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Superintendents
Brian & Lorey



Esson News



July 27, 2010

Air Conditioner Rejection Blues

Update

The team stayed up all night unloading the container that arrived at midnight. Everything was soaked including the drop ceiling but are glad to have it.

Many thanks to Brian and Lorey who in 7 weeks poured the footer for the first bldg. at the orphanage and roofed more than 44 temporary shelters given by Samaritan's Purse. They prayed with 42 families including a voodoo shaman.

Jim is in Haiti and I will join him the 29th. We have 3 groups back to back.

Please pray for consistent financial support to enable us to continue to do the work.

When Jim bought the handcuffs for his friend Charles, chief of police in Haiti, he started to pack them in his carryon. I reminded him that airport security confiscated my 10 lb. weight on the last trip, frisked me, informing me it was a weapon. I wasn't planning to club the pilot over the head with it, I promise. I only wanted to stay fit for my mental health and to survive in Haiti. I heard muscle tone helps stave off old age!

Jim called American Airlines to see if he could take an air conditioner as checked luggage. "Not in a box." they warn. "Put it in a container of some sort". Jim figures we could fit it into one of those bags that basketball coaches use to carry their balls. Aisle after aisle at Academy Sports and nothing will accommodate the precious air conditioner. At Home Depot we find a Rubbermaid container that it will just squeeze into. The lid only bulges a little. We secure it with duct tape. I love duct tape.

It's overweight with the plastic container. Can we afford an extra fee? Faith or the intense desire for cool air kicks in. We will risk it!

At the airport both of us push and kick Jim's leaden bags along in line at the American Airlines counter. We "act natural" as they put the air conditioner on the baggage scale. I bite my lower lip.

The attendant hesitates, then slaps a tag on it. No overweight fee. We breathe again. Talk about elation. We envision cool air at night if the electricity happens to come on.

In Haiti, city electricity may come on a couple hours a day if at all. Amazingly, during the world cup soccer games the electricity managed to stay on for a whole month. You could hear the rise and fall of voices in unison in the city over each play, a friend said. They actually set up a huge screen in a stadium in Port Au Prince so the homeless could watch. The Haitians root for Brazil. Why? I have no idea, but it's a big deal in Haiti. Three people commit suicide when Brazil loses to Holland, one man hurling himself in front of a moving car. Later friends see a wiry little man in his bed sobbing inconsolably over Brazil's loss.

Back to the air conditioner. I hug Jim goodbye and amble

happily to my car in space 2E on the second floor of the parking garage. When I get home the answering machine beeps. Urgently, I press the button and hear Jim's deep breathless voice. He rushes, "Come back to the airport. They don't like Freon. Pick it up at the American Airlines desk. Gotta go. Plane boarding. Sorry Babe."

Later I pull up to the curb, rush through the sliding glass doors and walk past a line snaking from the counter to the door. I stand meekly at the desk and clear my throat a couple times. Finally an attendant with a warm brown face, looks towards me and asks if I'm Ms. Karen. I nod. She asks me to wait while they process the passengers. Without Jim I feel sad, forlorn and alone. A lump forms in my throat. I'm losing my composure

I glance nervously through the glass towards the curb outside. A police officer paces back and forth in front of my car scanning the sidewalk. "He is lean as a whip, all edges, brittle, aloof, controlled, arrogant." (Stole that from a book). I bolt out to tell him that I'm waiting for them to release a bag. "I'll just be another minute." He shouts that I cannot leave a car unattended at the curb. "Immediately move the car to the parking garage", he barks. I try to explain that it's heavy and I need help to get it into the car. I'm losing it. "Just take your car to the garage," he growls through clenched teeth.

I feel powerless and frustrated as I run back to tell the attendant. I stride towards my car. At the curb I glance back and see the attendant struggling towards me, the 55 pound container bouncing against her knees with each step. I ignore the policeman and go back to help her. We both shove to get it to squeeze onto the back seat, aware of his approach in our peripheral vision. I'm sobbing now, tears dripping from my chin leaving dark soggy spots on my shirt. I manage to thank the girl who looks concerned. I get that same feeling as when the burly drunks swore in front of the girls when they were small, at a July 4th fireworks display. I lose all fear and reason. I circle and slide into my seat. Now that the air-conditioner is safely in the car, I swing my door open and march back to the policeman....."It doesn't hurt to make an exception once in awhile," I choke out as I swivel around. "You by the booker," I think in my head. I realize, I haven't blown my nose and I'm not a pleasant sight. He shouts something at me. Angry and distraught, I turn on my heels and shriek over my shoulder, "I can't talk right now."

It's been five days now. My conscience is bothering me. I sit at my computer brooding. I guess I will have to go back and apologize to the police officer for my unChristlike behavior.

I join Jim in Haiti Thursday.

Love, Karen

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"A police officer paces back and forth in front of my car."