

Mat Hamlett's ASP Journal, 2005

(Sunday) We left CCBC around 8:00am. The weather was warm and sunny. We had eleven vehicles total: seven 15-passenger vans, two personal pickups (Don Truelove's and Clarence Lindsay's), one mini-van, and one cargo van. Gregg and I were in the cargo van and also led the way. The blue CCBC van was at the rear. We made good progress to Boone, NC, where we stopped for a rest and a bathroom break. We moved on from there towards Johnson City, TN. Road conditions were not as good, so progress slowed. We stopped in Elizabethtown, TN, at 12:30pm for lunch. Due to dietary needs, most everyone ate at Burger King. The line was so long Ray, Pete, Blake, Zak, and I ate at a Chinese buffet across the street. Delicious! (Note: Everyone just sang "Happy Birthday to MaryLin Truelove on Don's phone.) We drove on from there up to Virginia. The roads were good until we turned onto Highway 70 to drop down into Tennessee. What a crooked road! We arrived in Sneedsville at 4:00pm. There was a lot of confusion at the center upon arrival and it is very crowded. We are staying in an old hospital (very small hospital). The local rescue squad is in the front of the building. Zak and I are sleeping in a closet-sized room, probably a storage closet. No windows, no ventilation. We had our evening gathering at the old high school about ¼ mile away. We sang songs, went over some rules, and had a team leader's meeting. Then we ate spaghetti and salad. I went with Clarence, Ray, and Zak. I'm not quite sure where Gregg went. When we returned to the center (a.k.a. hospital) I answered technical questions and had small talk. Then went to bed.

(Monday) I slept fairly well. I missed Peggy. I think Zak slept well. He got cold and got his blanket around 4:00am. I got up at 5:45am. Several adults were already up and drinking coffee. I imagine Don Truelove made the coffee. We met at the school at 7:15am. We had pancakes, bacon, canned peaches, no-name cheerios, OJ, and milk. At 8:30am we had the three S's – safety, sensitivity, and stewardship. Afterwards we made lunches, gathered supplies, and went to the work sites. We first visited Don and Ronnie's site. There are two work crews there. The CCBC folks are Don, Ronnie, Ken, Christina, and Richard. They are building an addition and putting a carport roof over a trailer. Don and Ronnie had some construction questions. We met a little boy named Larry who did some bicycle tricks for us. We then went to Dana Kenyon's site. There CCBC folks are Claren Truelove and Dana. They are underpinning a trailer and finishing a carport roof. There is a crew from another church working on the inside there also. They need 16d nails. We didn't have any. On the same road is Linwood and Kathy's group. They are also underpinning a trailer. We borrowed some 16d nails from them and went to Ronnie's site and got a few more and took them back to Dana's group. We then drove to Sneedsville lumber store to pick up some 2x4's for Clarence's group. They had not been ordered so we went to Clarence's site without them. This group is repairing a ceiling in a mobile home. We then processed to Ray's site. Jessica Ridenhour is there. They are fixing a flue, doing electrical, and painting. We saw Zak's group at the

store, so we stopped and ate a popsicle with them. They are insulating under a house. It's a nasty job. We then returned to the lumber co. for Clarence's 2x4's and delivered them. Diane called and they needed insulation hangers. So we bought the hangers at the lumber company and delivered them. It was close to the end of the day so Gregg and I crawled under the house and helped them finish the insulation. Zak Hamlett is doing a great job! We returned to the center. I am now waiting to take a cold shower. The cold shower was just that cold! Some say, "brisk," some say, "refreshing," I just say, "cold." We went back to the high school for supper (macaroni and cheese, salad, fried corn things, chicken fingers – 1 per person – and pudding). At EG (evening gathering) we sang and had group discussions about why we are here, etc. Today is Anne Hunter's birthday. She is twenty-one. I call her, "Carpenter Girl." Anne is the best! We had cake and sang Happy Birthday. Gregg and I gave her a utility knife for her tool belt. Back to the hospital for wind-down, preparing for Tuesday and bed. Gregg and I felt a little let down today. The staff did not utilize us as Rovers very well. After some discussion with them this evening, my hope is that tomorrow will be a better day. *Note* today was partly cloudy for the most part. It sprinkled a little this morning. There was a nice breeze most of the day. It was hot but not too hot.

