

Report on October, 2016 Trip to Haiti

November 3, 2016

Concept

Go to Haiti and assess the damage caused by Hurricane Matthew and determine where help was needed. I was to go for one week. When I was returning to the US, a medical team was coming to join Helen for a second week. I packed in the event Helen asked me to stay for the second week.

Friday, October 7, 2016

I flew to Ft. Lauderdale, met Helen, and spent the night at the Candlewood Motel.

Saturday, October 8, 2016

We departed the motel at 4:05 am and caught the 6:00 am flight to Port-au-Prince. At Port-au-Prince we cleared immigration, found all of our bags, and met Lophane and Noel.

When we arrived, the weather was partly cloudy and remained that way most of the day. About 5:00 pm it started raining. According to the weather forecast, we will see a lot of rain this week. We did, mostly in the afternoon.

Pastor Benard from Port-de-Paix came in on the Sky Blue flight a few minutes behind our flight. We talked to him, and he headed up the road to Port-de-Paix. He said he would report the condition after he drove it.

We dropped our bags at Walls Guest House which will be our headquarters for a couple of days.

Port-au-Prince Airport

The airport was closed for the hurricane and reopened about noon on Wednesday, October 5. Needless to say, it was busy with relief supplies coming in. While the airport had runway lights and other technology so it could operate 24 hours per day, periodically the runway lights would fail and incoming planes would have to be diverted to other airports.

There was a strong demand for outgoing flights, since a number of mission teams had not been able to get out before the hurricane. They were ready to head for home!

Highway Bridge

After breakfast we headed to a bridge over one of the main highways. I failed to note the name. The water was brown and turbulent, but had gone down considerably from the high-water mark. The channel was scoured. We could see, but not approach, several houses where the earth under the footings had washed

away. This will lead to failure of the walls and roof, and with more crumbling the entire structures may end up in the river.

When we crossed the bridge, the structure of the bridge vibrated.

Talking to a family near the bridge, he said that he still had a house but water came through the house and took everything away. He also said that we were the first people who stopped and asked how he was doing.



Hardware Store

We stopped at a hardware store to price some items and for Helen and Lophane to purchase several items which were needed for the Medical Team that was coming the next week. Among other things, they purchased several folding tables, some chairs, and a portable sunshade.

While there, I checked on the prices of solar panels for Craig Cannon and looked at a diesel generator. The two generators we imported into Haiti need to be replaced. One has been loaned out, and we have not found it. During the March trip, one of the church's generators was made available for us to use while the hunt was on for ours. Our other generator has a gas leak associated with the carburetor and is dangerous to use. We priced a Kipor KDE 3500 60 Hz Diesel generator for \$995.00 US. It has recoil start and a fuel tank which will hold about 3 gallons.

Haiti Children's Home – Petion-Ville

GPS Location N 18° 31.536' W 72° 16.269'

On March 11, 2016, we did a forensic analysis of the old hospital owned by the JWC foundation. Jasper Washington Cineus is the President of the JWC Foundation. He runs an orphanage (Haiti Children's Home) in the old hospital building. A nursing school also uses the same building. On that same property are several other buildings which are used by a school. During that inspection we condemned the building because of failure of beams and columns supporting a majority of the building. With my hands I broke a No. 4 rebar that was in a cracked beam.

After lunch we headed to the facility and met with Jasper. He was still using the hospital building for the orphans and the nursing school. With the hurricane, the roof is leaking worse. He wanted us to look at the roof and recommend a low-cost fix.

The roof trusses, fascia board, soffits, and purlins are rotted. It is a wonder the metal roof did not come off during the hurricane. The metal roof is strongly rusted. I was able to get ahold of one of the boards and in examining it

found termites. The wood was riddled with termite tunnels. That means the entire roof structure is subject to termites.

The only fix would be to remove the roof down to the concrete walls, add termite shields, and replace the roof structure and covering. This would result in a building with many structural problems covered with a new roof.

We explored other options concerning getting the orphans out of the old hospital.

Jasper reported that one of his supporters, who owns a trucking company, had stated that he could remove the old hospital building and make that area available for a replacement building. I'm not sure whether he would do it pro bono or whether he would do it for a fee.

