

Today: When we first arrived in sousafilip, nearly two years ago, to use internet we had to take a grueling hour drive to Port a Rocquet to the radio station, and wait for them to "boot up" the computer while others made internet calls to the US. Those calls were desperate requests for money from family. Later, we could be "on line" for 2 hours then recharge the batteries for 3 days before the next session. Now? Instant on! Sort of. It is still Haiti.

Communication is critical to everything on La Gonave. Telephones are available but unreliable and are most often used for flash lights. A big rock by our front door is best for reception. When Hughes network has a problem we feel cut off, shut off and very much "un part of the world." Millions / billions in third world nations feel like "unknowns." Our solar panels and big "dish" connect dozens of communities to the world and family and resources. Some are learning to use computers and set up emails that someday they will understand.

Today, we went to a meeting that didn't happen and had time to watch the large market in Ti-Palmis. Today, ice we anticipated was sent down the coast and had to be retrieved with a row boat and confused explanation no one understood. Today, the father of a 12 year old daughter who has a serious STD thanked us for helping them. Today, the father of a severely burned child sent donated money to the hospital that will get his son released. Today, a fifteen year old returned from the Ophthalmic Clinic in Ti-guave with a paper saying a corneal transplant was needed in another hospital. Today, a twisted, crippled body passed us on a donkey, a toothless old woman in tattered clothing, and unlit homemade pipe greeted us; a dazed young man with torn clothing on backward ate a mango as he limped behind a young man with only one leg and a tree limb crutch; and, today we feel totally inadequate to do anything positive in this place.

Yet, today, another "crazy" man ask if I believed in Jesus and smiled joyfully at my assurance; my phone was used by many with no minutes in theirs; kids play cards in our doorway, a woman who had nothing a month ago ties her new goat behind our shower as she sweeps sidewalks and does piles of hand laundry, and, tonight I assisted two mid-wives and half the community, deliver a first born mama in one dark room. A beautiful boy, with no papa, uncertain future and a community that cares, let me be part of their traditions.

Louis called from Matenwa Training Center, excited about learning use of a McIntosh computer and reports all are excited learning new "stuff."

We are shut off, cut off, hot, bombarded by spiders, mosquitos, rats and needy, greedy, bright and resourceful people, AND we say, thank you, Kansas East Conference, Lawrence Central UMC, many congregations of the United Methodist Church, UMCOR and GBGM.

Two years went by in a month; yet your radical generosity made a difference in the lives of many, including ours. To the Kansas East Annual Conference we express our radical gratitude.

Shirley and Joe Edgerton, GBGM Long Term Volunteers on sud la gonave, Haiti. June 3, 2009