

# Living

The News Reporter, Thursday, January 30, 2014 Section C



These women spread water over the new floor to keep the dust down.



These girls were happy to have a new hangout, whether it be for worship, studying or making new friends.



Dominican children watch progress through a new church window.

## A perfect day

Local men help build a church in the Dominican Republic

By MARK GILCHRIST  
Special to The News Reporter

It took months to plan and several days just to create the foundation, so actually constructing the church for a small village in the Third World was the easy part for seven men from Columbus County.

They travelled to the Dominican Republic earlier this month with diverse backgrounds, but similar reasons for going.

“Just to serve God and honor God,” said Whiteville native Doug Lane, summing up feelings for the group, which included Darryl and Paul Whittington, Ted Williams, Ken Clark, Neal Turner and Mark Creech.

Organized by Honor the Father Ministries out of Ocala, Fla., and funded by donations, the First Baptist Church of Boruco is an all-metal structure on a concrete slab, just right for the climate and culture here. Boruco is west of Santiago.

The Dominican Republic and Haiti share the island of Hispaniola, which is in the northern Caribbean between Cuba and Puerto Rico. With a more stable government over the centuries, the country has fared much better than Haiti and is popular with tourists and “ex-pats,” people leaving their home countries to live a relaxed and less expensive lifestyle on this tropical island.

The men stayed in a local motel during their trip. They ate local food and made many friends. Williams credits the special camaraderie that fills projects like this as one of the things that compelled him to come here for his third such trip. The men also realized how similar are people around the world.

“This gave me a chance to serve the outcast,” Mark Creech said. “The book I read tells me that these neighbors here are just like my neighbors at home.”

“The language barrier is kind of hard,” Neal Turner said about the Spanish speaking locals, “But they can still see the love that we have for them.”

Several setbacks, including a cement workers’ strike and stubborn, hard clay soil delayed foundation work for much of the week. But the men had the entire building finished only a day after the concrete work was completed.

It was a work of love in many ways; a love for their trade, a love for their fellow man, and a love for God. With the success of the project, the camaraderie and the new friends, most of the men agreed the project went perfectly, but Creech summed it all up for them.

“You cannot live a perfect day without doing something for someone who cannot pay you back,” he said. “That is what we’re doing here today.”



Neal Turner cuts lumber for final details.



Ken Clark installs chicken wire between the church walls and roof.



Finishing touches are put on the church.



Doug Lane visits a neighbor’s house that is small but meticulously outfitted.



You won’t find American football teams in Dominican Republic schools, and you won’t even see much soccer. But baseball is king in the Caribbean.