There is an area in front of the old hospital building which was suggested for building a temporary or permanent structure. It is nominally 135 feet long by 102 feet wide and has a strong slope to it. It would make a better garden area than a building site.



On the property is the start of a church. Footings are in and some of the walls have been installed. Some of those walls have collapsed. The footings and bond beam appear to be in good shape, but the footings need to be plastered to protect them, and soil needs to be moved to allow water to pass the structure without eroding the footings.

Taking this as a start, and working with Vanessa Darbouze on a design, would result in a lower cost and provide a long-lasting solution.

Sunday, October 9, 2016

We went to church with Lophane.

GPS Location N 18° 33.014' W 072° 17.405

After lunch Lophane bought food to be taken to Leogane on Monday. The plan was to purchase rice, beans, bouillon, and oil. He found that with the hurricane, the price of food had gone up and that beans were not available. Spaghetti was purchased instead. We packed the food into plastic bags. Each should provide food for a family of 4 for one week. With approximately \$5,000, we obtained enough food for about 250 families. That comes out to about \$2.87 per family per day.

Monday, October 10, 2016

Leogane - Food

GPS Location N 18° 31.741' W 072° 34.715'

Leogane is 45 km west of Port-au-Prince on the base of the southern peninsula. The trip should have taken about 45 minutes to get there, but it took 2.5 hours. Our first order of business was to pass out \$5,000 in food we brought to Leogane. This was done at the church, and there were people seated in the church waiting. Outside there were others who had heard about the food, but the leaders had not let them in because there was not enough food for everyone.



As the food was passed out, we photographed the process so the sponsors could see the people who were receiving the food. Everything went smoothly.

After the people started to leave, it became evident that the people who had not received any food were very disappointed and wanted food. Lophane and Noel organized us and got us into the vehicles and out of there very quickly.

Leogane – Hurricane Damage

We then went to examine some of the houses in Leogane which were only a few minutes from the church where the food was distributed.

We looked at four disaster-resistant homes which were allegedly built by the Spanish Red Cross after the earthquake. They consisted of a concrete post type footing with rebar coming out. Apparently the rebar were positioned with a template. A base plate with four holes was placed on the footing with Number 3 rebar coming through the holes. The rebar were bent over.



Attached to the base plate was a nominally 3” vertical square tube that ran to ceiling height. Metal cross pieces at slab level and at roof level attached to the uprights. Horizontal 2x lumber was then bolted to the metal framing. The lath was nailed to the horizontal 2x lumber with 4d nails that were pounded halfway in and then bent over. This photo shows the Red Cross house that remained in the best condition.

The lath was plastered inside and out with a high-clay stucco and then finished with a thin layer of high-cement stucco.

No attempt was made to determine the gauge of the lath because I was not carrying a micrometer. It was very light.

The flat roof was made of a similar configuration.

The photo at the right shows the worst failure of the four Spanish Red Cross houses. We do not know what happened to the metal framing, but the house ended up being about six inches high. To the left is an unfinished confined masonry home that survived. To the right is a non-disaster-resistant home that survived.



Failures occurred in several ways:

- Sections of lath tore free from the wooden supports.
- When the stucco got wet, the inner layers of stucco softened and the stucco fell off, or was pulled off by negative wind load.
- The area where the houses stood was not shaped to divert water, so when water contacted the walls, the stucco failed.
- If the water was moving, it washed away the foundation and the slab.

Other homes in the area had lost their roofs.

One home, a confined masonry home, failed when a tree about two feet in diameter fell on it. Three people were killed.

Haiti Children's Home – Petion-Ville

We arrived at about dark and met with Jasper's board of directors. We did not make any decisions but discussed options and needs. Helen stressed that Mission: Haiti would not be involved if the construction was not disaster-resistant and if the plan for the orphanage would not lead to self-sufficiency.

The Rest of the Day

Lophane and Noel dropped Helen and me at the Walls Guest House and went to pick up the head of Lutheran World Relief for the LCMS. Due to the lights being out on the runway, the plane was diverted to the Dominican Republic. His plane was due back at 8:00 am on Tuesday.

Lophane and Noel were back at the Guest House to plan for Tuesday at about 10 pm. They were both exhausted. They still had to drive to their homes.

Before the evening was over, we found that 5 others were coming in on Tuesday morning at about 8:00 am. They had not made arrangements for transportation, so there was scurrying around to find another vehicle.

