



# Friends Sharing

*Reaching out in Love to help  
the people of Haiti*



Spring 2022



*Luann Polissaint*

## *The President's Corner*

Bonjou tout moun! Greetings everyone!

The world, especially the Haitian world, lost a true champion on 21 February 2022 with the death of Dr. Paul Farmer. Dr. Farmer began his love affair with Haiti during his medical school studies. The lengthy list of Dr. Farmer's accomplishments is impressive to say the least. Focused in Haiti, but extending world-wide, he worked tirelessly to improve the lives, especially the health and healthcare for the poorest of the poor. He believed in working side by side with those he served. He emphasized the need to cooperate with others to achieve these goals.

“With rare exceptions, all of your most important achievements on this planet will come from working with others or in a word, partnership.” Dr. Paul Farmer

Partnership. Friends of the People of Haiti has partnered with St. Anne's Parish for 32 years now. We have also partnered with all of you who support FOPH in so many ways. It's a 3-way partnership, and we couldn't accomplish this significant work without our partners. This Partnership works toward a common goal – the belief that we can help improve the lives of the community of Trouin. The FOPH list of accomplishments is impressive in its own way. The SAC program has educated hundreds (if not thousands) of students; our medical missions served the entire community, young and old with necessary health care and our work missions have repaired countless homes. We have just completed *Work Mission 2022*. While we couldn't physically travel again this year, we were still able to partner with you providing your support in finances and prayers with our partners in Haiti – Father, our interpreters, workers and homeowners and the SAC students. Altogether, we achieved our goal of repairing 10 houses, major repairs to 1 chapel and some school improvements. The homeowners, and students win, our workers win, and we win knowing our efforts have helped a small corner of Haiti.

So I take this opportunity to sincerely & deeply thank each of you who have so generously partnered with us, especially through these trying times. Let's take some inspiration from Paul Farmer and continue our purpose through the partnerships of common goals, compassion, awareness and love.

### Friends of the People of Haiti Board of Directors

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### OUR MISSION

Friends of the People of Haiti is a non-profit Christian group established in 1989 in order to broaden our vision of church by building a relationship of prayer and friendship with the people of St. Anne's Parish in Trouin, Haiti. Our focus is to foster awareness of the plight of the Haitian people as well as to share our resources by providing regular financial support to the parish. St. Anne's Parish in Trouin, Haiti was established in 1924 and has one parish church and ten outlying chapels, a primary school and a secondary school.

## FOPH 2022 WORK MISSION

### Summary (Come to our next meeting to learn more)

Our Haitian team interviewed 84 out of 86 SAC students and several more for the waitlist. Thanks to these efforts, updated student information, photos and thank you letters will be forthcoming to the sponsors.



Our Haitian teams repaired:

- 10 houses
- 1 satellite chapel - major repairs including a new roof and cement work on St. Joseph's Chapel (one of the satellite chapels affiliated with St. Anne's Parish)
- Improvements to St. Anne's school

Friends of the People of Haiti provided funds for the building materials, wages for the 3 interpreters, 3 bosses, 12 workers, the cook, housekeeper and driver and the vehicle. Our budget was respected.

Thank you to all who have supported FOPH to reach this goal. Please keep our Haitian brothers and sisters in your prayers for peace, justice, comfort and safety.

Our next meeting will be our Annual Meeting on Monday, March 14th at 7:00 PM at The Butterworth Center, 1105-8th Street, Moline IL. All are welcome to join us!

### SPONSOR A CHILD PROGRAM

Please consider supporting the students of St Anne's School in Trouin by sponsoring a child for only \$160 a year (or \$40 a quarter). Note - this is less than 1 Starbuck's coffee a week. Your donation covers tuition, uniforms and school supplies with a little extra to help the students and their families. We desperately need sponsors! We currently have 18 children on our waiting list. For more information, contact Mary Knepp, at (309) 738-0002 or [mknepp21@gmail.com](mailto:mknepp21@gmail.com).



*Sophanie*



*Noel*



*Melissa*



*Marc Arthur*

Sophanie is 21 years old. She lives in Trouin and is in 12th grade at St. Anne's school. Noel is 8 years old. He lives in Petit Harpon and is in 3rd grade at St Martin's. Melissa is 11 years old. She lives in Bel Aire and is in 2nd grade at St Theresa. Marc Arthur is 21 years old. He lives in Cafe Lompre and is in 13th grade at St Mathias school. Many of our students walk up to 2 hours each way to school just to get an education. Many Haitian children are unable to go to school without someone sponsoring them.

**CANS FOR CANS** - Jean Edmunds is still collecting non-crushed aluminum cans. The money raised from recycling these cans is used for building latrines in Haiti. Please drop off your cans at her home at 1739 - 11th Ave Moline or call (563) 349-1650. Jean raised over \$1,000 last year collecting cans!!!

