



From David Feikes, The Shepherd's Work

Shepherd's Work Issue #11

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Greetings,

It is good to be home! I just spent 45 days in Belize and before that I was there for 22 days for a total of 67 days this summer! In this time frame we accomplished a great deal. Following is a summary of our progress.

First Residential Building

- We built the roof with 2 x 6 hardwood. This lumber is actually 2 inches by 6 inches with quite a bit of variation; some boards are 2 and ½ inches by 6 and ½ inches. The lumber is also not straight. I selected hardwood because termites will not eat it! On the residential building the roof rafters are 20 feet long. They are very heavy and take a couple of people to move, especially because we have to lift them onto the roof! I am excited to say my calculations worked out nicely and after having cut the rafters they fit together nicely.

- After all the rafters are in place we put in 1 by 4-inch hardwood purlins approximately 3 and ½ feet apart for the metal roof to rest on. We spent an entire day chiseling the rafters so the roof would be flat.

- After the purlins were installed, we put up the metal roofing which are precut to length. This part goes up quickly and I am always excited to see the finished product. The roof is very sturdy and over built. In Indiana I build for snow load, these roofs could handle the snow, but we are in the tropics, and it will not snow here!



- Installed hardwood siding on the gable ends. We painted it before we installed it. I used a solid wood stain to match the roof. It took me a while to find the correct stain but I located it in Spanish Lookout which is about 45 minutes away. The good news is there is a new paved road between Spanish Lookout and Bullet Tree. I enjoy this drive and I especially like the view in Spanish Lookout.



- I also did the rough electrical wiring and plumbing for this building. I enjoyed the challenge! Once of the hardest things we did was move some plumbing pipes in the concrete. The only thing we are waiting on is the fan/lights for the bathrooms. They do not use them much in Belize but I thought we should have them, so I ordered them.
- The First Church of God mission trip team primed all the cement stucco walls and put two coats of paint on the exterior. It looks great and I am grateful to them for their assistance!



Donation Opportunity

The Shepherd's Work is in need of your financial support. As you can see from the pictures we have not installed the windows but we are ready. We are seeking donations of \$350 per window or door. This will cover the cost of the window and installation. If you choose to donate, your name will be placed on a plaque below the window, similar to how stain glass windows often have a donor for each window. You can send a check to The Shepherd's Work; 4667 West Burgundy Tr. LaPorte, IN 46350 or just make a donation through the link in this Newsletter. If you would like to donate a window or door please make sure you let us know the exact wording you would like: *Window Donated by: [fill in the blank.]* by sending an email to: feikesd@pnw.edu.

Main Building

- Our first task was to construct the rim joist for this building. This consists of 8 inches of concrete with four 3/8-inch rebar connected every 8 inches with a bent rectangular piece of rebar. In addition, we place a metal bar sticking out of the concrete wherever the wood roof and ceiling rafter rests. Constructing the rim joist is time consuming! Once we have a section ready, we mix the concrete by hand on the ground, no machines or trucks. Mixing the concrete is my job along with a helper. I do not carry the buckets or fill the rim joist because they put too much concrete in each bucket for me to handle.
- We again built a roof with hardwood and metal sheeting. This building has three doors on the front. It will house the office, the main meeting room, a kitchen, laundry room and two bathrooms. From my perspective the main meeting room is impressive, the dimensions are 19 feet 6 inches by 26 feet 8 inches. We will eat all our meals and do activities here.



As I say in Belize, something goes wrong every day, BUT it always works out. I had about 30 feet of walls to build which were not masonry. In the first building I used 2 x 4 hardwood boards but they varied in dimensions and were often crooked. I decided to use steel studs for these walls. I drove to Spanish Lookout and purchased them. I could not carry the steel studs in my car, so I hired an older gentlemen who has worked with me before to deliver them to us in his pickup truck. I met him in Spanish Lookout, paid for the metal and he was going to deliver it. He did not show up at the job site for the longest time. Finally, Abel came to me and said he had been in an accident. Abel and I drove down to check on him. He was at the bottom of the hill. It seems that the steel studs had shifted on his trip and he stopped his truck to readjust the load before proceeding up the steepest hill to The Shepherd's Work. Either he forgot to put on his parking brake or it did not work. When he and his wife got out of this truck it rolled down the hill and hit a tree. It bent every piece of metal! Two pieces were so embedded in the tree and I could not get them out. Later I saw some one had taken a machete and removed the two pieces. The metal was unusable and he had dented up his truck even more. After helping him get out I paid him for the trip. The next day I bought more metal and paid someone else to deliver it! I now have very straight interior walls! I did hire the older gentleman on the last day to haul our tools back to Abel's. He had fixed most of the damage to his truck and was back in business again!



Second residential building

- We cleared a few trees which were overhanging the building and had an excavator dig the footings—This was a 12-hour day!
- We poured the footing using cement trucks and then laid block for the foundation.
- It took a while for the excavator to show up but he brought in 5 loads of fill and leveled the dirt. He did not do a very good job of leveling the dirt so we did that on the last day. In the meantime, Abel formed up five pillars in the back of the building. This is going to be a two-story building and we need the pillars. This is going to be the men's residence and the other building will be for the women. One blessing was the fill was a sandy gravel mix, and very nice to work with as opposed to 'white maul' which is rocky, gets super hard and muddy when it rains.



After Christmas Trip

I plan to hang the drywall and insulate the ceilings in the first residential building. I will also tape and finish the ceiling. I am not sure if we will get to it this week but we can then finish painting and order the windows and front door. We will also do the underground plumbing in the third building and the underground electrical conduit. For the main building we will put siding on the gable ends and if there is time drywall the ceilings. The residential building will need to be tiled as we had a torrential rain when we poured the concrete floor. I also need to build the septic and run the electrical and water lines from the road. This will be a challenge!

Please keep The Shepherd's Work in your prayers and consider donating!

Todos son bienvenidos a La Obra del Pastor!

All are welcome at The Shepherd's Work!

Thank you for reading!

David Feikes

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