(Tuesday) I got up at 5:45am. The students are awakened at 6:45am. This is so we can leave the hospital and drive to the old high school for devo's (devotionals) at 7:15am. Jeannie and Susan (from UPC) did devo's. We had biscuits, gravy, sausage, cereal, oatmeal, and yogurt for breakfast. The center staff had specific directions for Gregg and I, so things went much better today. I slept okay last night. I don't remember the dream specifics but I do know I dreamed of Peggy; I miss her; we are not apart too much. I also dreamed of Zak's work site and solved some problems. I told Zak about the solution with the plastic. Gregg and I had a busy day. We went to Linwood's and got a wheel barrow to take to Anne's site later. We proceeded to Ronnie and Don's and dropped off OSB and sack-crete. We then went to Dana's and dropped off luan and OSB. From there we drove back to town and picked up drywall for Clarence. We took a short hop (about 3 miles one way) to a job site where the other church is working to pick up a ladder for Ray's site. Then it was off, out the other side of town. We first stopped at Anne's site, it was our first visit. They are plumbing and have already dug a drainage ditch. The ditch is about 75-feet long. They are waiting on gravel. We left the wheel barrow and went to Clarence's site and delivered the drywall. We ate our ham sandwich in the van on the way to Zak's. We delivered sack-crete and rebar. This group was very down. They were tired of being under the house. The insulation is finished. Today, they were working on a vapor barrier (plastic) and digging footings for piers to help support the floor. As we were leaving, they left also to use the restroom and eat lunch. There is no running water at this site. When we left Zak's we went to Ray's and dropped off the ladder and picked up two 2x6x12's to take back to Zak's. Ray's crew picked them up by accident. Ray's crew was not on site. They had also left for lunch and a bathroom break. After leaving the 2x6's at Zak's site, Gregg and I drove to

Tazwell (about 28 miles away) and purchased two 16-foot ladders. Everyone needs ladders and the center doesn't have very many, and there are none to buy in Sneedsville. On the trip back I missed the turn and we went about ten miles the wrong way (my fault). Once back on track, Ray called, and needed a ¼" nut driver. We had one in the van so we delivered it. Finally the last run of the day. We went back to the center, picked up 38 sheets of OSB and took it and the ladders to Ronnie and Don's. They had some rafter questions. After helping with the questions we all went back to the center. Cold showers for everyone. Gregg and Diane put fuel in all the vehicles while I helped Ronnie and Don figure out rafters. It's now 6:15pm. At 6:30pm we will all go to the high school for supper. I might have time for that "just cold" shower before supper, if not, I'll take one after... Tonight was "culture night." After supper three guys came to play country music. We passed the hat before they played...that was good because they weren't. Zak can play and sing much better than they could. Shoot, Don and Ronnie could have done better. I left early and walked back to the hospital. As you go from the center (hospital) to the school you pass the waste water treatment plant on one side of the road and the prison on the other. I got a milkshake at Hardee's (which you also pass), during my walk back. When I got to the center I took my cold shower. A couple of people who weren't feeling well also came back early. It was decided that tomorrow I would go to the Ronnie and Don site to help with the rafters. So that's where I'll be for at least part of the day. Bedtime is between 10:30pm and 11:00pm, with lights out at 11:00pm. I am very proud of Zak. He has matured over the years which have gone by much too quickly. He is a fine man. **The temp at the local bank at 4:00pm was 90 degrees.

(Wednesday) I slept fairly well. I got up at 5:45am. My first thought was of Peggy. Don, who makes the coffee at early o'clock was already up as well as the rest of the early risers coffee club. Soon it will be off to breakfast and another day at ASP. Ronnie and Lindsey did devo's this morning. They did great. Ronnie talked about the narrow gate in Luke. I can't remember the chapter and verse. We had scrambled eggs, toast, bacon, cereal, and yogurt for breakfast. The rain set in right after breakfast. Today I traded places with Laurie Taylor, the intern from UPC. She roved with Gregg and I went to Ronnie and Don's site to help with the rafters. There are two crews working at that site. Don, Ronnie, Ken, and Richard, (the adults) are great working with the students. They set quite a positive example. What I did today they could have done without my help. I just sped up the process, and affirmed what they were doing. Susan, Lindsey, Christina, Robert, Ben, Corwin, Blake, and _____ worked through the rain and got all the rafters on. They felt good about what they accomplished. None of it would have happened if Gregg and Laurie had not delivered the materials early this morning. We stopped around 3:15pm. The last rafter went on and the rain came down harder. We went to the drug store in Sneedsville to buy the cooks a thank you card for fixing meals. Hardees was the last stop for a treat, before returning to the hospital (the center). At the hospital there was already a line for showers. I have been waiting until later for the shower. Gregg,

