

HSHM April 12-19, 2016

Team: Lou Galipeau, Darcy Sylvester, Amber Kaderbek & Bob McCoy

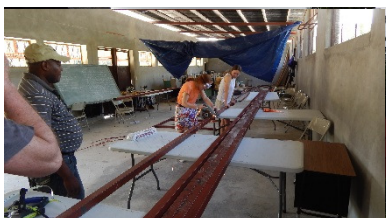
Objectives:

1. Build water tank and install solar panel and well pump for Sister Denise in Fond des Negres school
2. Retrofit NDC battery bench to fit properly in water house
3. Build and install NDC sprinkler system for garden
4. Feed the hungry service project
5. Visit a shelter for severely handicapped children
6. Review Water Prediction Service with DINEPA
7. Review state of all water purification systems and continue focus on sustainability with IC team
8. Surprise birthday party for Ancy, Bertone and Fre Olizard
9. Systems Management covenant for new well for Pere Blot
10. Have an Easter egg hunt and put on a skit for NDC girls on Jealousy



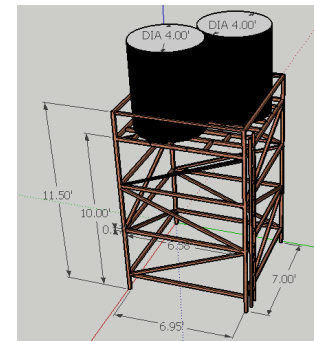
The flights to and from Haiti are getting pretty good. We leave Huntsville at 6a and arrive in Haiti at 2:30p. Haiti is in the Eastern Time zone but does not implement daylight savings time, so there is no time difference. By the time we get our luggage and through customs there is enough time to get to the monastery (PAV) before dark. Our first stop though was to make a visit to Ancy's 82 year old mother. She loved the rosary I gave to Ancy when he was in the US in February, so I made one for her and seven others for Ancy's other brothers and sisters. We said two decades of the Sorrowful Mysteries with her. The Holy Spirit was all around us that afternoon. We had a happy arrival at PAV for all, but especially for Amber as many have been asking about her and it has been a year since she had stayed for 5 months in Haiti. The first night we had a lot of unpacking to do. We carried 8 bags between us and all were 50 lbs each or very close. To accomplish this there is a lot of shifting items between bags to get it all in and under the weight limit. Because we had to leave at 5a the next morning for Fond des Negres we had to have everything ready the night before.

The drive to FdN was two hours and about 80 miles. Not knowing where we would get breakfast we stopped in Mirogane to get some ice for the drink cooler and there was a hard boiled-egg vendor serving eggs with some incredible seasonings. I should have known though that Sister Denis would have breakfast. There are four sisters at FdN and 3 of them teach school which begins shortly after we got there and they still had time to cook us a meal! Haiti may be the poorest country in the Western hemisphere but the hospitality is unmatched! The people have so little and give so much. Our task for the next three days was



to build a 12' water tower to place two water tanks. At the right is my drawing of what I wanted, but have never built one, so

I was anxious to see how it turned out. We had purchased the 15 pieces of 24' - 2" square steel to build it and had brought a skill saw with 5 abrasive blades to cut the pieces. Sister, per my instructions,



had rented a welder, but communications was not quite right. When I asked for a welder I wanted the man who would bring his welder and she got me welder thinking we would do the welding. She quickly went into the community and an hour later, Thovar shows up. Thovar who is about as tall as Darcy and Amber proved to be not only an excellent welder, but a really nice person. What



we found out on the second day was Thovar is 76 years old. He was tough as nails and gentle as a lamb and clung to the tower while welding it as if he has suction cups on his hands and feet. God clearly graced us with this man.



The first day we got the two ends set in place and concrete footings poured. The die had been cast. Each morning as we began our drive we would take the first 30 minutes to say the rosary since we could not get to mass at PAV. On the second day it was raining, but as we are coming over the mountain to Petit Goave God showed us something I have never seen before – a double rainbow. Right after we left Dufort and all the way to Petit Goave there were several rainbows, but this one was right there, not a half mile away. If you look carefully to the left of the rainbow you will see another much lighter one. After Sister fed us breakfast again, the cutting and welding began. At the same time that was going on, the crew dropped the well pump in the hole and began to get the tank ready for installation. We had to mount two electrical control panels also to get everything set up for tomorrow when we would raise the solar panel on the pole. That was day two.

While it looked like we were about finished on day three, there was still a lot of detailed work and most of all we had to weld the solar panel into a cage and then mount it on the 20' pole. All at proper angles



of course. Welding the cage around the panel was nerve racking because one spark from the welder would ruin the panel and I was not sure if the panel would get too hot from the welding. None of this happened and right after lunch the pole and panel went in place thanks to several of the guys working on another project that helped us. Once in place and adjusted properly for the sun's angle, Thovar welded it to the tower. In between time, the crew had finished the rest of the wiring and plumbing, so all we had to do was hook up the wire to the control box and pray the pump came on. And it did! And the water hitting the bottom of the empty tank was a glorious sound for now the Sisters had their first water source and did not have to go a mile away to carry in water.