Via phone calls we found:

- The children at Faith Lutheran Orphanage were okay.
- There was little damage to the north.
- Damage to Port-au-Prince is related to flooding.
- 90 percent of Port-au-Prince is ok.
- People need food and water.
- Food and water are available in Haiti if money is available.

As my friend Harry Reger used to say when I would state a fact that he questioned, "Interesting, if true."

Tuesday, October 11, 2016

Helen and Lophane left for the airport about 7:30 am. They had arranged for another vehicle to meet them at the airport. Since there was no knowledge as to how many bags there would be, a decision was made that I should stay at the Guest House and relax. The group would be back about 9:00 am, and we would have a meeting.

I worked on my notes and downloaded photos from my camera to my computer.

Helen texted at 9:30 am. They were still missing two people, and they were working on a flight plan to head south to Les Cayes.

GPS Location N 18o 11.733' W 73o 45.053'

Helen texted at 12 noon and suggested that I order some lunch. I did. The cook wanted to know what I wanted, since she was cooking just for me. I said, "Whatever is easiest." She grinned and said, "Hamburger." I had hamburger and French fries. Not just any French fries, but she makes some of the best I have ever eaten.

Helen texted at 1:11 pm that everyone had finally arrived, and the flight to Les Cayes was leaving in a few minutes. All would head out on it, and three of the group would return to the Port-au-Prince airport on the return flight. She anticipated being at the Guest House by 6:00 pm.

I spent the day working on my notes and sorting photos.

Eventually they arrived at the Guest House.

That evening Helen told me she could use me if I could stay for an extra week. Judy was fine with that, if I can handle it physically and health wise. Decision has not been made.

Wednesday, October 12, 2016

We visited a tent city on the edge of Port-au-Prince so the LCMS personnel could see it. We were told to keep windows rolled up, and if we were to shoot photos, we needed to shoot through the tinted windows of the vehicles. The

metal-roofed building in the distance is a church, and we could hear singing coming from it.

Then we took them past Lophane's Guest House and Lophane's church before taking them to the airport.

**Thursday, October 13,
2016**



Kenscoff

GPS Location

N 18° 32.667' N 072° 17.406'

We went to Kenscoff. It is on top of the mountain east of Port-au-Prince. We were high enough to be in pine trees. Gardens included lettuce and cabbage which are cool-weather crops and don't grow well in South Texas in October. With all of the rain, everything was green except the trees and other vegetation which had been knocked down and uprooted. The road was long, winding, narrow, and much of it was not paved, or if paved, there were more potholes than paving remaining. Much of the land was sloped between 45 and 60 degrees. Even with all of the inclines, the areas contained a large population.



Trees were destroyed by the winds. Many houses had lost their roofs. One home with a family of ten lost the roof and the contents, and two of the family died.



Nearby, another home lost its roof, all contents in the home are gone, and no trace has been found of the family.



We came to a sign said:

Pwoje Espwa
Orphanage Project Hope
Father Marc Boisvert

It was a Catholic Church, School, and Orphanage. Most of the roofs were gone. The photo at right was taken from inside the church. On the church building there is a major crack, about 40 feet long that started near the top of the wall, moved to near floor level, and then moved back to the top of the wall. A portion



of the wall above the crack was about 2 inches out of



plane. It appeared that a downdraft on the trussed metal roof caused the roof trusses to exert outward pressure before failing. This cracked the wall. The small photo to the left shows one of the columns in the wall that cracked.

Reinforcing in the column prevented the wall from collapsing completely.

Most of the roofs in the area are metal roofs.

We were told that most of the people did not take cover because they knew that they were above the area where a Tsunami could hit.

Trees up to 2 feet in diameter were down. The road had just reopened the day before. There were some chain saws at work, but we saw lots of axes. Most of the chain saws apparently were from the government and charities. The axes were the local people working at rebuilding.

Baptist Mission

On the way down the mountain we stopped for a very late lunch at a Baptist Mission. The sign in front said:

Mission Baptiste Conservatrice D'Haiti
Mountain Maid
Self Help Project

The mission was started in 1946 to evangelize the mountain Haitians and to teach them skills to enrich their lives. Helen said the food was good, and it was. In the gift shop she picked up a few copies of *God Is No Stranger*. It is a collection of short prayers by Haitians living in the mountains and photographs to go with each prayer. After looking over a copy during lunch, I went back and bought my own copies of the book.

