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Mission Trip Travel Journal
Monday, 1/30/12 - by *Clint Schwartz*

It's Monday night and I finally have a few minutes to sit and collect my thoughts, it's been a pretty busy day so far... When I originally began planning this trip, I was hoping to have at least 20 people sign up to come, but Vineyard once again

surprised me by sending a team of 28 to Haiti to do God's work down here. It's been a great trip so far, and you can feel God's presence surrounding us in every aspect. We left Sunday right after church in a blizzard, and I really wasn't sure if we were going to be able to make it to Chicago. The weather cleared up along the way and we made it



to the airport on time and went through customs, though God was protecting us even then. One of our team members had a big bottle of shampoo in his carry-on bag and they stopped him and took it from him, but what they didn't catch was the multi-blade utility knife that he mistakenly had packed in his carry-on. If they had found that, he might have been detained beyond our flight departure so Praise God for hiding this from security!

We arrived around 8:30pm in Miami and were checked in to our hotel by 9pm. We met our trip guides from Love-a-child, Jesse & his father Mark, and had a short team meeting in the lobby before going to bed as we had to be back in the lobby by 5:15am.

5:15am came way too early this morning, but everyone made it down in time and we were ready to continue our trip to Haiti. The flight went well and we safely arrived in Port-au-Prince, Haiti by 9:30am. All of our checked bags arrived on time (Praise God!) and we boarded a Love-a-Child bus to drive the



rest of the way to the base camp. We drove past several tent cities along the way, though most of them are much smaller than they were the last time we were here. People are slowly making their way back to what their lives were like before the earthquake of 2010, but it's hard to believe that so many people are still living in tents after all of this

time.

As we arrived in Fond Parisien, we saw the hundreds of houses that we had worked on last year, though this time they were painted bright colors and had people living in them. Many of the houses have large gardens of vegetables growing all around them, so it literally looks like a jungle between the houses. As we drove by, our team members began to cheer and clap as many of them were here last year working on those very houses. Seeing the houses painted and occupied was very, very fulfilling!

Upon arrival, we quickly changed and headed down to the warehouse where we eat and had lunch. The food is once again very good! We certainly eat well at Love-a-Child.

After lunch, we boarded several trucks and headed to Miracle Village (where all of the houses are located) to begin working on the houses. It was a little crazy when we arrived as the Haitian workers were everywhere and excited to help. We also didn't have a building plan, so it was quite the challenge to focus 28 people to an undefined task. Pastor Mark Ostrander knew how he wanted the houses built, so we just started laying them out and everyone had great



attitudes to jump in and help anywhere they could. The sun was hot, the work was crazy, but we ended up framing in 3 of the 7 houses in just over 4 hours! Now that we have a pattern created, I think the framing of the next 4 houses should go a lot more smoothly. We still have to build the roof for the houses, along with all of the siding on the outside and sheeting on the inside, but

the task looks accomplishable.

We came back to the base camp and showered before dinner and then broke up into our small groups for a time of devotions and prayer. We ended the evening with a wonderful time of worship in the warehouse.

It's now 9:30pm and I am tired... Bob Poyser is already asleep across the tent from me and most people are exhausted and turning in to bed. We have breakfast scheduled for 5:45am tomorrow with the plan to leave for the worksite by 6:30am. God has been faithful and it's been good to see Him at work already in our team. The one thing that He has been reminding me of is that this trip is all about love; love for Him, love for our teammates and love for the Haitian people. Building these houses is a labor of love and I'm not supposed to lose that perspective. God is good.

