

Haiti Visit

July 10 to 17, 2011

Summary Notes

RID John Smarge, PRIVP Eric Adamson, PRID Robert Stuart

and PRID Barry Rassin

Sunday July 10

arrive in PAP at 3:05 pm on AA #803

Barry had to redo form as it was so badly done so we almost missed next flight. One case of signs were not on the plane with us so had to come back to the airport next day to pick them up.

Amos and Guy met us and delivered us to the National Airport to Tortug'air. Tickets were paid for by Robert Leger. Barry reimbursed Robert but his check had to be replaced because they could not read it at the bank. Barry really has to learn how to write...

Check in to Hotel Le Manguier with 4 rooms - confirmed. breakfast included, "friend" took order, choices were eggs, omelet or spaghetti. I chose eggs but got omelet as we all did.

In Les Cayes meet with the club leaders at Robert & Rosa's house. They keep a gear in yard (what a reminder of Rotary), have a nice mango tree, and we had a wonderful Haitian dinner. We went back to the Hotel with but as power was out during the night there was no hot water.

Monday July 11

Robert and Rosa Leger drive us all through the South of Haiti.

8:00 am - Tour the projects in Les Cayes

DAF #1 – Ecole St. Famille -done but needs the outside wall fixed. met with the nun who runs the school and she showed us around. Another school right next door. Lycee Guerrier just down the block which we saw next.

DAF #17 – Ecole Normal des Cayes - they gave us a song and dance, literally. great project. met with the nun in charge. They also gave us a plaque to Rotary International

DAF #45 – Lycee Phillippe Guerrier - many Rotary projects over the years with the computer lab as ours. Basketball court had an excellent Rotary wheel on it.

DAF #91 – Ecole Primaire de Simon - Demolition begun. We drove into the area between the buildings and took pictures of the 32 demolition persons which some workers did not like. They were working hard in the hot sun and knocking building down by hand.

Then drive toward PAP stopping in:

Aquin - DAF #74 – National School of Fraternite of Vieux-Bourg d'Aquin- need to change to scope of the project to include another building. They will find out about Chile and the local government and have a new budget by next week. They had an abandoned water cistern but they have replaced it. Met with parents, mostly men as women were trying to earn a living for the family. They were very concerned that their school would not get done. RID John assured them that we would support the new expansion of the project. They will provide us more details on the government issues.

Miragoane – Chalon Medical Clinic, 97 National Road #2, Chalon
Miragoan

Jude Mathurin - John's friend with a project to expand the Clinic in need of \$1.5M. Nice clinic with two or three exam rooms that Jude wants to expand to a full clinic with Lab etc. They have land in the back and will continue to make it happen. John's Rotary club/district had given him scholarships in the past

Leogane - DAF #100 – Building deep water wells - One site already has water. Met with Association and the other site seems okay. Need Engineer to confirm. Malcolm is ready to ship. Barry sent note to Alison but MG already sent money to Haiti. There is now an on-going discussion on the best way to use the wells.

DAF #5 - visited Catherine Flon in Carrefour. Looks like the building is gone and lots of temporary classrooms are set up in various locations up and down the street. We walked around the street looking at the locations and the original school but could not find it as it must have been knocked down.

Arrive in PAP that night

Hotel La Plaza – confirmed in the name of Pasteur Caleb Lucien. A/C blew hot air so extremely hot with no sleep so happy for the cold shower. Caleb and Amos met us for breakfast.

Tuesday July 12

Caleb Lucien to drive and Kyss to drive.

Leave PAP for Mirebalais at 8:00 am

We first visited a matching grant between Mirebalais and Wisconsin - water filters - met with those individuals getting the filters. Not a DAF project

DAF #21 – Renovating 7 schools - visited the one school that we provided \$8,300 for the supplies. Essentially okay. Five of the other schools are not started. No more money until proof is provided.

DAF # 20 - visited one set of toilets for their other project. Toilet was okay and saw about 15 ground covers for other toilets. Kyss will go back to visit all the toilets.

DAF #19 - did not see the third project with the 80 tankers as too far away. Have two old pictures but concerned about any others. Kyss promised to visit them all and Mario promised to send bank statements and receipts

We have concerns and have asked for the documentation, bank, receipts, etc. Kyss to visit to make sure they are all being done. Toilet was well made but how many are there?

