

## Holy Spirit Haiti Mission Trip Mar 21-29

### Summary

Vivian Reiss, Amber Kaderbek, Lou Galipeau and I went to Haiti Mar 21-29. We carried several letters and items with us for the girls at NDC from some of you which were very much appreciated. The trip was one of both physical endurance and relationship building. The physical part had to do with getting two different pumps working and then dropped in the wells. Neither cooperated nicely but with patience we overcame the obstacles. The night before we were leaving the second pump began working but not before we had pulled it out of the 120' well four times in 95 deg heat. Weight of the two pumps, wire and PVC is about 100 lbs. And to make sure He had our attention at 30' from the well bottom the pump got stuck on the casing.

The really exciting part of this trip was the BonBon Chocolat project (BBC) (brownies). We have been looking for some projects for NDC that will not only teach the girls some skill sets for the future, but provide a method of future sustainability. The Garden Project is one of these and the BBC is another. Haiti has all the ingredients of brownies but no one makes them. So Amber put together an awesome 100% Haitian ingredient recipe that she taught 2 selected girls how to make. The girls were selected for their love of cooking, maturity and we hoped interest to succeed. The first pan of 16 came out great and 2 other girls were instructed to sell the BBC where they could for at least 100 goude per brownie (\$1.30). This part they did not understand because the Business Plan class was not scheduled until Sunday so the buyers got some good deals. On Sunday Lou and I scheduled three meetings with the girls. First we met with all of them and I spent an hour talking about the history of NDC and their home and the importance of respect for their mother, Eliane. I was surprised and very pleased that they all stayed riveted on what I was saying. Then we dismissed the younger ones and Lou did a mini career fair for the 13 year and older girls which also went over very well. Finally after lunch we did a 3 hour Business Plan session with the four girls. I had broken down the recipe to individual component costs and added labor and other costs such as use of the kitchen and propane. None of the girls had any concept of what it costs to make something, so there was a lot of knowledge transfer that afternoon. They had made another batch and this time the prices were held more rigidly. Bertone did not get the good deal he got on Friday. But the truth came home on Tuesday as we were preparing to leave for the US the next day. I went to the kitchen to say goodbye to Eliane and there the Brownie girls were making 2 batches. Unbeknownst to me they had sold all their inventory at two different schools (this was one of the key places we told them to sell so they were listening) and with the money earned they had purchased more raw material and still had money in their pocket. They were going to open up a Fonkoze bank account the next day. If they sell the BBC for the amount we told them and they get 16 squares from each pan, they can clear about \$12US on every pan. My heart was leaping for joy when I learned this and since it really is her brainchild I could not wait to tell Amber the next day when we picked her up on the way to the airport.

Amber had been planning for quite some time to spend 4 days with the Missionaries of Charity (St. Mother Theresa's order) to help with the kids in two of their hospitals. Arrangements had been made and I was reticent to leave her on Saturday, but Sr. Neha the superior assured us she would be fine and I knew in my heart she would be. The dad in me just wasn't cooperating. The unexpected outcome of this visit though was we have found a very needy facility for the next pure water system. It won't be straightforward because they have a lot of iron in their well water, but I think we can fix that. Amber looked good when we arrived and as usual was playing with some of the kids at the hospital. The feeling of holiness being on these grounds at this TB/AIDS hospital and seeing the nuns in their habits of white with the blue strip was very overwhelming. I just sensed God and Jesus and Mother Theresa there all watching over everyone. That's the best I can explain it which is most inadequate.

We thank all of you for your prayers and support. The full report will be on the website shortly. Grace and peace to all.

## Haiti day 1

Amber, Lou and I drove to Nashville last night and had a great dinner at Jim and Nicks before retiring to leave for the airport at 5. We just finished saying a full rosary together in the airport. Can't think of a better way to ask our Blessed Mother to watch over us this day. Vivian just left Huntsville and is waiting for us in Atlanta.

## Haiti day 2



Bertone, Abigail his niece and Sonie



Rained hard first 2 days

This morning we faced the challenge of finding material in Leogane. We needed cement, block, PVC, glue, some baking goods and iron bar. What would have taken me an hour at home took 1/2 day. When we got back from our 2nd trip to Leogane we met the Missionaries of Charity who had brought a young girl of 13. She had non contagious leprosy and her grandmother that was in charge of her was taking

whatever money was meant for the girl's welfare and putting it to other use meaning she was malnourished. When I met the sisters I thought for a moment I was speaking to Mother Theresa as they wore the same habit.