Sadly that afternoon tragedy struck the Dufort community. When we are going over the mountain looking toward Leogane about 30 miles away there was a very large and distinctive plume of black smoke in what looked like the area of Dufort. It rose a couple of thousand feet in the air and was very contained so was not a sugar cane fire. A 5000 gallon tanker truck filled with kerosene had lost a front axle, jackknifed, overturned and caught on fire. There were no fire trucks and why only two people lost their lives that day was only by God's Grace because there were houses on both side of the road. The road was closed for several hours while it burned out and passing by the next day reminded me of pictures of Hiroshima on a smaller scale.

The next two days found us at the orphanage (NDC) and as a split team. Amber had wanted very much to feed a lot of people mumba (peanut butter) and jelly sandwiches. There was a particular orphanage in Leogane, that Bertone knew about whose kids were not as well taken care of as Eliane does the NDC kids, so off they went with 20 bags of bread, a case of peanut butter and a case of jelly. That afternoon 100 children received some much needed nourishment.

That morning we met with Jackson, from a water management branch of the Haitian government called DINEPA, to present a software tool we have been developing. Bob and Darcy have been working on a computer model that could help predict the best locations for drilling wells all over southern Haiti. The computer model can be used to help Haitian organizations, schools, and landowners determine whether drilling a well on their land is likely to produce water, but it can do this before the owner has to invest



\$5,000 or more for a well. In some places drilling a dry well is very likely, and this tool would provide useful information up front. Jackson showed great interest in our project and agreed to gather some of his colleagues for a more formal presentation in the near future. Afterward Darcy and Lou began to build the sprinkler system for the new NDC garden. Darcy had designed it, gone to Lewter hardware and gotten the fittings and was now making it a reality. And at the same time I began to work on splitting the battery bench in half. The NDC solar system uses 24 6V deep cycle lead acid

batteries, each weighing about 70 lbs. I had hoped to only have to remove half the batteries on the 3-shelved bench, cut that half off, slide the bench with the other half of the batteries to the wall and then put legs on the end I had cut off and put it in place and then put the other batteries back on the shelf. I must have thought I was Godzilla if I was going to slide a 3 shelf bench with 850 lbs of batteries on it the 3 feet it had to go to the wall. So by the end of the day all batteries had to be disconnected, un-shelved and re-shelved and reconnected. Mass was at 5 that evening, so we all had to hustle back to PAV to get ready.

Sunday after breakfast we went back to NDC to finish up the sprinkler project, but for the first time relaxed a little. The crew wanted to bring an Easter egg hunt to Haiti, so Lou acquired 65 large plastic eggs filled with M&Ms. Having been a veteran of years of hiding eggs for our kids, I warned the girls to not make it too difficult so they will remember where they were. They brought the girls in by 3 different age groups so the younger ones got first pick and each girl could only get one egg. They had a lot of fun doing this, but my warning fell on deaf ears as there are probably 2-3 eggs still sitting in the sun somewhere.

That afternoon we put on a skit for the girls called Josephine and Her Three Sisters. Darcy wrote the skit and Lou directed it leveraging his many years of experience working in playhouses. Since none of us spoke Creole well, Bertone was our narrator, while the four of us played out the parts. The skit called for 4 women and we had two women and two men on the team; well need I say more? The intent was to address some jealousy issues that had been going on among the older girls, but we did not want to single these girls out, so we put it on for everyone. Each night when we got back from FdN, Bertone would come to our room and we would practice the skit. Bertone is a natural teacher and once he got the gist of what we were trying to do, he did very well. The kids got it also, because after it was over, he asked numerous questions and the girls gave some very insightful answers. The final question though was who was prettier, Rachel or Jenny? You have to ask Lou about that though.



The last day we continued the tight schedule. I had an all-day meeting with Ancy to discuss LWW business and sustainability of the Haitian water systems. Amber had scheduled a visit to a severely handicapped facility at the Little Sisters of St. Therese in Rivere Froide and Lou had a systems management contract to review and get signed by Pere Blot. However, today was Fre Olizard's birthday and Ancy and Bertone had just had birthdays, so I called a bogus meeting on Monday morning right after breakfast which was the only time Olizard had available (everyone's busy!) and while conducting the meeting the rest of the crew got the cake and gifts ready. We got Fre Arie to get the cake for us so Bertone would not get suspicious. It was the perfect surprise and some beautiful words were shared. It was a very close moment for me and thanks to Lou for getting the specially embroidered shirts that were given to each of



them with their name and Holy Spirit Haiti Mission on each. So Amber, Darcy and Lou went on their way with Bertone and Ancy and I worked together at PAV. The visit with Pere Blot went well and thanks to one of our patrons, he will have a well shortly. When Amber was living in Haiti she visited a severely handicapped facility and was very moved by the experience and so reached out to see what else she might be able to do. This visit was equally moving, but unfortunately where the Sisters really need help is beyond our capability to do so. But you don't know until you ask.

That night we packed what we had left which was four instead of eight suitcases. The spare suitcases were packed inside each other. Then at dinner we drank the champagne with the brothers that we had bought for the morning birthday party and had a lot of fun together even though it was good bye again. At 5a the next morning Bertone was driving us back to the airport. We had 5 hours in FTL and we always take advantage of going to Chilli's to get a round of American food. During lunch was my other very close moment as we discussed openly and honestly our commitments to this mission and to each other. It's not something I can describe, but was definitely a Grace God gave us that day. Until the next trip.