

JULY 24 – AUG. 2, 2015 TRIP REPORT

Participants: Ann Baxter, Jennifer Boehm, Mark Bronner, Jennifer Henery, Beth Major, Ben Major, Marie Major, John Meacham (trip leader), Sam Ropa

Summary: This was another outstanding trip. VBS was a huge success. The basketball clinic and play time with the smaller children proved to bring new and old friends together to have fun. It proved to me that we need to have young people with us on all the trips.

VBS REVIEW -The VBS team leaders were Mark Bronner (Music), Ann Baxter and Jen (Jennifer) Boehm and Jennifer Henery. Ann and Jen put together the three lessons (David and Goliath 10 Commandments and Noah's Ark). They put in many hours preparing the lessons, coloring pages, stories, etc. They also devised a great Noah's ark skit using all the children in each story time. Jennifer Henery worked on crafts (the Holy Spirit, rain sticks and making of mask's). Ann, Jen and Jennifer made the three days of VBS a huge success. Also a Huge thanks to Mark Bronner who made wonderful music with the children. We all chipped in and helped the various rooms. Mark and Marie in the Music/dance room, Ben, Beth, Sam and John in the classrooms.

Fri. July 24 - travelled to PAP and arrived in PAP on time. The flight from MKE to ATL was delayed by over an hour but we made the connection. We did not have a problem with the porters on the way in and left a \$10 tip with the person in the parking lot. He called Matthew 25 and was upset. I did not think he needed a bigger tip because we hauled the luggage to the parking lot ourselves. Desmond of Mat 25 called them back and told them that \$10 was enough. We had a good meal of spaghetti, watched a soccer game, held prayers and discussion of the trip so far.

Sat. July 25 – We had a breakfast of Pancakes and boiled eggs and Mangos. Fedner promptly arrived at 8:00 we packed up and headed to Jeannette. We stopped at a market in Leogone and purchased some extra supplies. I took a bottle of Mumba Pimente to Jeannette with us. We arrived at Jeannette at about noon. We had lunch for hot dogs, fries, fried plantain. We settled in and toured the campus. We played with the children in the courtyard and Marie and Ben taught them 4 square, Sam was busy chasing and playing with the little children. For dinner we had goat with typical side dishes of rice, etc. We had compline, singing and got to know each other better.

Sun. July 26 – Breakfast was soup Joumou (pumpkin), bread and bananas. We went to church from 9 – 11:30 three choirs sang and included wonderful prayers of the people and Eucharist. We had lasagna for lunch. We spend the afternoon prepping for VBS. Mark, Ben, Sam, Jennifer, and Marie painted the basketball court. For dinner we had Rice and beans, grilled goat, potato salad and fried plantains. In addition we had a cake that Pere purchased in PAP. Several people went to the bakery and purchased 36 small breads for 5 goudes each. Most of the bread was given away before we got back. **We need to consider that instead of the cooks buying**

commercial bread we buy from the local bakery. It is good bread and will help the local economy. We worked on crafts for the VBS, had a good time talking and had compline before retiring.

Mon. July 27 - Breakfast was eggs, watermelon, mango, and guava. Played with the children. John and Nelise looked at the garden (see garden discussion in the meeting section). Beth worked with the sewers with Jackson's help. We also worked on more crafts for VBS. We had a lunch of corn dogs, chicken tenders, pasty, left over lasagna and fruit. In the afternoon we walked to Mary Kahn's house (Jackson's mother), she is living with Jackson's sister and is in very poor health. John mixed up a gallon of bubbles for Tuesday afternoon. We walked to the bakery which was closed but bought 50 loaves from Jackson's wife. For dinner we had chicken in a vegetable broth with rice. Later several people came with wrapper purses for sale that were handmade in Jeannette. We met with Jackson and Junior (a man who we hired to help translate in VBS, he lives in Brooklyn and is on vacation in Jeannette). The topic was how we can help Haitians help themselves. Part of the discussion was the garden. They would like to start a business of wrapper purses and other items. We had singing, compline and went to bed.

Tues. July 28 – VBS SHOW TIME! Theme for the day was David and Goliath. Before breakfast Mark broke the bed doing sit ups. We had oatmeal PB and Jam with fruit. We started prepping VBS at 8:30. First day of VBS we had 75 people. We ran out of penguin snacks (like goldfish). We need to make the crafts easier. Several of the 2nd graders were 4 or 5 years old. The age groups were mixed. The 3rd graders were probably in or going into 3rd grade and the 4th grade had some larger kids in them but could have been in 4th grade. Songs were Jesus Loves, Hokey pokey, Praise the lord together, God is so good, Bunny hop, Cupid shuffle, Hoppy. VBS went from 9:00 – 12:45. Beth worked with the 4 sewers from 9:30 – 3:00 PM and had some rather tense moments. For lunch we had spaghetti with hot dogs fruit and cookies. In the afternoon Jen worked on Craft prep. Mark, Jennifer, Ben and Sam held the Basketball clinic. Older people showed up and wanted to play soccer. Taught Weave, layups drills and the clinic went well after a rather chaotic start. For dinner we had goat, rice and peas. In the evening we played card games, had a great conversation about the teaching world (4 teachers in our group). We closed with a prayer circle and went to bed.