Both had met Mother T. The young girl was supposed to be very smart. Please pray for her that she will get some peace and normalcy at NDC. We got the wire for the pump run and all the fittings in place but ran out of time to drop the pump. That will be tomorrow. Amber had hoped to do one BonBon Chocolat (brownie) class but time, rain and lack of one ingredient took its toll. We had to buy concrete block and you can see them making the block and sun drying them. It rained hard in Leogane but not a drop at the monastery. You just have to roll with the tide. Got home at 7 had dinner and a fun evening with Abigail who is Bertone's 4 yr old niece. Amber demonstrates the proper eating of a mango. And day 2 comes to a close.



## Haiti Day 3



Haitian labor?



AC pump at bottom and DC pump above it



New 300 gal garden tank

Today we had to make up for lost time and worked hard to do so. First the garden water tank base had to be filled with rock and gravel and since the piles of both were about 100 yards away they had to be hauled by hand. Fortunately it was

8:30a when we began and the wall provided protection from the sun. Lou and I kept up with the young'uns but we were both beat by the time it was complete. Then we

had to run #10 wire through PVC pipe (protect against the sun) for 80'. Then we had to run a new pipe to the garden tank. It was well into the afternoon before we had the tandem pump laid out and connected on the ground. The pic shows a 120vac 10 gal/min pump at the bottom and the 24 VDC 2 gal/min pump just above it. The cardinal rule of pump dropping is to always test it before you drop it. While I had tested the AC pump I had not tested it with the new wire configuration

and would pay dearly later because it didn't work. Fortunately the DC pump which the house depends on for water did work and the water tanks were low so I was glad to just get it pumping again. The big news of the day was Amber got great participation and enthusiasm in making the first batch of Bonbon Chocolat (brownies). Bertone was the first customer and then Ancy then I bought a half pan. The girls were so excited. Unfortunately the business plan training will not be until Sunday so they have yet to understand the monetary aspects of this project. It should be fun teaching the business class. Ancy our LWW In County Coordinator and I spent some real quality time together discussing the overall health of the water systems throughout Haiti. Back to the monastery about 7:00p for dinner and much needed rest.

#### Haiti day 4



*SOIL backyard. Was barren 3 years ago Molly Case in middle gave us a great tour.*

We have an appointment with SOIL (Sustainable Organic Integrated Livelihoods) in PAP to tour their all natural human waste management process. Breakfast was peanut butter crackers because we were on the road at 6a to go 25 miles. We got there just before 9 and yes the traffic was awful. We picked up Vivian, her niece Rachel and Eliane. The tour was incredibly interesting. These folks have developed a very simple process to take human waste and make it into compost 9 mon later. Using carbon it is all natural. We bought 2 bags for the garden. It is an incredible way of returning to the earth and preserving our precious resource. We're going to try one of the toilets at NDC. The picture of the yard 3 years ago was totally denuded and with the help of the compost has been turn into a beautiful landscape. Thank you Molly Case for

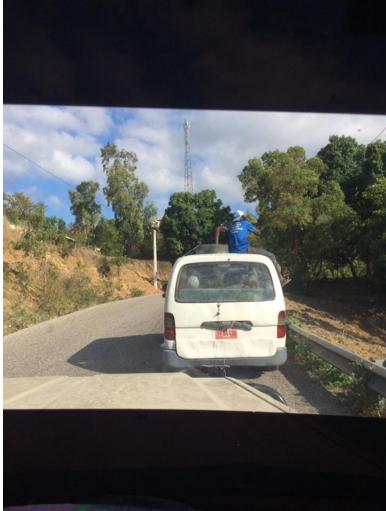
the tour and the work you and all the SOIL do. We drop off Rachel who taking a bus to the DR and then Vivian to the airport and then a stop to find cement board and home. The traffic is just as bad coming back but we get back to NDC about 2. Now we try to pull the pumps out and the first 50 feet do ok and then something gets stuck. No amount of maneuvering will free it and we have no tripod to hold it in place so the only choice is to lower it again so we can keep the water flowing to the house. Very discouraging. We get back to the monastery and get a little down time. A couple of things need fixing on the Land Cruiser which I do before dinner. After dinner Fre O, Fre Beryl, Dr Yanne and I discuss the future sustainability of the clinic and some good ideas were exchanged. There is much difficulty but there are possibilities. Amber and Lou have one more evening of Bananagram before she goes to Missionaries of Charity tomorrow. She is very bittersweet about it as she wants more time with the NDC kids but is anticipating an opportunity she has dreamed about for some time. I actually get to bed before 10.

