

**Wednesday, August 26, 2009 3:30 p.m. Apartment breezeway (By Pam Mann)**

### ***“School Starts Up at Institution Unvers on September 7”***

*Introduction: We have sometimes been asked about the emotional effect of traveling back and forth between the U.S. and Haiti. Which one is home? How do we adjust? Does it take a couple days to adapt? This entry from Pam’s journal immediately upon our arrival attempts to address such questions.*

We had just crossed the bridge over the Massacre River into Haiti. Dave turned to Mèt Jaccin who had met us with his SUV in Dajabón, D.R. “What’s the news here?”

“Not much. It’s been hot.”

“No accidents? No incidents?” Dave probed.

“Well, the clinic generator’s down ... for some time now.” Since we live in the UMC building, this was no small bit of news.

“What about internet?” I asked. “Do we have it at school yet?”

“At school? Yes,” Jaccin seemed glad to have something positive to share. We stopped at Haiti’s immigration office to get our passports stamped and to attest to our lack of swine flu symptoms. With bringing mission teams in and out, we’re regulars in the office.

“Ready for work again?” asked one agent. We smiled and nodded.

“We will be in ten days when school starts,” Dave added. Of course, that’s if the government doesn’t postpone school for a month like last year after the hurricanes on the far coast of the country.

When Dave and I were alone and headed to Jaccin’s car, Dave said, “Well, our first night back will be with a kerosene lamp. Always a new wrinkle.”

“Hey, who wants same old, same old?” I asked. “We like adventure, right?”

“Yep.” We do like it, leaving comfort to bring comfort. The clinic lab is still able to function with a small back-up generator which can power part of the clinic. But there’s only minimal lighting and no ceiling fans powered. I’m grateful there’s still power and internet at the school.

When we pulled up to the clinic, the I.U. truck was in front of Hugues’ house. He and the four ESL students, who’d been in NJ and PA, also arrived today in Ouanaminthe. Yesterday they went to the U.S. embassy in Port-au-Prince to present themselves faithfully returned to Haiti. Now the kids were already delivered to their homes but we exchanged sweaty hugs with Hugues. He was already on the go with no time to chat.

Once we had our school keys in hand, Jaccin took us to unload supplies we’d brought for school. We saw older students in other schools’ uniforms around I.U. Jaccin explained that we were hosting retakes of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade government exams.

Dave and I had barely unpacked the suitcases when storm-like winds started up. “Ah, I left the bedroom window open to air out the apartment,” Dave remembered.

“Well, I’ll go back,” I offered. “I need to buy something for supper. You can check email. My Haiti phone’s not charged so we can’t call each other.” Dave was already on his new computer that UALC purchased. This is a Hummer of a laptop because he (plus the heat, humidity, and dust) was so hard on his last one. It’s built to survive the Sahara, the Arctic, and the Amazon – all at once! “You’ll be home before dark?”

“Oh, yeah.” I heard a thunder rumble so I hurried out. Of course, there were lots of greetings along the way: custodians, snack stand vendors, students on bikes.

“Rodney, your brother sent photos with us from Ohio. Pastor Dave has them in his office.” Ezéchiél’s brother smiled at me appreciatively and headed off to see what it’s like to be a U.S. college student. I decided I might be able to get enough food for supper just on my walk back to the apartment if the rain

