

All Hand and Hearts (AHAH) Dundas Town Cohort I Trip Overview So Far February 2021

Bubble: A group of around 20 people who will live, sleep, eat, and work together.

Masks are on anytime other people outside this bubble come within closer proximity, and also, during heightened awareness (possible incident, new people joining us, etc.).

We have three bubbles (named after bubblegum): Hubba Bubba is the roofing team; Bubbalo (my team) and Bubblicious both work on the school site.

Getting there:

Due to snow, I left a day later, but still arrived in time to quarantine in Florida with my bubble mates, have the PCR test, and complete the travel health visa for The Bahamas. Our stay in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, was at an AirBnB; each bubble in a separate one.

Fly Tropic, a charter flight, brought us directly to Marsh Harbour, Abaco, The Bahamas. 8-passenger single propeller. Did not have to wait for luggage; advantage of only 7 passengers aboard. Customs/passport was also easy. We had a short drive to our new home.



The Base in Dundas Town:

We are located on the property of the Friendship Tabernacle (big green building; the next lot NNW is the future school). The main common area for all three bubbles is inside the building, a big open space divided into three areas with kitchen work areas, a camping stove for cooking, half of a fridge, and one shelf in a freezer (fridge and freezer are commercial size). Lots of chairs. The basket ball hoop has been moved outside.



The main living area is behind the building in the lot. Visible Goods (VG), basically a lightweight shelter which houses four people in two sets of bunk beds.



Five VGs, three Port-a-potties, a sink, a laundry station, three of the showers in a shower trailer (no electricity, no heated water), one outdoor shower (plywood walls attached to the building, no roof, and a pallet for the floor), and two large picnic tables with benches complete each bubble's living area.

During our first week here during our quarantine time, we learned proper use of power tools and practiced with them by building shade structures and shelves.



Friendship Tabernacle



With limited amount of shade, I "build" a chair to sit on behind the housing pod in the shade. The chair consists of two large rocks placed on top of each other. Luckily, I had brought a kneeling pad with me I'm using as a seat cushion. Should have brought three.



Water comes from a well.

A laundromat is less than a mile walking distance away, extremely busy on weekends. When I arrived, the power was out, but back on about 10 minutes later. It went out two more times during the wash cycle and one time during the dryer cycle. Worth the trip and wait, since the bed sheets and the work pants are a bit big for the laundry-station bucket.

Meals:

Breakfast items are provided, but it is fix your own.

Lunches and dinners are provided, cooked by two nice ladies in a large food truck/trailer. All hot meals. Most lunches are vegetarian meals consisting of mainly rice and beans. Dinners have meat, but vegetarian can be requested. So far we've had: baked chicken, corn, and salad; mixed vegetable stew; burrito and salad; fried chicken, potato salad, and rice; curry chicken; soups.

Typically, Saturday and Sunday lunches will be fix your own sandwiches.

Individuals can buy their own personal comfort foods at Maxwell's Supermarket.

Work Day Schedule:

We get up before/around 6:00, have breakfast (we fix our own), get ready.

6:30 Walk to our work site, about 10 to 15 minutes.

6:46 Morning stretch circle and get our assignments.

7:00 Start working.

12:00 to 13:00 Lunch (walk back to base, eat, and walk back to the site).

15:40 Start to put tools away, then walk back to base.

17:00 Evening meeting.

17:30ish Dinner.

Then our own time

20:00 Curfew - everyone on base.

21:00 Quiet hours (Saturday at 22:00).

Worksite for the future Little Darlings' Academy (LDA):

It is currently a flat piece of property with an old foundation slab. Since the safety of that slab for a new structure could not be verified, two new areas were staked out and already trenched for the footing. The new school will have two buildings. One with five classrooms, each with its own bathroom (toilet and sink). The other will house the kitchen, two more classrooms with bathrooms, and offices.

We are starting with cleaning up around the trenches by shoveling the rocks and sand away from the edges so heavy equipment front loader can remove all the debris and work can continue with the trenches.

Others worked on constructing the different work areas for carpentry, cement mixing, shade rest area, equipment storage, etc.