Food for Colminy

Lophane has arranged for packaging \$5,000 worth of food, and we will be taking it for delivery to Colminy on Friday. Colminy is about 5 miles (30 minutes) down a dirt road. A report told us that the road had dried so we could make it through. In Port-au-Prince we had a major thunderstorm this evening. If it extended up the coast, the road will be mud again.

American Airlines

We have been trying to get my ticket changed, so I can leave on October 22 rather than October 15. There is just one minor problem. We cannot get through. Apparently it is an 800 number system problem rather than an American Airlines problem. Finally I solved the problem. I texted Jessica Stetler and asked her if she would make the changes for me. I gave her carte blanche for making the decisions. Shortly she texted back, "Ticket change is in progress. You will be getting home later than planned. Your confirmation will be there when you get up in the morning. Go to bed, NOW!" I did, and in the morning I had the confirmation from American Airlines.

Friday, October 14, 2016

Colminy

GPS Location: N 19° 10.871 W 072° 42.735

Colminy is the place where the village elder, who was well over 100 years old at the time, offered me his chair at church because he figured I needed it more than he did.



The road from Route 1 to Colminy was dry and dusty. They had not had the rain we had experienced in Port-au-Prince. As a result, we were able to get there and deliver the food.

The walls of the church withstood the hurricane, but there was damage to the metal roof. It appears that to get the roof up with the moneys available, the roof trusses were not built strong enough. Mission: Haiti is arranging for money to make the repairs.





When the hurricane hit, the wife of the pastor thought there was another earthquake. She ran out of their mud hut and fell. She lost her unborn child. Two days later she died. The photo to the left is not the pastor's home, but he lives in a similar one. Most of the homes in Colminy are built in this fashion. We gave the pastor a copy of Kay pou Jubilee.

Banana Plantations

The road to Colminy passes many banana plantations. Many were decimated by the hurricane, while others did not appear to be touched. In some, the hurricane was selective in removing trees, but removed the entire crop of ripening fruit. Apparently there were a number of tornados spawned by the hurricane in the outer fringes of the storm. Where the current crop of bananas was destroyed along with the trees, it will be 18 months before there will be bananas to sell. This will place a burden on those who grow bananas for a living.



Wedding Reception

When we got back to Walls, we found that there was going to be a wedding reception in the parking area there that evening. The rains had started, so everything was moved under the porches. Since the only area where we could get internet was where there were guests for the reception, and since I was not dressed to be a party crasher, I resolved to stay off the internet until the party broke up. That happened after my bedtime. What I learned the next morning was that the wedding cake is not cut and eaten at the reception, but is cut and eaten the next day. I was tempted to dip a finger into the icing, but restrained myself.

Saturday, October 15, 2016

Our plan was

- Pick up team at airport and head to Leogane for a medical clinic.
- Return to Walls Saturday evening.
- Head to Port-de-Paix not later than 7:00 am on Sunday morning.
- Stop in Jubilee to inspect the dome homes and damage in Jubilee.

- Arrive at Pastor Bernard's Guest House on the top of a mountain near Port-de-Paix about dusk on Sunday evening.
- Work out of Port-de-Paix Monday through Thursday.
- Back towards civilization on Friday.
- To the Airport on Saturday.

God had a good chuckle.

Leogane Medical Clinic

We picked up the team which came in on American Airlines and met with Pastor Bernard who came in on the Jet Blue plane a few minutes behind the team coming to join us.

We delivered the team to Walls where suitcases were sorted, and then we headed to Leogane. On this trip we had a police escort.



After holding a medical clinic at a church that was different from the church we were at on Monday, we returned to Walls for the night. The medical clinic proceeded without a hitch but a few of the clients took the opportunity to take a nap while waiting.

Since we were going to need extra vehicles for the trip to Port-de-Paix, an attempt was made to rent an additional 4-wheel-drive vehicle. Since the rental agency could not contact Mission: Haiti's bank and since there was an extra demand for vehicles, the rental agency required a deposit they could be assured of, so I stepped in and provided that deposit.

