



Friends of Haiti Newsletter

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March 2014

What A Wonderful Blessing !

What a wonderful blessing it was for me to spend two weeks at Lacroix New Testament Mission in January. I missed some of the sub zero temperatures and large amount of snow in the burgh while enjoying daily, mountain walks with Pastor Pierre in 75-degree sunshine!!

I was fortunate to travel with a medical/dental team from Pittsburgh my first week, January 18th-25th. We delivered medical/dental care and first aid to several villages located 30-100 minutes by vehicle from the mission itself. Many of these people would not have received medical care and treatment had our team not traveled to them.

Some of the villages we served were Lacoupe and Platon, both mountaintop areas with poor accessibility. Also Paul, Bokanatomy, Perisse and Pacot filled our week.

Dr. Mike Hladio must have pulled a record amount of teeth (about 40 per day) and Drs. Tom Carmen and Steven Evans with Ellen Reynolds, CRNP and a host of nurses, physical therapist, pharmacy and dental assistants served over 200 patients per day.

We have noticed better general health in the Lacroix area over the years as our focus on clean water, hygiene and medical care through

our permanent and mobile health clinics have been the focus.

The second week, January 25-February 2 I was joined by a team from Pittsburgh's Church of The Covenant and Drs. Tom Tigar and George Jones and a supply of new helpers continued the medical outreach.

Lives were definitely saved by our efforts. I also witnessed many other great efforts both weeks with outreach from the teaching teams and sponsorship teams. Other articles about these efforts will be forthcoming.

Rochelle Paquette joined us from Portland on her first trip back after spending the better part of last year as one of our first long term missionaries. All of her Haitian friends were excited to see her.

The relationship building is also heartwarming as our Haitian brothers and sisters welcome us back to their home often throughout the year.

Traveling to the mission has become a true passion for me and I am so blessed to feel that Lacroix is my home away from home!

Laurie Adams, President Friends of Haiti

The Year in Review---

Friends of Haiti was able to make a difference in the lives of many Haitian Families over 2013. Together, we contributed over 1,200 pounds of rice and beans, purchased 29 animals for sponsored and needy children, purchased much needed text books for the school, and provided an education to 145 children through your donations. We were also able to help with several food distributions to school children and needy families thanks to undesignated donations. We supported clean water projects and provided supplies for construction projects.

Thank you all! We are grateful for your continued faithfulness to the people of Haiti.

Animal Distribution Program—From the Sponsorship Staff in Haiti

We are happy to share some great news about things that are taking place here in the child sponsorship office in Lacroix. Before we begin, the Haiti staff at the Lacroix New Testament mission would like to say a super “thank you” to all of the sponsors for believing in the progress and change taking place here at the mission schools.

The animal distribution project was established within the child sponsorship program to give an extra hand to the children’s families. When a child is issued an animal, they are asked to bring a status report every three months so that we can keep track of how that child’s family is managing their animal. They also agree to give the first offspring back to the sponsorship office so that another child can be blessed with an animal.

Whenever the program benefits from an offspring, Mrs. Pierre and the school superintendent, Altenor Philippe, look to find a needy family, and they issue the offspring to that family.

Families sign a contract saying that they will respect our policy, and they will bring back an offspring to pass along to another child. This way, many families can benefit. We realize that all sponsors may not be able to buy their sponsored child an animal. But with this program many children have the possibility of a blessing.

Sincerely, Edvens (Eddy), Jean Rene (JR) ---Child Sponsorship Office Staff, Haiti

Recipients of the Animal Distribution Program



Vaxon and His Mother with their offspring goat



Guerlandie and her grandmother with the goat received from Vaxon.

Vaxon Alcindor lives with his family in a small village called Decouvert. This year Vaxon is in second grade and loves math. About a year and a half ago, Vaxon obtained a goat.

In January 2014, he and his mother brought in the first offspring from his goat.

The family chosen to receive Vaxon’s offspring goat was Guerlandie Delicieux, from the village of Paul. She is also in second grade and lives with her grandmother, who takes care of her. There are 8 family members living in the Delicieux family.

Guerlandie helps with chores and keeps her grandmother company.

The offspring that Vaxon brought in has blessed Guerlandie’s family. Her family will continue to follow the same policy to help someone else.

Purchase an Animal for a Child

Purchase an animal that will be kept by the family.

The cost of a **Goat** is \$60.00 **Pig** is \$60.00 **Cow** is \$275.00

The first off-spring will be donated back to the mission to bless another child.

I would like to purchase ___ Goat, ___ Pig, ___ Cow (s) for:

My Sponsored Child(ren) _____ **OR** **A Child in Need** _____

Include child's name and T- number

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Return form and check to: Friends of Haiti PO Box 1441 McMurray, PA 15317

Teaching Team Brings Hand Washing Lesson to Mission

Six women participated as the Teaching Team. Some were first time travelers who were not teachers by career, but took on the challenge willingly.

