are and He certainly showed me Ashley's brightest side this morning. Ashley lives in Shreveport, LA and is going down with us for two days so she can go to Cayes and assess damage. She only had a backpack so agreed to carry two bags in for me that Judith could not because of her surgery. I shipped them via greyhound from Huntsville to Shreveport on Friday. Greyhound lost one but thanks to super persistence on the part of my super wife greyhound found the missing bag Monday evening in Dallas. Ashley was leaving Shreveport at 5a Tuesday. They get the bag to Shreveport, Ashley picks it up at 3:30a checks the bag, gets in her seat on the plane and is then summoned off the plane because TSA did not like the well pump that was in the bag. By the time she got it straightened out her plane had left. She's leaving again tonight for Mia to arrive tomorrow morning with the bags but has lost a half day. Ashley I am so sorry you had to bear this cross for me but your true friendship which was never in doubt has shown very brightly this day. We made it into PAP unscathed and through customs. Ancy had greased the skids. Thank you brother. It was so good to see Bertone again with his smile from ear to ear. In true Haitian fashion we have 10 bags on the roof of the land cruiser which weigh 500lbs to say nothing if the 300 lbs in the back and six bodies. The Land Cruiser is working today

Haiti day 2 Oct 19. At 4am I realized all my tools were in one of the two bags Ashley was so sweet to bring to me. It was not a simple task but many things we do in Haiti that seem easy turn out to be quite difficult. Sister Denise welcomed us for breakfast at 7 having left the monastery at 5. Even without tools there was plenty to do. Catherine took Bertone and Jackson and began teaching the health educators. What an enthusiastic group they were!!!



Chuck and Lou did work on the tank and Bob spent the morning with sister reviewing the plan. In the

LWW world that's running a 101, 102, and 103 all at once. Ancy and Ashley show up just before noon on their way to Caye, drop off the treasured suitcases, have lunch and head off to see how they can help rebuild what Matthew took away. One of the orphanages now has 400 children because they took in three other

orphanages that were destroyed. When an earthquake comes it leaves the trees and bushes standing so there was at least food. No so with a hurricane.



The picture on the post shows what we accomplished today in the afternoon. We are right on schedule and we're all having a great time. This is an incredible family God has blessed me with. Half way through the afternoon the Haitians have taken over the building and I could be more pleased. We leave at 5 but the drive back was partly in the dark and that's not fun. Thanks be to God we're all safe. Sleep was pretty good this night.

Chuck says happy birthday number 43 Chrissie. I love you. Dad

Tomorrow begins at 4

Haiti day 3 Oct 20-Out the gate at 5 and on the way to Fond des Negres. We're enthusiastic about arriving because we got a lot accomplished yesterday in spite of being behind because of the bag situation. Morning goes like clockwork and right after lunch the first test. For just about 6 times in a row our trash filter head is broken. I have tried to deal with the manufacture in the past and they are most unsympathetic. The quality is just bad. We were so gentle tightening the fittings by hand also. Because the water comes from a well and the source tank has almost no sediment in it the decision is made to leave out the trash filter. Next we find a junction that was not glued by guess who. Once fixed the system ran flawlessly. Number 22 is born. Bertone begins training the operators and Katherine and Jackson continue to train the health educators some more. It has rained all day and so the kids get a snow day from school. Since most of the kids have to walk or take a motorcycle to school the school just does not function if it's raining. So we lose the opportunity to let the educators show us what they've learned. Always monyana. We leave at 3 pm about 45 min ahead of Ancy and Ashley coming back from Caye. We plan to meet in Dufort to hug AJ goodbye but alas it was not to be. Up to the warehouse to get parts for tomorrow and then the up to the monastery and great dinner conversation will Richard from Quebec who is a dowser extraordinaire. The rain has stopped and we can see the lights of Dufort, Leogane and Port au Prince from our balcony rooms. No stars but Chuck, Lou and I solve the world's problems that day. It's really feels good to wind down a little.

Haiti Day 4 Oct 21-we slept in until 5 this morning. Bertone is not available in the morning so I have to drive and driving on Haiti roads in the dark is less than fun. We join the brothers for the rosary and gospel and head for Fond de Negres for our final day. It rained all night and does not stop until about 1p today. We stop in Petit Goave to get some ice and arrive at sisters at 7:45. Breakfast is wonderful as usual. Katherine wanted bananas in the worse way and the sisters obliged. After a couple of system alterations we're ready to dedicate the system that afternoon.



