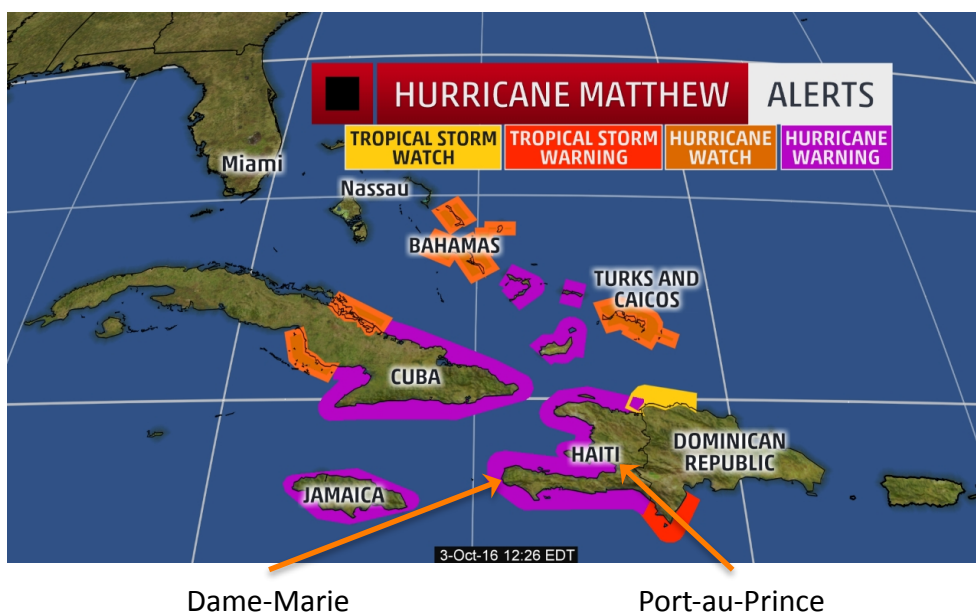


Hurricane Matthew

I usually enjoy writing of our adventures on the mission trail. But today I have a heavy heart knowing a lot of what we experienced in Dame-Marie the last four years is being destroyed at this moment by the Category 4 storm named Matthew. With the eye of the storm tracking over the westernmost part of the lower arm of Haiti, winds of 140 miles per hour, expected seas surges of 15 feet, and projected rainfall of up to 40 inches in 24 hours, our coastal village of Dame-Marie has very little chance of surviving intact.



Dame-Marie is a fishing village (left) and this is what a low level tropical storm did to our fishing community a year ago (right).



This is a collection of homes (left) surrounding the community hospital (right) as we left it three weeks ago.



Today's blessing, however, might be that none of us know how bad things are presently in Dame-Marie. So I will remain optimistic until we hear/see otherwise. And I will share with all of you now what we accomplished just three weeks ago.

Our September Band of Sisters and Brothers



Kneeling (L-R): Betty Rodrigue- Desnoyers, RN, Kathy Aries, RN, Veronica Bailey, RN, Kara Andaloro, RN, Michael R. Bourque, MD; Standing (L-R): Erika Hull, RN, AnnMarie Sweet, CST, Soanna LaGuerre, MD, Valerie Barthélemy, MD, James Stringer, EDT, Marina Torbey, MD, Wilkens Gilbert, MD, Kate Monahan, CRNA, Toby McPherson, CRNA, Linda Starr, RN, Anne D'Orvilliers

And here we all are enjoying the camaraderie that develops from sharing such an intense experience, never mind the awesome local fare that our cooks put together for us.



Many of our team interacted with the community during our down time, and took advantage of their particular skills. Here we have James Stringer, EDT and Navy Corpsman, getting a Haitian razor cut (left), and Marina Torbey, MD, getting braids (right).



Stories from Dame-Marie – September 2016

And an even more important connection was our meeting the new Inspector of police in Dame-Marie, Joshui St Fleur. I am happy to report his brother had successful minor surgery with our team, and we now have a new important connection in Dame-Marie.



L-R: Anne D'Orvilliers, Kathy Aries, RN, Joshui St Fleur and Michael Bourque, MD

Just as important, are the young patients that we treat as well as the young family members who hopefully will grow up comfortable with us and the care we bring.



AnnMarie Sweet, CST, with a young Haitian who has already caught humanity's love of cell phones.

Pre-op ran very effectively with our duo of Linda Starr, RN, and James Stringer, EDT.



Dr. Marina Torbey, a senior attending physician from Bridgeport Hospital, helped me in a leadership role in surgery and with the Cesarean Section. We were also blessed to have Dr. Soana LaGuerre, a senior resident in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Saint Francis Hospital, on this trip. She was born in Haiti and still has family in the Port-au-Prince area. It was a special gift for me to work with both of these professionals, especially with the difficult cases where we were unable to help patients with advanced cancers. Having Soanna, who understood the medical aspects and could communicate in Creole with compassion and hope, without the use of an interpreter, added a valuable component to providing care.



L-R: Drs. Soanna LaGuerre and Marina Torbey

Post-op was extremely organized due to the special skills of Veronica Bailey, RN, and Kara Andaloro, RN. Their exceptional skills are evident in that all 25 surgical patients were discharged home as expected, and without complications.



Left – L-R: Kate Monahan, CRNA, Veronica Bailey, RN, and Kara Andaloro, RN; Right – PACU

And Anne D’Orvilliers, our new Chairman of the Board of Medical Aid to Haiti, put her engineering organizational skills to superb use in organizing our pharmacy, as well as pinching in to dispense reading glasses that were in big demand.



The Hospital Expansion Continues

The ER is structually finished, but lacking all the equipment and supplies it needs to run. Supplies are coming but running three months behind schedule -- not great when a Category 4 hurricane is occuring and no ER or OR available to help a community of 40,000 people.



Work continues on the second operating room and progress is being made.



And the Community Expands

The newest member (left) of our growing number of babies born under our watch, and her extended family of doting aunts and friends (right).



And for some comic relief here is a photo of three young children who were chasing a pig outside our hospital grounds. I was too slow to catch the pig in the image. But children are the same everywhere when given the chance to play. Note the middle child's umbilical hernia that is visible but will have to wait until he is four to have it repaired.



Closing Thoughts

All of us wait with trepidation yet hope for what will survive in Dame-Marie today. In four weeks we will hopefully make the long overland trip back, where it will be hard to reconcile what I have shown you today, with the life that may be left. But if there is one lesson that we can take from these good people born with few resources and fewer blessings is that they

always have hope for a better tomorrow. They are tough, resilient, resourceful, and strong of character. Please PRAY along with me for God's protection of them during this day of storm and its aftermath.

God Bless,

Michael R. Bonnyne MD

Medical Director for MATH Dame-Marie, formerly Saint Francis IMM



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