

## Operation Go Trip 2017

### February 19, 2017 Sunday

**Team Members:** Michelle Bertram, Ann Berendt, Karen Zantow, Emily Noltner, Stephen Troester, and Hans

We spent the afternoon on Saturday packing eight 50 pound bags full of supplies donated by Mineral Point Community, Mineral Point CCD class, Mineral Point 5<sup>th</sup> grade class, and UW Digestive Health. The supplies we took were sheets, school supplies, outfits for orphanage, First aid kits, and Tylenol, Ibuprofen and multi vitamins.

We left for Chicago at 2 am Sunday morning then to Fort Lauderdale. We arrived in Haiti about 345pm. We were met by Achka interpreter and driver, and Berline interpreter. The weather was sunny with temperature of 85 degrees.

After arriving to the guest house in Port Au Prince we were greeted by Pastor Renes and his wife Monic. This year Vivian our usual cook was unable to join us. So Madam Antoinette and Monic's niece Blondie would be our cooks for the week.

After getting settled in our rooms the team walked to CHOIDS [www.choaids.org](http://www.choaids.org) orphaned which takes about 5 min. The children are all HIV positive. Operation Go has given support since 2010 follow the earthquake. We have watched the children grow and have strong personal relationships with the kids.

After leaving the orphanage we stopped at Louisan's a place where the team will occasionally stop to have a refreshment sitting on a curb and talk about our day.

### Monday February 20, 2017

There are a total 131 children at all the orphanages.

Our first full day in Haiti. The weather was sunny and we had a high of 85 degrees.

Our first stop was at FREM (AKA Baby orphanage) "Baby Orphanage" was nicked after we meet them three years ago in February 2014. Most of the children were 6 months to 3 years old. To our surprise this was the first year that all the children 3 years and older have been able to go to school. We held the babies for a little while and met the newest baby who is 8 months Mosaletto (AKA Moses). The story about Mosaletto is that his mother died within weeks of his birth from AIDS. The father was grief stricken and unable to care for the baby at such a young age. He brought the baby to the orphanage for care.

We went to LMT orphanage in the afternoon. LMT is a Haitian owned orphanage. Mr. Andre and his wife run the orphanage. Mr. Andre is open to Christianity being taught to the children. He also

practices voodoo which is not an uncommon thing in Haiti. Of the four orphanages that we support LMT is in need of prayer for the acceptance of Jesus as Savior and His teachings. In the past we had noticed that the children fought among themselves and were just generally not content. Our team has made an effort to foster Christian principle of peace, joy, kindness and the love of Jesus with the children. Weekly Operation Go has interpreter Berline go to LMT, as well two other orphanages, and teach English lesson and bible study. The mission of Operation Go is to not only provide for physical needs but spiritually, emotionally and educationally. This year we had noticed a change in the children with kindness to each other and contentment.

Go into all the world and preach the gospel

Frantz Laffaille has his own ministry Future for the Kids

<https://missionfinder.org/organizations/future-for-the-kids/> joined the team. He lives in Haiti and assist our team with food delivery monthly. He is a dedicated and Godly man that is a quiet servant.

We spent a couple hours updating the children's profiles for our web site and sponsorship [operation-go.org](http://operation-go.org) Also, we are able to get profiles on any new children at the orphanage and record the reason some children left the orphanage. Updating the profiles gives us a way to track the children's growth throughout the year. We were so pleased to see that the majority of children had significant growth and weight gain. Over all, the children general health seemed to have improved over the past year.

Michelle told the children the story about her son ASA age 3 years. Asa is adopted and doesn't have an earthly father that he knows. But Asa does know that he has a father in his heart, Jesus. So whenever he is playing, alone, afraid or happy he knows and takes comfort and joy in having Jesus as his Father. ASA knows that Jesus is with him at all times. Throughout the week Michelle repeated ASA's story to all the children.

## **February 21, 2017 Tuesday**

The team went to two facilities to try to get ideas about managing Haitian run orphanages and programs with sponsors from the US. We meet with the pastor from Back2Back Ministries [back2back.org/haiti](http://back2back.org/haiti) . He was very helpful in giving the team ideas and suggestion regarding non legal but written commitments and expectations. He gave practical suggestion with dealing with exchange of American money and tracking the payment for goods and supplies with Haitian money. He offered help and support to Frantz Laffaille by meeting with him and teaching him. We also went to Maranatha Children Ministry [mcmhaiti.org](http://mcmhaiti.org). It is Christian preschool, after school program and an English camp. The school was full of fun, stimulating and nurturing environment for the children to learn and have a solid early foundation. We were given a tour by a women named Susan. She told us about how she came to live in Haiti five years ago after helping bring a team to the orphanage for week

Later the team went to FREM orphanage. We updated the profiles of the kids weighed and measured them. Again all the children had grown. We gave out the letters and gift bags for the kids from the staff at UWHC Digestive Health in Madison WI. The gift bags contained a summer outfit, toy, colors, school supplies, and shoes or sandals. Each child had their photo taken in their new cloths. Pastor Stephen and his brother in law Hans joined us from the airport. They came to Haiti a few days behind the rest of the team to work with Pastor Rene's at his camp for teenagers. Each year Pastor Rene's takes a group of youths to a retreat during the Carnival Season in Haiti. Which is a celebration held over several weeks each year leading up to Mardi Gras. It's a time for the teens to have some Christian fellowship with other teenagers and do some team building, leadership activities, and bible study to deepen their faith. Stephen is the pastor the Cowboy church in Mineral Point. The Cowboy church and some other sponsors in the Mineral Point Community donated for 26 teenagers from the four orphanages to go to the camp.