Visit Hinch

DAF #8 – Providing a vehicle for midwives - met the midwives, they use it as an ambulance as well as the need arises. They do feel it has made a big difference in maternal and child mortality. We went to their house where it is kept.

DAF #67 – Providing supplies to children in six schools - did not see but they say they were mostly done. They need to send us documentation to release any more funds. Need to show the six schools

DAF #94 – Building 3 Footbridges - saw the one footbridge in Ti Pelegre, which seems to be well built and serves a great purpose to cross a river. It is helping the sick, the pregnant, and the students going to school. It was a walk down from the car as the road was too difficult for the car to get to the bridge. There were Folks bathing in the water beneath the bridge.

We went to Kyss and Nicole's house for a late lunch, then two hours to drive 19 miles to Pignon.

The road is unbelievable and wet from the night before with much slip sliding up and down a terrible road and so it took us two hours to drive there. We almost got stuck where a truck was stuck in the mud so no way past but Caleb got us through.

The government is working on new roads and the hope is that they will start in that area sometime next year.

We stayed with Caleb and Debbie who have a nice house and gave us dinner and then breakfast. Rooster started at around three am

Wednesday July 13 and we start at 8:30

Visit Pignon

Evanel showed us around as many of the projects as possible. Distance between projects was greater than expected. One road was so narrow that we had to close the windows so the branches would not hit us. Bob enjoyed being in the back of the truck, Eric also did some time back there. Barry was given the honor of most front seats which he deeply appreciated. He must have looked the most frail?

DAF #102 – Ecole Mont Sinai de LaCoste - next to church

DAF #64 – Ecole Etoile du Matin - painted next to damaged building

DAF #107 – College Mont Sion de la Victoire - two story building

DAF #106 – Ecole Communautaire de Gaspard - renovate one building and built a new one

DAF #103 – College Coeur Unis de Savane - new with a beautiful view

DAF #3 - St. Collettes - Pictures of the kids and chicken and soccer

DAF #31 – Savanette Primary School - roof?

DAF #108 – College Baptiste “Le Rocher” de Pignon

DAF #2 – Jaipur Limb - saw all three buildings with photos with signs. One letter fell off. Signs did not come on the flight so had to go back to airport Tuesday morning to get them. Guy took us to his home, washed hands then rinsed with chlorine water. Then he fed us. To avoid the dangers of local water, John stuck to Prestige as did the others. Eric took more risk with water and vegetables, especially tomatoes as they have skin?

Time was running short so that we could not make the distances to see the other five schools in that area.

DAF #30 – Frobel Primary School - we did not see this one

DAF #65 – Ecole Evangelique Chretienne de St. Raphael - did not see

DAF #101 – Provide supplies to children in 13 schools - did not see

DAF #104 – Ecole Baptiste Bethesda de St. Raphael - did not see

DAF #105 – Ecole Bon Samaritin de Bail/Savanette - did not see

We did fly back to PAP to save time and avoid the roads at 2:30 pm.

Caleb Lucien's driver to drive from the airport as he drove our bags to PAP but we got lost looking for Karibe Hotel

Visit Thomassique - DAF #16 – The Good Samaritan School - did not visit as it was too far. They have a problem that the school has spent over budget and they are trying to resolve that with the school before they come back to us. It has not started as yet

Ospri Descommes for DAF #113 – Barry met him at La Plaza on the first morning.

Staying at the Karib Hotel 13-16

Louisa Dow, Past Peace Fellow, came and met with us for a few hours and joined us for dinner. She has a new job with Habitat, financed by USAID, in the north to determine community capacity. She is clearly an intelligent and impressive peace fellow.

Thursday July 14

Caleb's driver driving us and then we met up with Gary in Verrettes. Told 30 minutes that took 4 hours. Clearly our French/Creole needs improvement. In Verrettes we had both Gary and a driver so we had two cars which was always a pleasure as with one car three in the back seat became close and friendly.

We were hoping to visit Sacre Coeur Hospital in Milot, Haiti? Dr. Harold Previl. However it was too far as it is in Cap Haitian on the North Coast.

DAF #95 – We visited Albert Schweitzer Hospital - Verrettes - Dawn Johnson showed us around and introduced us to the malnourished kids who will benefit from the nutrition program which is in a remote nutrition unit in the mountains. They are using the plumpy nut for

nutrition. We visited the ward for malnourished children. They use art to teach them about proper nutrition including breast feeding. They also have some tents set up for the Cholera patients. They are down from 300 patients at their max to 190 now. This hospital was the first to take them in. They are the patients who are resistant to treatment.