Sunday, October 16, 2016

The Trip to Guinode

We needed one more vehicle, so we went through the rental process again on Sunday morning. Again I provided the assurance the rental agency needed.

Counting Helen and me, there were 14 people on the team, plus drivers for 5 vehicles, plus security, plus translators. For the trip north some of the translators took a bus, so the vehicles were not as crowded as they were on the mountain roads. In all we had about 30 people.

Since part of our time we were going to be in remote regions, we packed a large cooler with water. Since we are Lutherans, beer was placed between the bottles of water.

Due to the delays, 7:00 am came at about 10:00 am on Sunday morning.

We arrived at Jubilee and could only spend about 5 minutes there, since we were running so late. Lophane and I were the only ones to get out of the vehicles. The domes ignored the hurricane. Some of the whitewash was washed off, but that can easily be corrected.



Since we were running so late, we skipped lunch and snacked on the trip north. Going north out of Gonaives we were on a very rough gravel road. Initially there was a lot of dust, but a heavy downpour eliminated the dust.

We arrived at Port-au-Paix about dark and were told that the Guest House we were staying at was about half an hour down the road. 2.5 hours later when Caroline got carsick, we were told that it was only another 10 minutes. By this time the road was down to one lane. Shortly thereafter it was down to two tracks, one for the right wheel and one for the left wheel. Vegetation brushed the vehicles as we passed through it. Thirty minutes later we arrived.

In one wing of the house, assigned to the ladies, there were two bedrooms and a restroom which has a shower and a commode. Outside was a tin building that had a shower in one room and a commode in the other room. Water was supplied from an overhead 500-gallon tank. Water was supplied to the tank by boys who led donkeys carrying water barrels up to the facility and then carrying buckets of water up a ladder and pouring it into the overhead tank.

The ladies used the indoor facilities and shared the outdoor facilities with the men. Periodically one of the ladies would notify me that so-and-so was in the shower and there was no water. I would go out and turn on the valve at the tank. Since there was a water leak in the system, the water was shut off when not in use. Apparently my turning the water back on was much appreciated.

There was food, and we ate. Then since there was a single bed, I crawled in and went to sleep.

Monday, October 17, 2016

Guinode

GPS Location N 19° 50.254' W 073° 07.870'

In the morning I found that most of the room was covered with air mattresses and that the walking space between them was often less than 12 inches.

Going outside I found that we were on the top of a mountain. On most mornings there was a mist; and when one took the time to look, there were



numerous thatched roofed homes in the area. This was a farming area with lots of fields and with various tree crops. The translators who had come up from Port-au-Prince and Gonaives via bus had caught motorbike taxies up the mountain.

In Haiti one does not throw toilet paper in the commode, but places it in a basket. One of the reasons for this is because much of the plumbing is

smaller than 3 inches in diameter and excess paper can clog a toilet. Shortly after getting up, I was called to the outdoor toilet because it was plugged. There was a waiting line of ladies. I fixed the plug by digging out the wads of toilet paper with sticks. Then, as a competent repairman, I tested the toilet. That was the only way I could get to the head of the line.

When I got back in, I could smell the coffee brewing. The team was happy and talking about how this was just like when they went to summer camp many years ago.

The air mattresses were stacked, and we sorted suitcases and set off to our first medical clinic in the mountains.

First Northern Medical Clinic

GPS Location

N 19° 49.839' W 073° 08.004'

The first northern or mountainous medical clinic was near Pastor Bernard's Guest House. As the crow flies, it is about half a mile away. But in Haiti, vehicles cannot go where the crow flies.

Pastor Benoit and his sister paid for the education of a young lady



to become a nurse and then built the clinic so she could provide care for the local population. While being in the clinic had some advantages, it also was a different environment than what the team was used to. Normally the clinics are held in churches, which are much more open, and when difficulties develop in one area, there are others on the team who can step in to help.

While the clinic was going on,

there was a funeral parade which passed the building. The casket was in the back of a pickup.

During the clinic a doctor from Jean Rabel came and talked to Pastor Bernard and to Helen. He stated that he wanted to work with the clinic in Jean Rabel because he had kits for testing for Malaria and for HIV. He also needed an inventory of the medicines they had in stock so he would know what he could prescribe. The grant that furnishes the money which buys the drugs for the medical clinics mandates that none of the recipients of the services are to pay for those services or to pay for the doctors', nurses', or other services. The doctor wanted to charge for seeing the patients.