#### Haiti Day 5



Begin with morning Matins with the brothers at 5:30. What a great way to begin the day. Bertone surprised us this morning with an incredible mango smoothie that he made along with ice. Ice is not unusual in Haiti but its water source generally is. Since Bertone is one of the LWW technicians we know his water source is good. What a treat. Thank you my brother. We pack Amber up and head to Carrefour for her new adventure. She has been planning for weeks to spend 4 days with Mother Theresa's order the Missionaries of Charity. She had no idea what she would do but hoped it involved small children. As

*Who doesn't belong in this picture? NDC garden prep.*



*30MPH, talking on the cell phone for the next 20 miles. Hope he made it.*

soon as we drive on the grounds I knew it was a holy place. Sister Neha met us and gave us a tour of the facility. It's a hospital that takes TB patients, mentally challenged and creatures of God that would likely be cast away by society. A gentle woman came up to me with her hand extended to shake mine. I don't think she realized where she was as her behavior was childlike. She trusted everything it seemed. I took her hand and kissed it. She smiled and in turn kissed my hand. I think I made her day. There are 250 patients at this facility and the two doctors see patients all day long Sat. When we arrived there had to be 50-60 people waiting in the hot sun just to get in the gate and then I saw a waiting area packed with people that I have no idea how many resided there. There were several buildings most two story painted a light blue. Sister showed us their chapel which could hold 400 easily. Just being in the chapel and seeing the statue of Mary and a picture of Mother Theresa looking at our Lady with great compassion in her eyes. It was an incredible feeling of holiness just being there for a few minutes. We hug Amber and return to Leogane to get some parts for Oizard's well pump. Our intent was the spend the rest of the

day hooking the pump to a solar panel and splicing the 400' of 1" coil that got damaged when they had to pull the pump the last time. We got the pump assembled and hooked it to a solar panel and nothing. Not even a hum of the motor. I knew we were on marginal power with the one panel and this particular model works on AC and DC so we plugged it into the wall and nothing. Instructions for the pump were 5 pictures. It's not good to run a pump dry but it's ok just to see if it will start before you drop it in the well. It would not be until 4am the next morning that I would wake up realizing that the strange little device connected to one of the electrical lines is a water sensing device and since we didn't have the pump in water by design it would not start. So we had a short opportunity to go visit with Fre Jones at NDC to get an update on the garden project. He comes from Hinche every two weeks (a 4 hr drive and you have to go through PAP) to teach the garden girls. The picture is a plot they had tilled that day and were planting tomatoes. The picture was taken at 4pm and it was still too hot so they were waiting for 6pm to finish the work. Now that the girls have gotten their hands into the soil they have come alive with enthusiasm. Their homework is to till up and prepare their own garden patch before Fre Jones returns. At the end you can see the new water tank we installed earlier. We headed back to mass that evening at the monastery. Lou was able to follow parts of it which was all said in Kreyol. The singing and the bongo drum were very uplifting. So while we struggled to provide something better that day and had failed with the pump I left feeling God on my heart and there would be another opportunity. It was lonely for Lou and me eating dinner together without Amber. We talked about how she might be fairing and determined she was in her element and most happy. After dinner we studied the most beautiful star studded sky. The Big Dipper was so large and beautiful I could almost reach out and touch it. While there are lights in the yard they don't shine up on the roof where the stargazing is just magical. I've never seen the sky at night as I have been able to in Haiti. Lou and I do some homework prep for tomorrow and call it a night. Peace be with you.

### Haiti Day 6



*Lou & Bertone presenting possible careers to NDC girls 13+*

This morning Lou and I began the early am with the rosary on the roof. The brothers were in Retreat this weekend so had a different schedule. I woke up at 4 this morning with a revelation that I knew why the pump would not start. Since I've never used this pump before and the Grundfos instructions are worse than awful I finally realized there is a low or no water sensor just above the pump and if it is not in 3' of water it won't start. I'm certain this is the problem but won't be able to test it until Tuesday. Nothing like the last minute.