Because of the constant rain the

kids get another snow day so we lose all opportunity to observe the health educators teaching the kids. Chuck being a retired science teacher for 5-6 grades had prepared a couple of fun labs for the kids. Not to be. So in the morning we reinforced the health education and right after lunch we had a really nice dedication ceremony that was conducted by the two



local parish priests that Sister Denise invited. Then after Father had sprinkled the water house and system with holy water we all signed the board, a tradition of the HSHM teams. And finally we all celebrated with a drink of the water. One thing we hear about from time to time is people don't like the taste of the water. In general it is because they have been drinking bad water that they are not certain what pure water should taste like. Not so at Fond des Negres. Everyone from sisters to the committee to the operators to folks living on the neighborhood liked the taste. So we pack up and leave Sister Denise with a tool to make a major difference in people's lives. We leave a little after two and get to Leogane to drop off Jackson so he can go home to his family in PAP. What an incredible asset he has been! Catherine is fixated on ice cream so we make a run by the local gas station and then on to NDC to bring some things to Julie. I have to meet with Pere Blot for dinner in PAV regarding the install for tomorrow so Lou and Katherine stay at NDC to celebrate movie night watching Frozen. Poor Bertone has gotten almost no sleep the past day or so because he had to bring his wife to the airport at 5 am. Tomorrow we begin another adventure. It's not raining now and we pray for sun tomorrow because we have no electricity since the sun has not shown in 3 days.

Haiti Day 5 Oct 22- this was definitely a much easier day. We began with morning prayers with the brothers, communion and then a leisurely breakfast. Off at 8:30 to make a stop in Leogane and then on to Pere Blot's to set up a solar powered well pump. Father's facility was not quite ready for the final installation so we spent the morning teaching three Haitians how to set it up the pump in the near future. These lads appointed by Pere Blot were not only sharp and enthusiastic but they were hungry for the knowledge. Next onto NDC with a quick lunch stop of ice cream. We laughed over some of the silliest things. What a team God has graced me with. That afternoon we diagnose a refrigerator problem, fix a water tank problem, diagnose a truck clutch problem and have some of the best



pastry you can imagine baked by Eliane. It was definitely a hot day approaching 100 with an equal amount of humidity. Lots of sunshine and as we are heading for the monastery at 4 I am so looking forward to a shower before mass at 5. Expectations are often turned on their head in Haiti and having no water this afternoon certainly made taking a shower with a Wet One a new experience. Mass as always is beautiful with Pere Blot. The bongo which is the only instrument is haunting and the brothers and young people singing just make this a more Graceful experience. I forget how much I love this place sometimes until Saturday evening mass at PAV. Thank you Lord for the gift. Dinner was great amongst discussions of no water with Fre O and Catherine learning that the monastery has to haul its water up the hill every 3-4 days. I even had an opportunity to tell stories of hauling 80 gallon barrels in the back of pickup trucks and unloading and moving them into the monastery by hand. For those of wondering 80 gallons of water weighs 640 lbs. Bertone and I take Julie to the airport tomorrow morning leaving here at 4a so good night and God bless you all.

Haiti Day 6 Oct 23-Our focus this day was at NDC measuring rooms for the next tile project, fixing the cut off switch on water tank, checking batteries and trying to understand the septic system problems. Chuck wanted pay and a half for going 26' up the tower. We played with the girls, met with our friend Jackson and his lovely family, ate one of Eliane's superior meals and had a delightful day. The days get easier as we wind down our visit and take time to get to know our hosts better. Tomorrow Chuck will be teaching and I know you'll enjoy the pics



Haiti Day 7 Oct 24- Sun is shining so today we all help Chuck bring down to the school all the science labs he has made up in both English and Kreyol. He made up seven labs and the ones I saw were incredibly interesting. Catherine who confesses she never cared much for Science kept proclaiming how much she wished she had had Chuck as a teacher. Fre Arie arranged for a lab in the 3rd, 5th, 6th and 7th grades. The first lab was building triangles, pyramids, squares and cubes out of clay and toothpicks. Next he had the 5th grade racing balloons on a string teaching each reaction has an equal and opposite

reaction.

<https://www.facebook.com/bob.mccoy.566/videos/vb.100005944151746/627112674163532/?type=2&theater> Then the 6th graders made rubber band spools racing across the floor demonstrating kinetic energy. Lastly the 7th graders learn how to make a sundial. What a great time the kids and we adults had!! The afternoon was just chilling out. We're packing our bags and getting ready to head out on a jet plane tomorrow. We've done all we came to do this trip and then a little more. No water again tonight. Part of the Caribbean cruise.

Haiti the 8th day – Up at 3:30 to leave by 4. Our flight is at 8:30 and there is nothing like a PAP traffic jam to change your plans, so we avoid that situation by leaving early. The trip is uneventful and we are all home by 10p or so. Chuck had a two hour drive from Cleveland to Erie and we had the same from Nashville. I want to thank everyone for your prayers and wonderful comments regarding our trip. It was fun to share our adventure with you in real time.

Grace and Peace until the next time.