Our focus was to help children understand the value of hand washing, in hopes that they would make a habit of using the hand washing stations that were built at each school.

We taught how germs are spread, by “sneezing” a balloon into the crowd. After it was bounced around we explained that everyone who touched it got our sneeze germs.

We taught a hand washing song in Kreyole that rocked the house as a group of 600 elementary school children sang their hearts out.

We put glitter on our hands, shook hands with high school students and explained that we spread our germs to them from our hands.

I believe our goal was met when I observed children leaving the compost toilet and stopping to use the soap and water at the hand washing station.

Each child was given a bar of soap to take home after their instruction and some received a gallon bag of rice.

Clean water has been a constant concern at the Lacroix New Testament Mission. In the past water has been tested, only to find it is loaded with bacteria.

High School students had the opportunity to look at dirty water under a microscope so that they could understand how water can make them sick.

The installation of compost toilets will add another defense to keeping well water clean. The latrines, which were used in the past, polluted the well water almost as soon as it was purified.

A large bio-sand filter was also installed at the school last year that purifies the drinking water used at the school.

We touched the lives of 3,000 students during our week in Haiti. My hope is that they will continue hand washing and will teach their families as well.

Villagers of Lacoupe received a portion of rice and rat traps during our visit to their school. People were thrilled with the traps because rats not only bring disease but eat their food, bite their children and cause harm to the thatched roofs of homes.

We take so much for granted !

Denise Douglas, Child Sponsorship Coordinator



Top:
Project Phoenix
Site 2013

Right:
Project Phoenix
Site Today



Top Left: Lacoupe's water source for drinking, & washing

Top: People in Lacoupe received rice and rat traps

Right: Hand washing station & 600 children sing a hand washing song



Observations from Haiti Trip 2014---

I am pleased to report that things within the country seemed better than they have since the earthquake. About 2/3 of the tent camps are **gone**. Some beautiful villages are cropping up on the mountains where their used to be emptiness.

US AID built a community that has houses painted in tropical colors to accommodate those that were displaced. We also saw a new community called January 10, 2010---Byen Venu or Welcome. It is great to see the people of Haiti coming back into their own in a big way.

We saw construction of an Olympic Soccer Stadium. It is located in a very poor area. The people in the community were told, if they vacated the land of tents, a soccer stadium would be built so that Haitians as well as visiting teams could play and be trained there. It is called **Project Phoenix**. Haitians love soccer, called football, so this will be a great community gathering place and will offer Haitian players a venue to train or play.

This project is funded by philanthropic donations. To learn more go to project-phoenix.org

Jane Evans Meets Her Sponsored Child

Being the sponsor of a child in Haiti has changed my life forever. Fifteen years ago, I began sponsoring a 3 year old little girl, named Phaguencia. By sending \$20 a month, I helped her better her life by getting an education and a hot meal each day. As the years went by, I received pictures and letters and became emotionally attached to her.

I wanted to meet her but, financially it was just out of my reach at the time. In my letters, I assured her that one day we would meet. It was a goal set for myself.

Well, this was my year. January, 2014 I finally made it to Haiti. I went directly to the office when I got there and set up our meeting. The anticipation of finally meeting her after 15 years was overwhelming. I so hoped that she felt the same way. When she came to the mission and we saw each other for the first time, we both cried. We hugged for a long time and she kissed my cheeks over and over showing me her gratitude for my years of support for her and her family. I suddenly felt a sense of completion. Something I had waited for had finally come!

I brought clothes, shoes, & toiletries as gifts for



Top: Jane Evans and Phaguencia

Bottom: Sponsor George Jones & Djonsley meet for the first time.



her. She can't speak English so we needed a translator. We talked and laughed and I cried to hear how they struggle to survive each day.

I am now committed to helping her and her family as long as I possibly can. After our first day, we met again and spent the entire day together without a translator. It was incredible.

We laughed at how we were communicating without speaking. She taught me to count in Kreyole. And laughed as I spoke and didn't pronounce the words right. I showed her pictures of my children and she called them her sisters. And they are!

Phaguencia has been part of our family for 15 years and will continue to be forever. I truly believe God brought her into our lives! We have loved watching her grow into a beautiful young lady and will continue to support her.

Before I left Haiti, I signed her up for English classes at the mission. She promised me that when I return, she will greet me in English.

I can't tell you the joy and fulfillment that has come from knowing I am changing the life of a struggling child/family.

Jane Evans

Friends of Haiti Child Sponsor

The Child Sponsorship Program connects you with a Haitian school-aged child. Haiti's government does not totally fund education, so families must pay to send their children to school.

For most families this puts education out of their reach. \$20.00 a month gives a child their education, a uniform, a hot meal each day and good Christian role-models.

Most of all, **Child Sponsorship gives children hope for a future through opportunity.** There is a difference in the children that go to school. They smile more, are happy and have a purpose for their life.

