

THE WARNOCKS' ESCAPADES

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Our Home Page: <http://warnocksescapades.com/>



Ted's Advance # 13030Z Ted's E-Mail: missionsted@gmail.com

Carla's Advance # 13031Z Carla's E-Mail: carlanursemgr@gmail.com

From Ted: Puerto Rico Visit

I spent 2 weeks in November in Puerto Rico working with our partners of the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico (MCPR) as they developed their plan to respond to hurricane Maria that destroyed so much of their country. I am returning this month to be part of the Emergency Response Training for the Puerto Rican volunteers who will work with the United Methodist volunteers who will go to help rebuild this beautiful part of our country. I am also coordinating all the UMCOR relief supply shipments to Puerto Rico.

**Ted: One Day of the Puerto Rico Visit: God in Action: As you read this consider Matthew 7:7
Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.**

Notwithstanding that my primary purpose this past Tuesday was to visit a good friend visiting the Puerto Rico Volunteer Organizations Against Disasters, PRVOAD at the Joint Field Office at the Convention Center for disaster response. The rest of the story needs to be told.

On 7 November, while discussing how we might more efficiently navigate the receipt of UMCOR relief supply containers into Puerto Rico, I was handed off to the U.S. Coast Guard representatives by a FEMA representative I met earlier. The U.S.C.G. informed me that we were doing everything correctly and they were not hindering our efforts. From there I was escorted to the representatives of Crowley, one of the largest shippers of containers into Puerto Rico. I was given the standard set of steps to follow and that we were just competing for available space. The rest of the story follows when we were brought back to the PRVOAD area via an alternate route through this maze of organizations.

One of employees of Samaritans Purse, affectionately named the "water guy" was walking within, or maybe just out of, ear shot, and I called out "hay water guy". We had met the previous week at a meeting and he came over to talk with myself, a pastor/representative of the MCPR and our FEMA representative working with us.

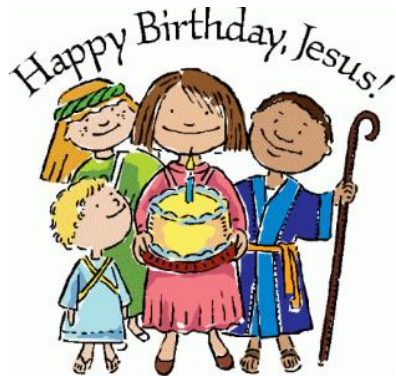
We talked about our current efforts with the "water guy" and I noted we could use a few tarps. Great was the response of the Water Guy. We have lots and will be discontinuing our response with this program. How many do you need? We can go the warehouse right now and get them for you. Our MCPR pastor said that he would need to check and see how many we could use and he and the Water Guy went to his work area to plan accordingly. While in route, our MCPR pastor handed me off to a different FEMA representative. He asked me why I was here, at the JFO, and what was I looking for. So happens this FEMA representative is responsible for relief supplies that are stored at their warehouse. So, my next question "what do you have?" Was followed, by "what do you need?" Ok, I share that I have been trying to get containers into Puerto Rico and that two of the items on the containers we were looking to get in for the MCPR were hygiene kits and insect spray. "Ok" came his response, "how much do you need?" So, I ask for enough to meet the current needs until we can get our containers into Puerto Rico. Ok, came the response. "Anything else I can help you with?" My response, "what do you have?". Nope, doesn't work like that. So, I begin to share what the MCPR is doing. "Ok" comes the response, "we can help you with that also". This request was to provide the MCPR with kitchen size containers of food for their hot meal programs. My next question, "what else do you have?" Nope, doesn't work like that. "Anything to help our women?" "Ok, we can help there also".

Advance to Friday, three days later and I just received the follow-up to our efforts.

FEMA will be providing the MCPR with 30,000 hygiene kits, 7,000 feminine kits, 3,000 cans of insect spray, and food for 5 distribution centers that provide hot meals. And, as a bonus, FEMA will deliver the supplies to their (MCPR) main distribution site, and perhaps a second site as well.

And yes, Samaritans Purse will provide the MCPR with 50 tarps tomorrow and 100 next week; and now up to 300 provided!

If there was any underlying doubt that God works in many mysterious ways, see what might happen the next time you decide to raise your voice call across the room "hey water guy!". Maybe I should have started the morning with "hey container guy". Nope, doesn't work like that. Thanks God!



Ted and Carla's Blessing to for Christmas

We pray that you will find these photos of the people of the MCPR helping their fellow citizens uplifting. Giving is Christmas to Christians - giving of ourselves, our time, talents, and resources to our families and our communities. We celebrate Christmas as God-in-human-form was given to the world to teach and guide us, as a sacrifice for us, and to provide for our salvation. May God's love and grace be present in all you experience and do and may you see the God-incidences in your life!

Thank you for your prayers and support in 2017. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! *Ted & Carla*



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UMCOR Relief Containers - Loading

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