### **February 22, 2017 Wed**

The team divided up so that we could accomplish more in the day due to a busy agenda with a small team. Michelle went to a warehouse grocery with Frantz for the first time. They found the warhorse food shopping to be a great relief. Frantz for the past three years has been having to exchange US money into Haiti dollars and Haitian goods and go to multiple markets, negotiate a fair price for staples such as rice, beans, and oil and corn meal. Then he pushes the supplies with a wheel barrel through the market. Some of the bags of rice and beans are 50 to 75 lbs. After loading things into a Tap Tap Frantz has to sort the food and deliver it monthly to each orphanage. Despite the difficulty of the shopping Frantz has always served with kindness and patients never complaining. At the grocery warehouse he will no longer need to negotiate a price. They fill the list for each orphanage, get the food with fork lifts, and load the food into the truck for delivery. There is also savings on food with buying in bulk and the money exchange is done there as well. All the children were so happy when the food was dropped off. They all ran to help and cared in the food. Even the youngest helped with 3-4 carrying a big bag together. At Agape the children sang praise for food.

The rest of the team went to LMT and gave out the Valentines from CCD class in Mineral Point. The interpreters Berline and Achka translated the letter written by the American children into Haitian Creole. The orphans then made thank you letters and colored picture for us to take back to the children in Mineral Point CCD and fifth grade elementary school.

At the end of the day we went to CHOIDS and updated profiles. We gave them their Valentines and letters and then the kids made their thank you notes.

In the evening we went to Louisan's for a little relaxing team time along with the interpreters Achka and Berline and Frantz. We had a drink of Prestige and potato chips. We very much enjoyed each other's company. <http://www.miaminewtimes.com/.../haitian-beer-prestige-takes-gold-medal-at-world-beer-cu...>

### **February 23, 2017 Thursday**

Beach Day. Two full size yellow buses, 350 hot dogs, 36 bags of chips, Ten 5 gallon water containers,

16 adults, 130 children 11 team members and interpreters.

Before leaving for the beach each child got a colored Bracelet that coordinate to their orphanage and the workers of the orphanage.

As soon as we got to the beach the cloths came off and the little ones will swim in their under wear. The hot dogs came out with foil wrapped around them and into the sun to be solar warmed.

Some of the little children that we rarely will see smile and laugh or talk will come to life at the beach. The team will take turns sitting along the shore line with the small children so they can wade and sit in the water. Then we will take turns carrying from 1-3 little kids out a little deeper in the water to kick, slash and play with an adult or older child holding them. The children like to try to float and learn to swim. The kids this year from the different orphanages spent more time playing together and getting to know each other.

The ride home was long and slow. The police stopped the buses for no reason and held us up. Interpreters gave some money to the police and they finally let us pass. Apparently some police will do this to make money.

### **February 24, 2017 Friday**

Team divided up. Stephen and Hans went with Pastor Renes and took 26 orphanage teenagers to Camp. Total 100 kids were at the camp. It's a good time for the kids to get out of their comfort zone and have fellowship with other Christian teens. They learn about God and what being a Christian leader in Haiti means.

Emily and Achka picked up the kids and delivered them to AFGA where the group was meeting. To our surprise at three of the four orphanages they had difficulty getting the kids organized to go. A variety of problems came up resulting in it taking 6 hours and almost not getting there. But in the end everyone got there safely and to camp.

Karen and Frantz went shopping to get 50 mattresses. Traffic was terrible because of the carnival celebration. Their Tap Tap had a flat tire and they were delayed for hours with traffic jams, roads blocked for dancing and music. In the end Karen rode on a motor cycle behind the cycle driver and Frantz holding on behind her to get back to the guest house and the team. They had a wild ride through the streets of Porta Au Prince.

Michelle Emily and Ann went to FREM, Agape, and LMT orphanages to say goodbye to the kids and take the last of supplies to deliver. With the crazy traffic, all the celebrations, and blocked road it was difficult to get to all the places. On our last stop we ended leaving the Tap Tap with Achka in the middle of a crowd road blocked off by Haitian Police. The city streets were closed for music and dancing with carnival. We walked through the crowd city streets pulling a fifty pound bag of supplies. After arriving to LMT there was little girl sick with a fever for the past week. Sha had a high fever off and on. The skin was peeling on her hands and she had a rash. Her fever was high when we were saying goodbye. We gave her a bath to cool her fever. She had been taken her to the Doctor that day and needed antibiotics. They had no money for the medication. Her parents work at the orphanage and the mother was sick as well. The team was able to provide the money for the medication and since she has recovered.

When we leave each orphanage for the last time on a trip the team have the children line up. We hug each of the children, tell them good bye and how much we love them. We want the kids to know that we care for them and see them as individuals. That each one of them is loved and care for even when we are not there every day. We left the kids playing with balloons for a happy ending to our stay.

### **February 25, 2017 Saturday**

Our last day in Haiti. The morning was spent getting ready to leave. The team then went to Papillion Enterprises [papillon-enterprise.com](http://papillon-enterprise.com). They have a roof top café so we had our team meeting and debriefing before leaving. The flights home were uneventful other than some delays.