Unfortunately, the limestone bedrock is not as solid as originally thought. We filled a big hole, about 14 feet down to water level, with a cement mixture of one wheelbarrow sand, 1 bag cement powder, and 2 wheelbarrows of pebbles. Many, many, many of these batches. And



then some more. Then pebbles were compacted on top of that. Lots of "weight training," wet cement mixture is heavy, even in a wheelbarrow. As we were clearing out more rubble from the trenches, more holes were discovered. The engineers are relooking the foundation and building design.



Training/Education

Disaster Management 12 Weeks (DM12) Workshops (adapted to our 8-week stay):

If I understood it correctly, this workshop program was developed recently to provide training in disaster relief and humanitarian areas over the 12-week project/deployment time frame. The Bahamas project is a new version condensing it into 8 weeks. The first session tried to explain the program and conducted ice-breakers for us to get to know people from the other Bubbles. It continued with defining personality traits, exploring strengths and weaknesses, and setting goals. The next session continued with an introduction to Humanitarian Aid and Sustainable Development Goals, and how AHAH chooses and prioritizes projects. Next topic is Ethical Storytelling.

Other Events keeping us busy:

10 Feb 2021, Wednesday: After our evening meeting and dinner, we ended the day with "Classie Night," complete with mocktails (fruit punch), and, of course the push for fund raising. Nice and relaxing, music, and the mocktail was really refreshingly good.

14 Feb 2021 Happy Valentine's Day

Speed Meeting: the other cohort (started in January) located in Marsh Harbour visited. Everyone stayed outside our base, chairs were lined up in two rows facing each other proper distance apart.

18 Feb Tonight was movie night, "Guardians of the Galaxy", complete with popcorn. Timing was perfect when Peter (main character) started a song, a loud gospel song? Nope, the church choir started their practice, the wall separating us is thin.

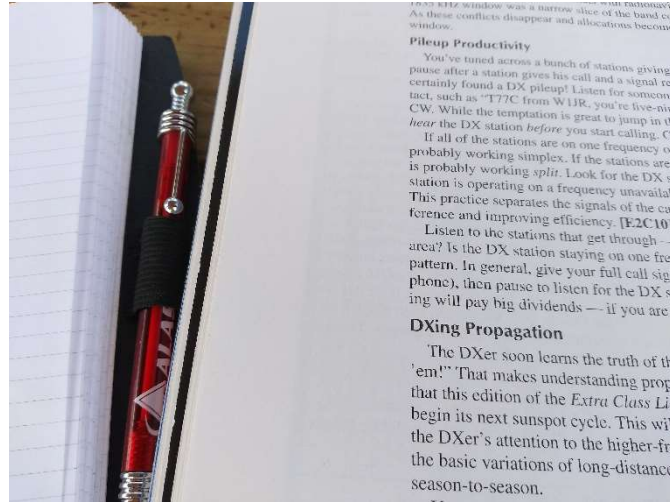
A pick-up truck with a big cooler/freezer box sells homemade ice cream for \$4.00 a cup. The various flavors included pecan, coconut, peach, chocolate, and rum raisin. After a hot day, I bought a coconut ice cream and placed it in our freezer to enjoy after dinner. When I went to get the ice cream, the freezer doors were wide open for defrosting. It seems that the freezer is not working properly. So instead of ice cream I enjoyed a milk shake. Still refreshing and delicious!

21 Feb Sunday: Possible crisis! I was almost out of chocolate! After lunch I visited Maxwell's Supermarket (about 2.4 miles one way). Luckily the store had chocolate, so I was able to avert the impending crisis.



On a different note: Everyone is ok. Unfortunately, we lost ten days of work at the school site. Both bubbles were quarantined, because one person had symptoms and tested positive for Covid19. Even though the person was in the other bubble, contact tracing showed that a couple of people did not follow the protocols. Tuesday, a nurse is supposed to come and see if we are allowed out 4 days early, or if we have to stay the full 14 days.

So, with even more time on my hands, just what have I been up to?



You guessed it! Studying.