If you would like to make a difference in the life of a child, please contact Denise Douglas at 724-941-2737 haitichildsponsor@hotmail.com

Sponsorship donations can be sent monthly \$20.00, quarterly \$60.00 or yearly \$240.00.

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Friends of Haiti is a 501c3 --- Donations are tax deductible according to the law
[Donations can also be made through Paypal at friendsofhaiti.org](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?url=https://www.friendsofhaiti.org)

The official registration and financial information of Friends of HaiTi may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Haiti: A Life Unchanged, A Perspective Transformed—by Alex Franco, a 17 year old from McMurray

To say I was not prepared would be an understatement. I was so unprepared, physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. I had so much going on in my life. I had school, work, friends, and I was just going to leave all of it. I was thoroughly panicked, completely freaked out.

I sat for three hours in a front row seat viewing one of the poorest places on earth. I was immediately hit with hard to handle emotions. **Pain** to see so much poverty. I had more monetary value in my suitcase than many of these people had in their whole lives. **Empathy** I couldn't help but feel for these people. And vitriol **Anger** that my country had so much, and while we argue and complain about boyfriend and girlfriend, Facebook, politics, television and other things, there were fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers not struggling to make a living but just struggling to live.

But in LaCroix, I met people that weren't defined by stuff, weren't valued based on money. They showed me that monetary value is not real value at all. I met beautiful people, in a beautiful place. People beautiful like Jezsumin, smart like Eddie, wise like Pastor Evans, and inspired like Pastor Pierre, who I have grown to love like a second dad. I went to church, and heard a sermon unlike one I have ever heard before, felt God unlike I ever had, and heard and saw people worship, with more passion, more commitment, more humility, and more power than I had ever seen in my life. People who spoke and sang with the Voice of Angels on their lips.

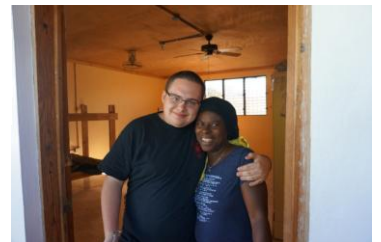
I went to the preschool and the English club. I met amazing kids, who were not worried about learning because of a letter grade, but kids that were engaged in learning because they were changing their own future. I had the blessing of knowing Eddie, who is a great guy, and the privilege of meeting the Bright Morning Star English Club. I was amazed by their faith and passion for learning, for God, for English, and for others.

Eddie asked me teach the class, and I was blessed by the experience, and completely moved by the ability to connect with people that were my age, going through the same stages of life, on a personal and emotional level. One of the girls in the class had a birthday, and Eddie said something on her special day that really stuck with me. He said, "Although we have nothing material to give you, we have something far greater. Our love and our friendship, on this, your special day."

That quote colored my week and my life since. It changed my perspective. My life at home hasn't changed. Same friends, same school, same work, same life. But for the first time, I'm looking at it all through Haitian glasses. Seeing my faith differently, understanding what praying for people means, seeing that learning as not only a means to an end, but a journey in and of itself.

I am learning how to sacrifice. How to spend not only my money, but life's most valuable thing, time, on learning Kreyole so I can better communicate, and help teach in whatever small way I can. I have truly found a love for the Haitian people. And I can't wait to return to a land so beautiful that the French called it... "La Perle des Antilles", The Pearl of the Antilles.

Alex and
Jezsumin



Library Opening at Lacroix School

by Sandy Conley

Paul and I were part of a team that traveled with Westminster Presbyterian Church to the La Croix New Testament Mission in February. One of the projects we tackled was the establishment of a library. Many people were involved in the work for months prior to our trip. The culmination of all the work was the joyous opening of the library on Friday, February 14, 2014.

The library called "Bibliotheque LaCroix" has wooden furniture, bookshelves, circulation desk, tables and benches that were made by volunteer master carpenters and their helpers. Nearly 1000 books were categorized, labeled, and shelved by volunteers and La Croix students. Two large murals were painted and hung in the library. When the library officially opened a crowd of enthusiastic students and teachers examined puzzles and books.

A dedication assembly was held in which all students were invited to celebrate the opening of the new library. School Superintendent, Altenor Philippe told the children they will have class time to visit the library. Two librarians will be hired so that the library can be open after school.

You can see paintings depicting this experience at the McMurray Art League Spring Show at the Galleria, Mt. Lebanon, Lower Level, March 14-23, during regular mall hours. Paintings by Sandy Conley

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Friends of Haiti is a 501c3
non-profit organization

We are on the web at
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The Friends of HaiTi was established in 2008 to support the LaCroix New Testament Mission.

We continue our commitment to work in partnership with the people of Haiti through health care, construction and educational programs that will empower the Haitian people to improve their quality of life, within their culture.

People who have a heart for the plight of the Haitian people operate the Friends of Haiti. We are dedicated volunteers who seek to continue our relationship by offering financial support, education and traveling to serve the mission as well as informing Americans about the many needs of the Haitian people.