Wed. July 29 – After a rooster singalong (3 roosters) and an all-night funeral prep sing along we started the day with a breakfast of Denver type eggs and fruit. VBS theme for the day was the 10 Commandments and gifts of the spirit. Our dove turned out to be a poul (Chicken). We had a total of 104 children and we took all the paper plates we had for the next day's craft to feed the children. We also gave Madam Jorrell another \$40 for extra food and bowls since we planned a maximum of 75 for lunches. Beth led the sewing team again. She did come up to VBS and left the sewers to complete some of the neck scarves. For lunch we had fried okra, plantain, goat and fruit. Basketball clinic ran from 3:30 – 4:30 with 15 kids, weaving, star pass was the lesson for the day. One little boy had a bloody nose but no broken nose. We played with the smaller children in the court yard and went through another gallon of bubble mixture. Went to the

bakery with Junior, Jackson and children to get 50 breads and gave most of them away. At 6:00 we met with Judith Dor and local ladies about the ERD micro loan program. See meeting notes for details. For dinner we had rice and goat stew. We worked on masks and rain sticks to make the crafts much easier for the children. We played Spoons with a lot of laughter (Jackson, Junior, Stevenson and Lukson joined us). Some questions came up about health concerns of uncircumcised men. Some untended land was seen during the walk and it can be purchased for \$200/acre.

Thurs. July 30 FINAL DAY OF VBS (NOAH'S ARK). The roosters started at 1:30 AM Breakfast was Soup joumou and bakery bread. Beth worked with the sewers from about 10 AM until 4 PM. VBS started with songs, Pere telling the story, before breaking up into groups. The 2nd graders had pre-made masks, the 3rd graders colored masks, and the 4th graders made rain sticks. Each class acted out Noah's ark. Each class had a Noah, a sheet was used for the ark. The children loved it. 112 kids were served lunch. Our lunch consisted of Mac and Cheese and fruit for lunch. We had the kids cleanup the campus and gave our prizes to those who helped. We had rubber ducks for the little ones, bouncy balls hacky sacks and erasers for the older children. The last basketball camp was held with keep away drill, 3 man weave lightning knockout. We made another bakery trip and gave most of the bread away. For dinner we had goat in a vegetable broth and rice and peas. We played games in the evening and closed with song and prayer.

Fri. July 31 – Church 8:00 AM we sang Amen, Jesus loves the little children and Jesus loves me with the children. Breakfast was bananas, Peanut butter and bread. Mark, Jennifer, Ben, Sam planted the chili peppers with Nelise behind the preschool. They will transplant when they come up. Ben, Jennifer and Sam helped dig the foundation for the church for most of the morning. Beth worked with the sewers. We all held the babies while the women sewed and cleaned up the porch and organized everything we were leaving. The wooden games for pre-school and school was carried up to the office. Several basketballs were given away during the week. We had Fried okra, plantain, pigs in a blanket, and fruit. In the afternoon we took a long walk, stopped at the bakery and bought 54 pieces of bread. We took the toys along with us. Mark played St. Nick. We walked to the Lake Miragoane overlook. We saw the big community cistern in the distance. For supper we had Pen Patat for desert. Everyone really liked it. We played games gave thanks for the trip discussed the week.

Sat. Aug. 1 – We had a breakfast of eggs, bananas, bread and PB. We were all packed and ready to leave before 8:00 AM. Fedner called and was running late because of all the heavy traffic on the way out. He got there at 9:10, we loaded the van and headed out at 9:30. We made it to CAH at 12:30 and spent a good hour shopping. After we went to Deli-Mart to buy vanilla, mumba and lunch supplies. We got to Matthew 25 at 3:00 PM. We had lunch and repacked several bags with the art work. For dinner we had soup joumou with beef and rice. We watched a soccer game, met and talked about the trip and closed the evening with prayer.

Sun. Aug. 2 – we slept in until about 7 or 8 found out we had no water. Everyone was very disappointed. Dumond ordered water for the cistern and we had water after breakfast. They lost 3,000 gallons of water in 2 days (big leak somewhere). For breakfast we had pancakes, boiled eggs, and Mango (last time for Mangos). We packed the bowls and crosses that Fedner brought the night before. We decided to head to the airport at 11:00 AM instead of noon to get back into the AC. We took some snacks for the airport and hung out at the airport until boarding time at 2:30. They took Sam's PB that he had in his carry on. At the final check point Ben had his entire carry-on searched because he 'looked suspicious'. Flights were on time and we had a great American dinner in Atlanta. We said goodbye to Sam who flew to Chicago. We got to MKE on time and said our final goodbyes. Mark and I got to bed at 1:30 AM.

We had a wonderful trip and everyone came home with new friends and great memories.

John Meacham