

**Wednesday, February 1, 2012**  
**Steve Schwartz**

Well, it's hard to believe that it's Wednesday night of our week in Haiti already. This week is absolutely flying by, but I guess that will happen when you work from sunrise to sunset every day. ☺

Today started with breakfast at the normal time, 5:45am. After a meal of oatmeal and sausage, the team loaded up and was on the road to the worksites at Miracle Village by 6:30. We arrived on site, and, as usual, gathered with the Haitians that we are working with for a quick rundown of our tasks for the day and a word of prayer. This morning, Mark Ostrander asked one of the Haitians to lead the prayer. The Haitians immediately started singing a song in Creole. It took about 5 seconds to realize that they were singing one of my favorite hymns, "How Great Thou Art". Some of us soon joined in with the English version as well. I loved it. 28 Americans and a dozen Haitians standing in the early dawn singing a beautiful hymn, followed by a passionate Creole prayer. My guess would be that I could start every day that way for a long time and still be amazed. It's great to see brothers and sisters in Christ from different countries and cultures joining together to do God's work!

After the prayers, everyone immediately started working on their tasks for the day. We had a crew finishing the roofing on the houses we had already framed and sheeted, a crew finishing up sheeting on the outside of other houses, and, of course, several people installing the world famous hurricane clips. Even though everyone was tired and sore from the previous day, we were working hard and accomplishing a lot! By the time we stopped for lunch at 11:45, every house had sheeting completed, hurricane clips done, and all but one house had a roof. Incredible job by everyone! Thanks to God for giving us the strength to work today, as I know everyone was tired.

After a mid-day break for lunch (chicken and rice and beans) and a little rest, we were back out to the job site by 1:45. To start the afternoon, several of us were on "trash duty". We took one of the trucks, and went from house to house picking up the remaining usable wood that could be used later. After that, we went back around and picked up anything that was left...water bottles, the cut ends of lumber...anything that you would think of when you think of "trash". We soon had a full truckload. We took the truck to the back of the village to the dump. After we pulled up to the dump and started unloading the trash, we were suddenly joined by about 30 Haitian children, all laughing and playing. It took me a second to realize, the children were going through the trash we were dumping off, and were overjoyed by some of the stuff they found that they could use for toys. That was a humbling realization. This was trash in a dump, and the kids were acting like it was Christmas morning. How incredibly blessed am I in my life? I take for granted way too often how much God has blessed me in my life. One of my takeaways from this week will be to not forget that moment in the Haitian sun.

At about 3:45, we were all called together for a meeting. Apparently, there was going to be a competition between three crews made up of people from our group, and one group of Haitians. Each crew was assigned a house, and the goal was to see which group could get the sheeting up on all of the inside walls of the house first. Everyone quickly started at the task, and let me tell you, the competition was pretty fierce! After one hour and 38 minutes, the Haitian crew was done first, and they were declared the winners, and given the prize of ice cold bottles of Coke. Each Vineyard team was finished soon after, and everyone had a great time. The best part was, 4 houses now have completed inside walls! Only 3 left to go!

We arrived back at Love A Child at around 6:30, and had a wonderful meal of pasta and meatballs...and there was an ice cold bottle of Coke for everyone! That was a treat! After dinner and some time for showers and rest, we meet back in the warehouse at 8:30 for a group time of worship and sharing. It was great! The singing especially was fantastic tonight. Now it's 10:00 and I'm sitting in the yard with a cool breeze and reflecting on the day. It was an incredible day today, and I can't wait to start again tomorrow at 5:45am!

God Bless,

Steve Schwartz