with a worried look on his face, asks me if I would help with a nasty job. It seems that Anne Hunter's crew was removing insulation from under a mobile home and two of the girls were stung by bees. So after recommended work hours, Gregg and I went to their site to finish taking the insulation out and "kill the bees." At first we didn't find any bees, but then we did, well, three bee nests and two wasp nests. Gregg had a 2x2 stick about three feet long and he is deadly with it. He bashed, he swatted, he bashed some more. Bees zero, Gregg a home run. We finished pulling the insulation, we put it in bags, and loaded it all in the cargo van. We also met Johnny, who lives there. He was very concerned for our safety. By the time we returned to the hospital, supper was over. They had stouffers lasagna, and we missed it. We ate at subway, a 6-inch club. After eating we met up with everyone at the school for EG. We had group activities basically about how much we have, more opportunity, education, and health, than the people we are working for. I saw Jon Spaulding. He is from UPC and has worked on my crew for two of the seven years I've been coming to ASP. Jon is now an ASP staff worker. He looks good and I was glad to see him. He drove two hours to see us...Back at the hospital it was time to vent. Wednesday is usually the time for that to happen. The rain, the work, or lack thereof, the food, the showers, etc. Enduring common hardships or obstacles really makes the group closer. Lights out...to bed.

(Thursday) I got up at 6:15am today. Clarence and Robe had devo's. They talked about generosity. We had sausage biscuits, oatmeal, and fruit cocktail for breakfast. Gregg and I hit the road. We went to the hardware store with an ASP staffer...Ali, I think. By the way, it is still raining. With the van loaded we drove to the hospital (center) to wait for the load of stuff to come from Home Depot about 40 miles away. The ASP van arrived about 9:30am from Home Depot. We loaded 28 sheets of OSB from their van to ours then delivered it and 2x6's to Don and Ronnie. Due to the length of the 2x6's we couldn't close the door. Gregg rode on top of the OSB so it wouldn't slide out of the back of the van. We backed into the Ronnie and Don site. What a ride! We delivered the OSB and some screws to Dana's site, they are also repairing a ceiling. Zak's crew finished at Homer's yesterday, so they worked at Linwood's site building a retaining wall. Gregg and I hauled the railroad ties for the wall to their site – twenty of them. Each weighed 250-300 pounds. They were beasts, that means heavy, and very dirty. We went to Anne's site where the bees were, they had made raincoats from trash bags. Gregg and I ate lunch at the BP station close to Ray's site. As we were eating our hot dog, Ray's group came in. There were there for a potty break. Today was a good day and a lot was accomplished, even in the rain, which was very heavy at times. Our crews are running out of things to do. Good or bad, most feel the staff is not taking advantage of our talents. Thursday is picnic night where families we work for are invited to eat with us. None of our families wanted to attend. We had a good time nonetheless. Ray and Ronnie cooked hot dogs and hamburgers. We also had potato salad, slaw, beans, and watermelon. The picnic was at a place called Elrod Falls. I did not

walk to the falls, but the students said they were beautiful. Several students swam there. After eating, it was back to the center and to bed.

(Friday) No rain! Yea! I got up at 5:45am. We went through the regular morning stuff. French toast, scrambled eggs, and peaches for breakfast. Today I was on the Ronnie Crew again. Ronnie's crew and Don's crew started OSB (a type of plywood) on the front while Laurie (the UPC intern) and I prepared the back. The roof was sheeted with OSB by 1:30pm and the black paper was on by 3:00pm. Ronnie thanked everyone and prayed before we left. The family was not there. Gregg and Zak came and helped about 2:00pm. Zak's crew and Linwood's crew finished the retaining wall, so Gregg got Zak to help rove. Zak really works well in all environments. His quiet confidence is a gift that will do him well all his life. I am back at the center now. The vans are being vacuumed and rinsed, tools put away, and gas put in each van.