



From David Feikes, The Shepherd's Work

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Issue #2

I started writing the second newsletter after returning from my first trip to Belize in May but the two trips have left a lasting impression on me and I decided to begin anew! On the first trip I was there for six days; one of the highlights was being accompanied by my cousin Matt Feikes. Matt had worked construction with me one summer on his return from working in England. He was a hard worker then and continues to be.



Things never go as planned in Belize, that is about the only thing you can plan on! My goal on the first trip was to clear the trees for the first two buildings.

One was the main building which is 28 feet by 52 feet. It will have an office, a large meeting room where the residents will meet and also eat their meals, a kitchen, and laundry room. The second building, 32 feet by 40 feet will be a residential building which will have four bedrooms, three bathrooms, and a living room. It will house 6 residents and a caretaker in each building. Eventually I would like to

build five buildings on the property.

The excavator did not show up on time, so we ended up clearing the land for the first four buildings. When he did arrive, he was an expert at digging up and removing stumps. However, he was not an expert at digging foundations. The grade on the trench he dug for the foundation differed by 23 inches. Matt and I spent two days getting it level and we put in six step ups to make it work.



That was all we accomplished on the first trip, but it was very productive. I had to return to the United States for my youngest son's graduation from Purdue University with a degree in chemistry and my second grandson's high school graduation! After graduation my son started a great job with Eli Lilly.



Matt holding palm nuts.

On the second trip I returned alone for 19 days. I missed having my cousin with me! This was my eleventh trip to Belize, and I usually stay at a very nice resort called Cahal Pech. My cousin Matt, who was a professional photographer, took the picture

of me there with the sunset in the background for the first newsletter. However, Cahal Pech booked up the first week and so were many other hotels nearby. I assumed it was because the solstice was June 20 and the Mayan Temples, (Belizeans refer to them as temples and not ruins) are aligned with the sun on the solstice and equinox. However, I later learned that Cahal Pech had booked a famous Mexican band that week.



Abel & Hairson



A thorny tree!

I spent the first 11 days at a downtown hotel called the Maya Bella. It was a bit more spartan than I was accustomed to, but I enjoyed my stay there. The last eight days I returned to Cahal Pech. Another highlight was the relationship I formed with local residents. Helping me the entire time, was Able Hernandez, who I refer to as my foreman. I really like Abel. He is from Guatemala and never finished elementary school. One might say we make an odd couple with me with my Ph.D and his education background. We both share construction stories about our fathers! He is hard working, honest, and he looks out for me! I consult with him on all construction decisions. After a few days we got a helper named Hearson Ramoz. He is a talker and very friendly. He was taking a break from working at a local call center, making calls to potential customers in the United States. He too looks out for me as well, grabbing a wheelbarrow from me so I do not have to wheel it. Maybe it is my age, I am 69 and try to keep up with the two. I tell them every day that "I am old" and now Hearson who is 25 keeps saying he is 'old'. I also hear both of them saying 'Jeez-O- Pete' because that is an expression I use when things are not going well on the construction site! Hearson says his four-year old is now saying 'Jeez-O-Pete' at home!

One of the first things we did was pour the foundation for the residential building! We rented a gas-powered cement mixer and hired four workers for the day. They mixed the concrete and wheeled it to the building. I can say that this was not a highlight! The first three days were very hot and humid but after that I became a bit more acclimated to the weather!

I am going to stop here and provide more descriptions of the second trip in the third newsletter. Some final points, if you are in Belize receiving this newsletter please, please encourage those with intellectual disabilities to sign up for the one-day camp July 18 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Santa Familia Monastery in Santa Elana! Christy Livergood, a board member, is traveling with the First Church of God mission

team and will be leading the workshop with me. She will also be participating in the mission trip with the youth from First Church of God.

If you know me, you know I am frugal, but we could really use help with donations. Please consider donating to this worthy cause! However, the most important thing you can do is pray for our mission. I can tell people have been praying. When something goes wrong in Belize, and something always goes wrong in Belize, it just seems to work out Please keep us in your prayers.

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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Beach Volley Ball Fundraiser: My daughter has scheduled a fundraiser for the Shepherd's Work, 'Bump for Belize', at her sand beach volleyball courts in Indianapolis next to Grand Park, iBEACH 31, Sunday July 13 from 12:00 to 4:00 PM EST. Please share this information with others!

Register Here

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