## REFLECTIONS

### *Reflections from Marlene Shattuck - A Bebe Kind of Day*

Have you ever met someone who makes you forget all your troubles? Someone that makes you laugh, and reminds you that life is giving you beautiful moments. One of our Haitian friends does just that to us for those who know him.

I met Bebe Wilkinson on one of my very first trips to Haiti. I worked alongside him many times. He is one of our workers. He helps us do cement work and roofing work on the Haiti houses, and other construction projects. Bebe is such a hard worker. He is also the sweetest, kindest, most entertaining, funniest, flirtatious, talented, happiest person that I know. I do not know Bebe's real first name. We found out later after having another Bebe work for us, that the word Bebe means deaf mute in Creole.



There is no language barrier with our friend Bebe and us. Even though we do not speak Creole and he does not speak at all, we get along beautifully and understand each other. We learned we can communicate the same way Bebe does. We talk by an unofficial sign language. Bebe language. Hand gestures, and signals. The body talks. You think of all the challenges in life, and how it can prevent people from moving forward and them doing their best. Now think of the many endless challenges while growing up in Haiti. From what I have seen of Bebe, nothing brings this man down. He always delivers a smile.

This man is one of my hardest workers, and at the same time one of the happiest of them. Maybe it is because he doesn't have the noise of this world to interfere with that? This man is smart, creative, and an entrepreneur. He knows how to get by in this world and make the most out of it. He has taken my t-shirts and jeans that I left after mission and tailored them to suit his needs and fit nicely. I couldn't believe how good they looked! I have also seen him take a plain razor and a comb and start barbering. He gave haircuts while we were waiting for more supplies to arrive at the house that we were working on. He also took an old water bottle and made a drinking goblet out of it with duct tape. He is so creative. I am truly amazed by him.

We do not know where Bebe lives, or who his family is. We really don't know much about him. It is the same for many of our workers in Trouin, Haiti. They arrive in the morning to do a full day of work and then they walk home when our work day is over. From what I have observed, Bebe is very loved by the entire community. Everyone knows him and he is a good soul. He has overcome challenges in a different way making the most of his world as we all should. He taps to the music anyway, even when he cannot hear a thing! He just feels the beat as he feels life!

He is a great reminder to us all. We sometimes think that we aren't strong enough, smart enough, or we are struggling with life's issues, going through hard times, or just having a bad day. What ever has got you down, seeing Bebe reminds us to stay positive and just be as happy as we can be. His charm is infectious, as all great attitudes and smiles are. So that is why we now say to each other, "Have a BeBe Kind of Day!"





**Friends of the People of Haiti**  
12570 US Highway 150  
Orion, Illinois 61273



### **Haitian Art with the Figge**

**Sat. April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 3:00 pm**  
**Eastern & Virtual**

**Join the Figge for a talk all about Haitian art. The Figge Art Museum houses one of the world's largest collections of Haitian art outside of Haiti itself. There will be a brief presentation about the basic of Haitian art, followed by a hands-on art activity related to the lesson.**

**Please send donations & Sponsor a Child funds to**  
**FOPH C/O Jack Knepp, Treasurer**  
**110 19th Street #205, Rock Island, IL 61201**

**For those of you who have email, please send us your email address so we can email you our newsletter to reduce our mailing costs. For those of you with no email, we will continue to postal mail. If you wish to be removed from our mailing list please contact [Diane@bluehorizon.net](mailto:Diane@bluehorizon.net) or (309) 526-3499.**

### ***Sister Marilyn in Jacmel***

**If you were fortunate enough to attend our 30th Anniversary celebration of the Friends of the People of Haiti several years ago, you heard Sister Marilyn Minter speak. She is a dynamo!!**

**Mary Knepp told us she had the good fortune of meeting Sister Marilyn on her first trip to Haiti when visiting the Bishop in Jacmel, a city south of Trouin. Sister Marilyn was there and she really impressed us with her plans for their mission .**

**Sister Marilyn is an amazing woman. What she and the 3 other Felician sisters in their mission at Jacmel are accomplishing is truly inspirational. Below are links to interviews with Sr. Marilyn Minter, a member of the Felician Sisters of North America. The interviews are in America Magazine and in EWTN TV .**



**Despite earthquake and political turmoil, a Felician sister says the Haitians remain 'people of hope'.**

**<https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2021/09/13/earthquake-felician-sisters-haiti-humanitarian-response-tropical-storm>**

**Watch "Felician Sisters Haiti Mission: Sr. Marilyn Minter shares her passion for building up the body of Christ" on YouTube.**

**[https://youtu.be/4kgUkYz\\_zqc](https://youtu.be/4kgUkYz_zqc)**