While the clinic was going on, the local church had a pot of food cooking in the backyard, and food was dished up for the people who came to the clinic.

We returned to Pastor Bernard's Guest House. By 9:00 pm I was sound asleep.

I had been able to send one email message during the morning. From that time until about noon on Friday I was not able to send email messages or text messages even though I had an AT&T service which stated that I had unlimited text messaging while traveling outside the US.



Tuesday, October 18, 2016

When I woke up, there were more air mattresses in the room than there were the morning before. After all, the translators needed a place to sleep. After breakfast we loaded up and headed to Jean Rabel. If my memory is correct, it was a two-hour drive over a very rough gravel road.

Jean Rabel

GPS Location N 19° 50.255' W 073° 7.887'

Jean Rabel has a strong Voodoo influence. The area has an estimated population of about 148,000.

On one side of the street was a church, and on the other side was a school. There were discussions as to where we were to set up. Eventually we set up in the church.

We arrived earlier than anticipated and found that the local doctor and one of the local politicians had been selling tickets to get into the medical clinic. Since this violated the terms of the grant which the medical clinic was operating under, we scaled back our efforts and only saw children and pregnant ladies. With the children, the emphasis was on hygiene instruction and vitamins. With

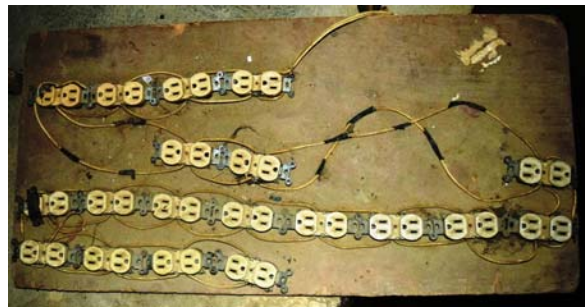


the pregnant ladies, Dr. Nancy taught a class on care for the newborn and the importance of sanitation. Birthing kits were passed out and discussed.

The number of people who were waiting for the clinic was much lower than would have been expected, because many of the people could not afford to buy the ticket.

A number of the school children were in the balcony of the building and were hoping to participate. It is a requirement for the medical clinic that parents accompany their children. The parents were not there.

Near the altar of the church was an electric board for charging cell phones. There were 19 duplex outlets attached to the board and wired together. Leading from the board was a wire that went to an electrical outlet on a wall. The ends of the wire were bare for plugging into the outlet.



Cholera Hospital

GPS Location N 19° 49.834' W 073° 8.017'

After leaving Jean Rabel, we drove to a Cholera Hospital. Pastor Bernard asked me to look it over and tell him what would be needed to keep it from deteriorating further.



The roof was shot, and the roofing lumber was infested with termites. Apparently little rebar was used in the foundation. The left side of the building, when facing the front door, was stable. The footing for the right side of the building was about a meter lower than the footing on the left side. The right side of the building was moving downhill. There were substantial cracks in the concrete in

the footings and the slab on the right side of the building. Next to the building on the right side, Mother-in-Law plants were growing. As I was navigating that area, the comment was made that these plants were what was keeping the right side of the building from sliding down the hill. From my observations, I concluded there was a great deal of truth in that statement. With just a little more movement, the roof is going to fall in.

There is not a way to rescue the building without it costing more than tearing the existing building down and starting over would.

Pastor Bernard's Church

A short distance from the Cholera Hospital is the first church which Pastor Bernard built. It is confined masonry and is in better condition than most confined masonry buildings I have observed in Haiti. I did not take measurements.

In examining it I found that there was a minor amount of settling on the left rear corner of the building and gave Pastor Bernard some suggestions for preventing further deterioration. The suggestions concerned diverting water away from that area so the wet soil would not further compress.

After that we headed back to Pastor Bernard's Guest House where we prepared to depart in the morning.

I could not send text messages or email.

Wednesday, October 19, 2016

Coming off a High Mountain

It rained overnight, and everywhere the soil and vegetation were damp. Looking across the valleys, there was a mist or fog that hung over the area.

