

ROD'S UPDATE: 10-16-2011

Wow, I can hardly believe that it has already been over a year since I quit my job in the states and started packing things up so we could move here. This week will be our one year anniversary of serving with WISH in Haiti.

The past couple weeks have been fun and of course busy. One week ago we were able to host the team of first time visitors to Haiti from our home district in the Northwest. There were six guys who came down and they brought funds and willing hands to work on a house for a woman who had caught Pastor Greg's heart of compassion. She is a lady who occasionally comes by the compounds to sell sea shells. At some point she asked to sell some shells to pay for her daughter's hospital stay (her daughter Kelly which is also Pastor Greg's sister's name). After that incident he heard that the sickness was to be expected because she and her family were living under a tarp down near the airport. You can see in one of the pictures I am attaching, the brown tarp that the family has used for a house. Pastor Greg had already received some donations for the building of the house, but not quite enough and the additional help was very welcome. I think the guys had as much fun building the house and spending time around the family as they could expect to do. Maybe Andy spent more time playing with the kids than working... but I guess that is all part of sharing God's love.

This week we had time to work on a project which will be vital to our houses in the next few days. Barry and I got inverters and batteries to keep some lights and fans on in our houses when the generator is not running. In the very near future we will return to a night time shut down of the generators. Since fuel prices went up one dollar a gallon this year there is a constant shortfall in funds from the ice plant to pay for the diesel to run the generators. It appears that the easiest way to make an immediate change to our fuel purchases will be to shut them off overnight. Installing these systems has kept Barry busy this week, and finally yesterday we got the last of the supplies needed to complete the installations. Even Joseph got called into duty as our "wire monkey" to climb and pull wires for the new system. The system in my family's house is ready to run, and Barry just needs to put the finishing touches on a battery cage for his batteries to set in and he will be done. Fortunately for the Wesleyan missionaries they had a very capable team here last week which installed identical systems into the houses they have so they are also ready for this change. An interesting proposal was made to us this week by the hospital administration as they have a donor who is interested in giving money towards the purchase of power producing equipment. One possible use of this money would be to purchase solar panels to reduce loads on our equipment. Another use could be to purchase a new generator which would be operated by WISH to supply the hospital with power. Please pray that we have wisdom as we explore options and make recommendations to the hospital administration.

Progress on the library continues to be made. Soon we hope to be putting up the trusses and laying on the tin. This will be a nice milestone towards the completion of the library which will be for all the people of LaGonave. Sometimes the work seems to stall out as there are water line issues that the guys have to work on, or there are men out sick etc. but it is progressing. Besides the roof we need to install windows and all of the utilities, and lay the finish concrete on the outside walls of the second story. In about two weeks we will have an electrician coming who can help lay out everything that needs to be purchased before installing the electrical utilities. The past few weeks we hired a local man to build all of the doors needed for the building. He does great work of making four panel wooden doors and has built them for the hospital and other missionaries around here. I think at the rate he is working he will finish up this week and will be waiting for us to install the roof before we let him hang the doors.

One final note, Barry and Beth are settling pretty well. They of course miss friends and family back home, but they are working to set up the main WISH house as their home. They have been busy doing that, reconnecting with old friends from the time they lived here before and of course starting to learn about what needs to be done on a regular basis to keep WISH going. So far it has been very enjoyable getting to know them and learning little bits about them. Beth is excited to have a surgeon coming in to the hospital this week so she can work with him again and spend some time doing what she loves to do. Barry and I are still trying to figure out where we can get some fishing poles and tackle so that we can get away once in a while, perhaps we will have to go old school and build our own equipment. If that doesn't work out I think I can talk him into helping me find a couple old used jeeps and making trail rigs out of them for exploring the island.

Okay, enough news for now. Thanks for all your prayers and encouraging e-mails.
Rod



Construction begun, old house in the background.



House almost finished



Kids need a safe house



Wire Monkey Joe