DAF #114 - 150 wells - St. Marc -did not get there but drove through on the coast and passed club indigo where the District Conference will be next year and we could see La Gonave as we drove along the beautiful coast.

Petite Riviere de l'Artibonite –

DAF #83 - Art – They are in a two story building and saw the students painting, went upstairs and Barry bought two paintings done by students and they gave us each wooden fish. Barry managed to crack his head open on the beam going up the stairs.

DAF #84 – Household Microcredit Program- We were kissed by all as they showed their appreciation, they want more money but they like the program. They pay 1.5% to the bank to administer. It is administered by Copecra. They get about 5000 gourd or 6000 gourd and then pay back over four months and then do it again. They each have a bank book to track the payments. There were only three men out of 60 participants.

DAF #85 - Computers and Internet Research– This program is in the local library which needs to have the roof fixed and security added. We had lunch with the VP in his house. They bought computers and other items and are ready to install. They still need to install the satellite dish so they can hook up to the internet. Computers are in his house for safe keeping

DAF #79 – Hospital Charles Colimon is building a waiting area for mothers and children with a roof. They need to send receipts and statements. The roof structure was not new but the covering will be. They are also in need of an ambulance which we will try to find for them.

Gary Marcelin drove us around. He could not juggle three cell phones as well as Caleb but sure was enthusiastic and jolly on the phone. Thomas called five times while on the way to make sure we were on the way. They had been waiting since 10 and we got there around 2 but there were no complaints to us. Timing to get these vast distances was a constant challenge, even for the local Rotarians who made the arrangements.

Friday July 15

Alexandra Soli and Marghareta drove us to Sarazin and Teach Haiti

DAF #62 - Sarazin – It was an hour walk up the mountain where they had cooked corn for us and the kids sang to us. The kids are in summer school. They have to carry everything up the mountain. They pay 75 gourde to carry one bag of cement. The photo Barry took of the person carrying the bag of cement cost \$5. We each had to lose 5 pounds of water during the walk and had to go back to the hotel to change before we could continue. It was a magnificent view as we could see PAP over the roof of the school. Kitchen is a fire in the back yard under a USAID tent

DAF #76 – Teach Haiti – This project is on the second floor and they are making artistic souvenir items to sell. We bought supplies and an alternate source of energy. We also bought 8 necklaces of the necklaces they made out of cereal boxes. They are truly creative and beautiful. We saw batteries and converter as well as easels, wood, chairs and tables

Raphael Izmerly drove us around Petionville

Delmas -We met with the President and another Rotarian as they came into town to meet with us . President Rodolph promised to speed up their process. They showed us the final budgets and are ready to go.

DAF #69 – College Francais de Bareau Guitho - ready to start

DAF #70 – St. Augustin of Tapio School - ready to start

DAF #71 – St. Therese de L'enfant Jesus - ready to start

DAF #92 – Providing a community with Biosand Filters – We need to find out from HOM when they will get started.

They are going to make sure they communicate with us better than in the past.

DAF #4 – Kenscoff Clinic – We did not see it but George will send some more pictures. The pictures of the outside show it as finished so we just need documentation of the completion.

We went to lunch at the Latin Quarter with Raphael and George Nicolas joined us and updated us on DAF #29 and the problems with containers

Barry met with Amos about the Rotary Club of Carrefour.

Brigitte Hudicourt and Chris Low met with us to show us two different projects. BH showed us an impromptu school started by a 62 year old to help the kids get an education. We would like to help them with that school and BH will send in a proposal.

CL showed us the school in Matenwa on La Gonave. La Gonave has a population of 100,000 and has been ignored by Haiti. We want to use it as an example of converting an entire community, not just doing an occasional project.

Saturday July 16

Caleb's brother showed up and took our driver as he had to go to Leogane but he arranged for Gilbert to take us to the airport

Leave hotel at 8:30

Leave on AA #404 at 12:15pm

Amazing fellowship and Rotary work.

We greatly admired the amazing work of the local Rotarians in Haiti who are getting the job done in spite of some amazing barriers. We also thank all those who housed us, fed us, drove us and put up with us. No comments above should be construed as criticism, only as relating the experience to others who may never have shared such an experience.

Our admiration goes out to the incredible progress made by Rotary in Haiti. We know that Rotary will impact the education of over 23,000 children. The children and their future is why we do what we do.