We sorted our possessions and packed them so that each of us would only have to have access to one suitcase when we got to Pastor Bernard's sister's home in Port-de-Paix. Then we loaded the vehicles. The pickups were loaded to about cab height and tarped so the loads would not get wet and also to help hold the suitcases in.

After everything was loaded, we climbed in. Since we had most of what we brought up the mountain as well as the translators, there was not room in the vehicles for everyone. The translators rode on top of the tarps which were covering the loads on the pickups.

As we started down the mountain, we followed a mountain ridge and were accompanied by a light rain. At this point the road consisted of two trails, one for the left wheels of the vehicles and one for the right wheels. Often grass grew all the way across the road giving us good traction under the damp conditions. Vegetation regularly brushed the vehicles on both sides.

We were the first vehicles coming down the mountain and in many areas there was a layer of moist clay on the surface of the road. Even with each of the vehicles having the 4-wheel drive in gear, there was some slipping and sliding. At one point the road took a strong turn as it passed a creek. We could not see much of the creek on the upper side (left) because it was encased in vegetation. On the right side there was strong erosion. Masonry works had been built to stabilize the

bank, but some of that had been washed away. There was a drop of about eight feet on the right side, starting at the edge of the road.

We got out and walked to the other side and then the vehicles moved across. I noted that when they got through, there were tire marks within 4 inches of the drop-off.

After loading up, we traveled down the mountain. The road widened, and there was no longer a median of green vegetation between the wheels of our vehicles. We occasionally got up to 20 kph. That is 12.4 miles per hour.

After about 10 kilometers we came to some flags in the road. The road we were on was blocked off because it was impassable. After getting onto the passable road, our rate of speed improved. We could maintain a speed of 20 kph.

The road improved, and we have visions of stopping and providing a medical clinic and making it to Pastor Bernard's sister's home in Port-de-Paix before dark. We were then flagged down at a village, and after much discussion we unloaded. The road ahead was blocked with mud. I wanted to stretch my legs, but a lady brought a chair out of her house and insisted I sit down. I did. Shortly, other chairs were provided, so four of us helped international relations by sitting when we wanted to be standing and walking.



Vagabond Medical Clinic

GPS Location
N 19 49.845 W 073 7.996

Since we were going to have to wait for a while, and since we had the makings for a medical clinic, we set up a medical clinic in the yard of the lady who furnished the chairs.



The medical clinic in that location was unplanned and unannounced, but people kept coming. The doctor's office was under a tree. The first people to come were wearing their everyday clothes. As the day progressed and people had time to prepare, they came dressed better. In Haiti one dresses up to go to church or

to go to a medical clinic.

Even though there was rain the night before and around us there were numerous storm clouds, the sun was shining where we were located. Rain would have been hard for this open-air clinic. Apparently God intended for it to stay open until all of the people were seen.

At about 3:00 pm we packed up and headed down the road. We made it to a service station in Port-de-Paix about dark. It took us about an hour after that to get to Pastor Bernard's sister's home.

Pastor Bernard's Sister's House

When we arrived at the house, there were no lights and no electricity, but there was a lot of food, and it appeared that a storm was eminent. Generator got started a number of times before it decided to run. Before eating we needed to unload the vehicles and store all of the suitcases.

I was tired, but did what I could. When we sat down to eat, I ate very little and fielded questions from the nurses about my pasty color and whether I was OK. I was just tired. Then I excused myself and went outside to lose what little I had eaten.

Dr. Nancy was called, and I recognized the questions she was asking me. They were the protocol to determine whether a person was suffering from a heart attack. I assured her that I was not having a heart attack, I was just tired, and that the nausea was the only symptom I had that correlated with the heart attack protocol. She stated that if I could hear myself, my confused speech would convince me that I had two of the symptoms.

Two of the men transferred me from the porch to the master bedroom where I was installed on an air mattress. Occasionally Dr. Nancy checked on me. Actually I think she remained in the room for about an hour.

At some point I heard a discussion as to whether the generator would wake me up or keep me awake. It did not.

I could not stay in the master bedroom because it was assigned to the ladies on the team, so two of the men helped me upstairs to my assigned room, and I was put to bed.

Jessie, one of the medical professionals, slept in the same room with Mark and me and, I am told, periodically checked on me during the night.