*Business Plan Meeting w/BonBon Chocolat girls*

Today was formation day for NDC. We planned three sessions. The first was a general understanding of the orphanage and its origin. I especially emphasized the angelic work that Eliane was doing and spoke in some detail about what we hope the future holds for the girls. We spoke about the bracelet, garden and BonBon Chocolat projects and got some good questions from the girls. They were all very attentive. Next we dismissed all the kids under 13 and Lou and Bertone did a great job on possible careers for the girls. He had them all fill out a sheet that had up to 3 careers they would like to possibly pursue. Then after lunch we started a 3 hour interactive session on the BonBon Chocolat project business plan. The girls had baked two successful pans of brownies and had sold quite a few but had no clue on income and expenses of such a project. The class was good but their math is weak and the bus plan is mostly math. But they will set out with two cooks and two sales people. They have much enthusiasm so my prayer is each will get an epiphany. Since there is no benchmark for what we are trying to do with these guidance programs, we're all plowing new ground here. Grace and peace.

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### Haiti Day 7



*St. Marc Episcopal in Janette. The community is actually building this themselves. Communities like this are hard to find today.*



*One of the rewards of working in Haiti is gorgeous views like this looking North. LaGonave is in distance in the bay.*

Long day today but many blessings along the way. Lou, Bertone and I are on the road at 6 to pick up Ancy in Dufort and then head west to Mirogane and the Pailian to do a site analysis (SA) for Pere Quartorze at St Marc in Jeanette. It takes us two hours and once we reach Mirogane at sea level we climb 2400' (twice the height of where we stay in Palmiste au Vin. The drive is gorgeous if you overlook the fact there's no guard rails and unforgiving drop offs. I've never traveled this road before so thoroughly enjoyed the

adventure. My GPS got us within 1 mile. BUT Janette is not on the map so it took a young school lad riding with us to show us the way. The property on which St. Marc sits is some of the prettiest I have ever seen. The yard was a Bermuda type grass called garzus. They have a school of 500 with 40 teachers and 2 nurses at their clinic and about 5000 in the community. We spent the next 5 hours touring the facility and discussing in depth their need for a pure water system. What impressed me the most about this community is their willingness to work together. For two years they have been building their church and it is the community doing this. There is no funding and they all pitch in where they can. Those that can afford it give and those that can not provide free labor. They are truly an example to all Haitians. The water committee made up of Jackson, Rony, Jean, Hilaire and Judith (not present) were some of the nicest, warmest and most engaging people you would ever want to meet. The wind was blowing about 5-10mph, there was shade all over the yard and at 2400' it was not hot. It was one of the most beautiful days I have spent in Haiti. This was a time of relationship building, making friends and developing trust in preparation for the next trip. By 1p we were finished and bid goodbye to our hosts and headed back down to Mirogane. Mirogane is a shipping port without all the holdup of PAP and so much closer to Leogane with decent roads unlike Port au Paix. As much as I love Ronel who has done our shipping for years the drive to Port au Paix is just too brutal. It pays to know someone and Ancy knows a lot of someone. We went to meet Sonny who had worked the docks for 10 years and was happy to help. Before we were finished he would take us to meet the director of customs. They gave us the name of a shipper out of Miami and now we are set up to try it. I couldn't have imagined a better set of contacts. Now on back to Dufort for Ancy to pick up his car and then to Leogane to change some dollars into Goude and then to Signeau to meet briefly with Sister Denise to discuss future water installations.

And then back to PAV by 6:30 for supper. I was anxious to get through so we could test the big pump that wouldn't start. I had been assured by Sun Pumps that I was on the correct path with the sensor in the water and it should start. Praise God!! We were very relieved as I thought we might have to bring it home with us. Grace and peace.

### Haiti Day 8



*Building our well tripod. Top is separate so whole thing is transportable. It worked great!*

This was a day of last chances as tomorrow we go home. We begin our day in early morning with the brothers saying the rosary, divine office and communion. After breakfast is our first opportunity to show Fr Oizard his pump we got working the day before. He is most pleased. In order to pull the pumps out of the NDC well to figure out the problem we need a tripod to put over the well so we can use our come-a-long to winch the pump over the stuck part. Ever since Friday when we couldn't free them by manual labor I had been designing a rig in my mind. It had to be simple, portable and collapsible. By Sunday I had a design in mind and on Monday had 'requisitioned' the final needed piece. Since Fr O had need for a tripod also he was most interested in the project. He had a welder and a 7" skill saw and we had the steel and cutting blade. The result turned out pretty good since all we had was a wheelbarrow for a bench and a carpenters square for the angular measurements. All was welded on the concrete floor. We had a good drill in our truck and two hours later a very functional product. The apex is 3 pieces of 2" square steel welded 120 deg apart at a 25 deg angle. The legs are 1.5" square steel 8' long that slide into the apex and the three side horizontal side braces are 1.5" square steel held on with 3/8" bolts purchased at the local auto parts store which by the

