



# Friends Sharing

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



## *The President's Corner*

*Fall 2021*

**Bonjou tout moun! Greeting everyone!**

As I attempt to compose this message, my heart is very heavy for my Haitian family. There are too many questions for which I don't have answers. How can this country possibly endure any more hardships? I don't know. Why do these things continue to compound the struggles of their daily life? I don't know. And most importantly, what can we do to help? I don't know.

*Luann Polissaint*

My feelings ebb and flow between profound sadness, to anger, to helplessness, but have finally come to rest on the eternally optimistic hope. My personal observation is that most Haitians possess a deep wellspring of hope in their souls. I haven't yet concluded if it is part of their DNA, culture or just, at this point in time, the only / last thing they can possess. From the tragedies, traumas, troubles & stress they endure, their last resort response must be hope. For without hope, life loses its meaning.

Luckily, their wellspring of hope is deep enough for me to draw from too. By that I mean that via Face Book, I have witnessed Haitians helping Haitians. Puzzling out how best to get food, water, medicines, supplies, clothes, to their countrymen and women from areas less impacted by the earthquake. It's a complicated and dangerous process, and they can't do it alone. But there's hope.

So by the publication of this newsletter, the FOPH Board will have deliberated and determined our best course of action to help our long suffering friends. While still honoring our commitment to support St. Anne's Parish in Trouin, we cannot ignore the conditions of the earthquake victims. We will do what we can with the guidance of prayer and the Holy Spirit.

Also by the publication date, we will have also gathered strength, peace and hope from our Prayer Service on Sunday 29 August. We will have come together to focus our hearts on healing Haiti and lifting up its people. "Where 2 or 3 are gathered, there am I among you."

So while I continue my quest for answers, I wish you all peace & hope.

**Haiti hugs,  
Luann**

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

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Visit - [www.fophqc.org](http://www.fophqc.org)



### 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.

## SPONSOR A CHILD PROGRAM

We currently have 81 children being sponsored by generous donors to our SAC Program. There are children still waiting. These two boys of our students that are in need of sponsors.

The cost is \$160 for the year (less than a weekly Starbucks coffee) which can be paid yearly or quarterly. That amount covers their tuition, school uniforms, books and supplies with a little extra that helps out the family. Many children, especially in the rural areas, do not go to school until someone sponsors them. To obtain more information, please contact Mary Knepp (309) 738-0002 or email [mknepp21@gmail.com](mailto:mknepp21@gmail.com).



*Wesley is 12 years old & is in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.*



*Kefnie is 14 years old and is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.*



A friendly reminder to those sponsors who aren't current with their payments. Our students in Haiti are counting on us. Thank you to all of our sponsors who have made their payments. It is greatly appreciated. You are making a big difference in the lives of your sponsor children.

*Photo-Mary Knepp & Linda Clewell working on SAC records over morning coffee.*

**Our next meeting will be Monday, September 13th at 7:00 PM at The Butterworth Center, 1105-8th Street, Moline IL. Masks are mandatory! All are welcome to join us!**

## DISASTER STRIKES AGAIN - 2021 EARTHQUAKE



On 14 August 2021 at 8:30 EST, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck the Tiburon Peninsula in the Caribbean nation of Haiti. It had a 10-kilometre-deep (6.2 mi) hypocenter near Petit-Trou-de-Nippes, approximately 150 kilometres (93 mi) P west of the capital, Port-au-Prince. At least 2,200+ people have been confirmed killed and at least 136,800+ buildings were damaged or destroyed. The deadliest earthquake and deadliest natural disaster of 2021, it is the worst disaster to strike Haiti since the 2010 devastating earthquake. The suffering left in the wake of the earthquake was compounded by the heavy rains from Tropical Depression Grace on August 17th, which triggered flooding and mudslides in some localities. All of this

comes on top of the assassination of Haiti's president on July 7th, which has thrown the country into political chaos.

Damage to the region's already fragile infrastructure is making it difficult to access the affected areas, further complicating the response effort. Roads, bridges and other parts of the transportation network have been rendered unusable. In addition, gangs have made security an issue as the possibility of attacks on convoys remains high.



Photos courtesy of NPR

The acute needs as a result of the earthquake only exacerbate the multiple and protracted humanitarian crises that already affected Haiti. The risk of COVID-19 spread remains extremely high & is accompanied by vaccine hesitancy and very slow roll out, especially in rural parts of the country.

Much help is needed for our Haitian brothers and sisters via prayers and relief donations.

**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 by Cleon VanderVennet*

Over thirty years ago as I stood in the presbytery of St. Ann's Parish in Trouin, Haiti, when Father asked, "Will you help us?" Don and I could only tell him we would try to help. We knew we couldn't meet even a fraction of their needs by ourselves.

I knew from the beginning that I wanted to help, to stand with them in solidarity, as a friend, doing what I could, letting them know at least that I cared that things were so hard for them, so desperate. And over the years thanks to so very many kind, charitable people, who have worked together as Friends of the People of Haiti, we have made a difference in the lives of the people in Trouin. And as I look back, I can say, "Yes, we have helped them." We've become friends.



However, there is one thing I never anticipated in those early days, as I saw all the dire needs and deep, deep poverty. I never expected how much the Haitians would actually give me. Over the years they have taught me so much about making the right things in life important; focusing on personal relationships, loving, caring for each other and our planet; being grateful for what you have, no matter how little or how large. They have taught me how to be truly joyful, to notice the simple miracles of every day. And they have shown me deep, deep faith, which sustains them day to day. The Haitians have been a great example to me. I am truly grateful to be called to this mission and to call the Haitians friends.

As I write this, our friends face another tragedy, an earthquake followed by hurricane rains and mud slides. My heart aches for them. Please join me in praying for strength for the people, for aid to reach them. I was moved by this quotation from a recent newspaper article: "Johanne Dorcelly, 58, whose house was destroyed, said, "We only have Jesus now. If it wasn't for Jesus, I wouldn't be able to be here today." Yes, faith sustains them. Let's add our prayers to Johanne's.

## FALL IS HERE - IT'S CHILI TIME AGAIN!



## CURBSIDE CHILI FOR HAITI

**October 1, 2021 4:00 – 7:00PM**  
**CULEMANS HALL 1400 16<sup>th</sup> AVE MOLINE**

## **HELP US HELP THEM**

**Our friends in Haiti are in desperate need.**

Come by and pick up some yummy chili & warm your heart knowing you are helping our friends in Haiti who are counting on you.

Your meal includes your choice of either mild or spicy chili (quart size container), crackers, spoons & 4 cookies for a suggested donation of \$10.00. Payment of credit card or cash upon pick up.



Pre-orders may be placed with any FOPH board member or by emailing Luann at [luann.polissaint@gmail.com](mailto:luann.polissaint@gmail.com). Please indicate mild or spicy on your order.



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

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

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### **PRAYER SERVICE FOR HAITI**

Friends of the People of Haiti and our friends at St. John Vianney Catholic Church, Bettendorf would like to thank everyone who attended our prayer service for Haiti on Sunday, August 29th at Sacred Heart Church, Moline. It was a beautiful service. Dr. Mark Blaser, MD spoke about his medical missions to Haiti. A reception followed in Culman's Hall.

There is so much need for many things in Haiti. We continue on with your help to do what we can for our Haitian brothers and sisters.



Jack Knepp, Dr. Mark Blaser, Luann Polissaint, Shelly Ditzman, Mary Knepp and Linda Clewell.

### **SHOP AMAZON SMILE**

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