Thursday, October 20, 2016

I woke up about 5:30 am, rather than my normal 4:00 am, and thought I had better plug in my phone before the generator quits again. I did. I was tired



and sore but ok. My suitcase was sharing the single bed with me. I was told later that it was placed there in the event I needed anything during the night. Then I headed to the shower. I learned that the bathrooms are large and have fancy tubs in them. The plumbing to bring the water to the tubs and commodes does not function, so a shower is taken by standing in the tub and dipping a cup into a 5-gallon bucket. Toilets are flushed with water from the 5-gallon buckets. This is a beautiful mansion that has been faced with poverty for many years.



We had pancakes with eggs on top and an assortment of fruit for breakfast.

This was the day of the last medical clinic. Roberta and I were told to stay at the house while the others went to the clinic. I figured that this would give me an opportunity to photograph a mansion falling on hard times as well as to sort photos and organize my notes.

In between naps, I got some photos sorted and eliminated some photos that did not turn out. At one point I woke from a nap and saw 4 women carrying 5-gallon buckets of water to the bathroom.

The rest of the day was spent either talking with Roberta or reading. While we were sitting on the balcony, I noticed that Noel, one of our security team, was playing basketball with some of the children. Roberta explained that if she needed to contact the team because of me, she would not be able to, so Noel had stayed to provide communications in the event of an emergency. Why could they not accept that I was just over-tired? I sure caused a lot of trouble.

That evening, our plan was for each of us to pack everything we might need before getting to the airport on Saturday in one suitcase. Helen wanted to leave about 6:00 am on Friday. With 8 hours of driving time, 6 of it over rough gravel roads, we could be at Indigo in time for a late lunch. The team could relax and leave at 5:00 am on Saturday, to be at the airport by 7:00 am, to catch the 9:00 am plane to Ft. Lauderdale.

Besides my carry-on suitcase, I had two large suitcases. I packed one with things I needed to take back to Texas and the other with things I wanted to leave with Lophane.

Friday, October 21, 2016

We got off, but not at 6:00 am.

The translators were left at the bus station so they did not have to ride on top of the suitcases in the back of the pickup any more.

Twice on the gravel road we stopped, and the lug nuts on one of the front wheels on one of the pickups were tightened.

When we got to where we could see Gonaives in the distance, my phone started making noise. The twice per day messages I had sent to Judy and had not gone out all went out at once. She responded that she got 10 messages all at one time. Email started coming in.

In Gonaives the problem with the pickup's front wheel became more severe, and it was unloaded. Its load was added to the other vehicles.

We got to Indigo, which has been renamed, and ate a late lunch. While others relaxed at the bar or went swimming in the pool, I went to my room and showered, and showered, and showered. Then I flushed the toilet because I could. Since my bed was too comfortable to ignore, I slept. At 7:00 pm we ate supper and later we had a debriefing concerning the trip.

Saturday, October 22, 2016

We got off on time, but there were a few interesting moments. Lorrie's carry-on bag went flying out of the back of one of the pickups, so we stopped and retrieved it. It survived, but it had severe asphalt burns.

The rest of the team was leaving on the 9:00 am plane. I was leaving on the 2:40 pm plane. We got to the airport at 7:00 am, and they finally got through security about 5 minutes before boarding. The place was crowded.

Originally Lophane and I were to spend the morning together, but plans changed and I came to the airport with the others. Valentin, one of our security team, received word that his mother, who lives in Les Cayes, had disappeared Wednesday night in the storms that had been attacking that area. As soon as we were dropped off, Lophane and Valentin headed to Les Cayes to find her. They did and got her to a hospital. The doctor at the hospital happened to be one of Lophane's former students.

At the airport I talked to a group which had been in Les Cayes when the storm struck. They described the area as one giant waterfall.

I made it to Miami, made it through customs and immigration. When boarding the plane to San Antonio, I was so tired that I asked the stewardess to ensure I got off in San Antonio.

Future Plans

I am planning on heading back to Haiti on December 3 to erect the Candice Dominguez Girls' Dorm at the Faith Lutheran Orphanage and am praying that Candice and her family can join me for the dedication a few days before Christmas. We are hoping that Scott Conover can come on December 3 for one week, and that David Vangsness and a few friends can join me on December 10 for a week.