way is 1/2 of a steel container. While we were getting the bolts on the main drag through Leogane one of the primary schools was out practicing for Haiti Flag day in April. See the video as they had some great moves and it felt quite patriotic. Well the tripod worked great. As on Friday the pump got stuck about 30' from the bottom on the side of the well casing. Keep in mind we're pulling about 120lbs of pumps and pipe up 120'. So we tied it off and connect the come-a-long to the top of the tripod, started ratcheting and like magic it came free. Did I mention it was about 90 deg out and 1pm (aka hottest time of the day). Even Bertone who is very strong was pausing. Before we leave that evening we will have done this 3 more times. The pump worked great on land but in the water it blew the breaker. I was certain we had a ground to hot wire leak through one of the splices. After replacing all the splices with no change and my thinking we had a pump shorting out internally, Bertone suggests we put it on the generator instead of the batteries. I was skeptical it was the problem because we were running another AC pump with a similar load on the inverter but we had nothing to lose. We had to get the delco from the school and get some gasoline. At 5p the generator is started, the pump plugged in and water flows. Praise God!! Upon closer investigation I discovered the batteries had not been charged as much as I had thought they were and the load of the pump had taken its toll. I did know there was a chance this could happen but until you hook it all up and try it you don't know. Battery measurement levels are tricky to figure out. We spend the next hour measuring water flow with the new pump and leaving Alex with some money to get some PVC the next day and a design to bypass the 1/2" line used by the solar pump. The new pump will push a lot more water than the solar pump and by using the existing 1/2" pipe we were severely restricting its capacity. We were out of time but had a workable solution that Bertone and Alex could easily finish. Before we left though the most incredible thing happened. I went into the kitchen and the BonBon Chocolat team was making two more batches of brownies. Unbeknownst to me they had sold their entire inventory yesterday at two schools. Today after school they had taken the proceeds and purchased some more oil and cocoa powder. They still had over 1200 gde (\$18). The joy Lou and I felt in our hearts was incredible. This meant the girls Julie and Amber had selected for the project and Lou and I had trained on business planning on Sunday had paid off. We had the first fledgling business which was the first step to self-sustainability. We could not wait to tell Amber the next day when we saw her. On

the way back to the monastery Bertone quizzes Lou and me hard on the good and the bad we had seen that week at NDC. He had been hired 3 months ago to bring much needed male leadership and discipline and respect back to the organization and he was looking for feedback to make sure the path he was taking was the correct one. Bertone never ceases to amaze me through his constant interest in growing mentally and spiritually. He is one of the finest gifts God has given our team over the years. He has done a wonderful job at NDC and the improvement is striking. Eliane is much more at peace because much of this stress has been lifted off her shoulders. We talk through dinner about the next 3 months and we agree that more work needs to be done on preservation of resources - water, electricity and batteries. Lou and I have only now to pack our bags and get ready for the ride home. Grace and peace.

### **Haiti Day 9**

Time to come home but not before our wonderful morning ritual with the brothers and a Bon voyage to each of them. Breakfast with Bertone and then a two hour meeting with our Living Waters In-Country crew. We have been blessed with an incredible with Ancy at the helm. They have all grown so much since the earthquake. I always enjoy the times we can share information with each other. We haul out of Palmiste au Vin at 10a. Next stop Amber. When we find her at the hospital she's playing with the kids, her favorite past time. She was happy to see us as we were her. I loved getting a chance to visit with Sr. Neha the superior, one more time. She is truly a gentle creature and truly a person of God. St Theresa would be proud and yes she has spent a lot of time with Mother. And yes I kissed the hand that held that glorious person. As close as I will get to the saint. On to the airport. The worse is yet to come as PAP is very unpredictable. Today she was kind to us and we only ran into one bad intersection that took us 15 min to get through. That was 200' in 15 min. The rest is history. Lou, Amber and I have dinner in Atlanta and discuss our best and worst moments of the trip. I think the best was agreed by all seeing the BonBon Chocolat girls taking ownership of the project and beginning their new quest into the world of business. Can this be the beginning of sustainability? This is a bittersweet moment for me as I don't want it to be over but know it must. I will miss Vivian, Amber, Lou, Bertone, Eliane, Fre O, Fre Arie, Ancy, Yanne, Sonie and so many others. And I thank each of you our readers and supporters for your prayers, love and resources for which this mission would not be possible. Good night. Grace and peace.

Bob McCoy – Mission Team Lead