

## **Monday Recaps, July 11, 2016**

### **Natalie Hogue**

First we got up, and got on a bus to go to Port Loyola to help run a Vacation Bible School. For most kids, this is the highlight of their summer. We started with some fun music and hand motions to go with it. Then we split the kids up into three groups: sports, music/story, and games. I was in crafts and helped the little kids make dream catchers. They were a little hard for some of the kids so I helped them a lot.

Also, I was involved in a short skit for the kids. I was Josh Roper's cat and we were trying to find the secrets of life with other people.

When VBS was over, we went to a sports complex to run a sports camp. We played a lot of basketball. Many of the girls were making really cool bracelets. I made balloon animals for the kids and they LOVED them!! I made so many my hands kind of hurt!

Afterwards, we got on the bus and stopped at a coffee shop where we got frozen coffee with ice cream. It was so good! To end our day we prepared everything we need for Tuesday's VBS. I've already had the best time in Belize and can't wait to see what is going to come my way the rest of the trip! Miss you all!

### **Justin Owen - Construction Team**

After arriving at the church this morning wondering if I would be able to work, we ended up having a very productive day. Our day began with the "Opening Ceremonies" to VBS which were very exciting as it reminded me of my last trip to Belize. After the Opening Ceremonies I walked to the lot owned by the church to help with games until we were called upon by the leaders of the construction crew to come help because they were consulting with the contractor.

Shortly thereafter we were taken to the construction site to begin work on Brother Pitterson's home, we had a massive task ahead of us as we looked at this house that seemed to be falling apart, siding was falling off of the house, the studs were rotted and it seemed very unsafe, especially for a man at the age of 88. Nevertheless work commenced, our work began with climbing on the scaffolding that was built by other SVPC workers and removing all of the rotted, falling boards. This may seem like an easy task, but in the heat as well as the uncertainty of the stability of what we were pulling it was not easy. As the boards came down and our Nalgene's began to empty, we refilled and kept working, managing to tear down all of the boards from one section of the back of the house before lunch.

After lunch, we split in to two teams in order to prevent people from standing around watching others work, as there is only so much to do at once. This gave my team a

chance to rest while the other team replaced many of the supports beams and even the window.

After a needed nap on a church pew, I woke up and my team went to the construction site. Our team was ready to begin work on putting the siding on the house which is also harder than you think, although our bus driver, Carlos, and our contractor, Jermaine, made it look very easy. Many of us soon learned that our hammering skills were not all that we thought they were. We persevered with the siding and made it about halfway up the side of the house before Jermaine claimed the scaffolding and basically finished the section by himself, with the help of Adam Haltiwanger and I cutting boards, and Mark Riley handing him nails and tools. I was truly amazed at the living conditions of Brother Pitterson and hope to improve those conditions drastically. I can already see the end result in my mind and I know it will blow me away when we finish.

Thank you all.

### **Victoria Collins**

Three words: Vacation Bible School.

I have never realized the amount of work Jack Bailey and Marilyn Dillon put into this project but I can honestly say I think I understand now. The countless hours that were put into this VBS at home and then the amount of progress we made the night before was absolutely amazing. I can truly say that the first day of VBS was a success.

However, put aside the tedious work and cutting out of paper, and take a minute to acknowledge what this VBS was supposed to be about: the kids. When I worked at our Vacation Bible School, I walked down the halls every day and noticed the smiles that I saw on our kids. The smiles that I saw today were completely different. They were genuine (not saying that our kids aren't), but it was a different kind of genuine. It was the kind that recognized that they didn't get this every year, that it was perhaps once in a lifetime for some of these kids. I will be honest, it was hectic, it was stressful, but it was beautiful.

Today in the craft portion of the day we made dream catchers. (You may remember these from earlier this summer.) If a kid had extra time they had the option of coming over and getting beads to put on the string of their catchers. I have never seen little kids get so excited about something so minuscule and I have little kids (siblings) of my own. They were not beads to them. They were gems, a sight to behold, items worthy of becoming their most valuable possessions. This is my first time in Belize, my first time out of the country actually. I am three days into this experience and I don't think that I am thinking as I did when I left Columbia.

On a separate topic, this afternoon we were driving back to the church when we made an unexpected stop. Let me start by saying that I love coffee. Put me anywhere near a Starbucks and it is practically an instinct to purchase something. At this stop, we entered a small little coffee shop that I could have imagined being a typical hipster's paradise. We were lucky enough to get possibly the best frozen coffee that I have ever had. Now normally when I hear frozen coffee i just think of crushed ice and coffee, nothing much. This wasn't crushed ice and coffee. These drinks were a blend of creamy vanilla ice cream sprinkled with cinnamon and surrounded by delicious coffee. After the long day that we just had this was the pickup that we needed. We took some back to the construction crew and I can only hope that they appreciated it as much as the VBS crew did. This might have been a really random thing to mention considering everything that happened today and everything that I was touched by, but I feel like it's nice to hear about the silly little things, as well as the life-changing ones.