



Friends Sharing

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



The President's Corner

Summer 2022

Bonjou tout moun! Greetings everyone!

Summer greetings everyone. The advancement of season from spring to summer has been rapid on this year. Mother Nature is testing our ability to keep up.

The Haitian culture is centered around a multitude of proverbs. These proverbs serve the people well as beacons of life lessons, wisdom, caution, truth and hope onto which they hold and mold their attitudes.

Luann Polissaint One of the most well-known is: “*Dèyè mòn, gen mòn.*” It translates as “Beyond every mountain, there’s another mountain.” As soon as one obstacle is overcome, another looms on the horizon. This is an insightful lesson for many aspects of life for all. The proverb that *Friends of the People of Haiti* have adopted and found of value is: “*Petit petit wazo fe nich li*”. Which translates to: “Little by little the bird makes its nest”. It reflects the 30 years FOPH has been working with the community of St. Anne’s.

This proverb has become one of my personal favorites because it has so many applications. It can represent perseverance, patience, determination, and faith. I have been known to utter the phrase in the workplace when the computer keystrokes don’t cooperate or in a traffic slow down and impatience is rising up. And then I stop and think about the countless everyday trials and tribulations my Haitian friends endure. From the lack of electricity to the danger and risk of kidnapping or gang activity just going to the market or school – if school is even in session due to these serious threats. In this perspective my “problems” fade into nuisances or mere inconveniences.

Another interpretation is more optimistic when, after perseverance, the bird eventually does get the nest built and a hope that the positive end result will ultimately be achieved, just don’t give up. These are just 2 examples of the advice Haitians take to heart. However, it is not just the Haitians who face challenges & difficulties for the basic necessities of life. Many throughout the world face these same global problems and endure the same fate. May we all remember all those in the world who are poor and suffering and whisper a prayer for them to keep working to build their nest.

God bless you all.

Luann

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.

SPONSOR A CHILD PROGRAM

Please consider sponsoring a child so they can go to school. The cost is only \$160 a year (or \$40 a quarter). This is less than 50 cents a day. Your donation covers tuition, uniforms and school supplies plus a little for the family. We have many students waiting for sponsors. Some have had sponsors, but their sponsors for various reasons have had to discontinue their support. We never drop a child from our program. Our group pays for that child's schooling until another sponsor can be found.



Gabriel

Paul

If you or someone you know can sponsor a child, please contact Mary Knepp at 309 738-0002 or mknepp21@gmail.com. You can also contact Linda Clewell at 309 269-2333 or lmclewell@gmail.com.

Here are 2 of our students waiting for a sponsor.

Gabriel Bergmith is 10 years old and is in 1st grade. She walks a half hour to get to school. She wants to be a dressmaker. She has 9 siblings.

Paul Lovenson is 6 years old. He is in 2nd grade. His favorite subject is writing. He wants to be a teacher. He walks an hour and a half to get to school. He has 4 siblings.

**Our next meeting will be on Monday, June 13th at 7:00 PM at The Butterworth Center
1105-8th Street, Moline IL. All are welcome, bring a friend!**

Neal West spreads the word about Friends of the People of Haiti

Recently my wife, Perrine, invited me to a meeting of "Together Women Rise" which supports third world countries, because the country was Haiti.

The organization provided a short video on Haiti, which mainly focused on medical care in the cities. After the video, Maureen Bennett and I were asked to talk about our experience with FOPH and missions trips to Haiti. We talked about our support efforts and work in Trouin. Since Trouin is a small village compared to the cities featured in the video, it was a different perspective. Our talk, while unprepared, was well received and generated several questions.



As it happened there was also a man there who is a member of the local Gyros club. This a group of men who get together regularly for lunch, socializing, and programs on various topics. He asked me if I would be willing to talk about Haiti at one of their meetings. I was able to find a Power Point presentation that I had prepared after our mission trip in 2013 to present.

The presentation included several pictures of our work to improve the living conditions and life in general in Haiti. I told how I was impressed by how happy the people were, even with their limited possessions, and how they were very appreciative of the help that "rich white people" were giving them. Small groups like ours provide personal contact and all the money goes direct to our Parish to help the people compared to the money sent to the government, which is corrupt.

There were 26 men there and again the talk generated lots of questions and discussion. I passed out a few of the Friends of the People of Haiti brochures and copies of the latest newsletter.

Hopefully events like these will help spread the word about Friends of the People of Haiti. If you would like to have one of our speakers present a program for your church, school or organization, please contact Luann at luann.polissaint@gmail.com or phone 919-345-5268.

REFLECTIONS

Reflections from Jean Edmunds - AKA The Crazy Can Lady

Many memories from my trip to Haiti have faded and yet some are very fresh. I traveled to Trouin, Haiti shortly after the devastating earthquake in 2010. I was the "rookie" traveling with experienced companions, Sandy and Bob Madison along with Bob Thornton. Our mission was to connect with our friends in Trouin and to see how FOPH could aid in their recovery.

I was wide-eyed from the moment we landed in Port-Au-Prince. All of my senses were heightened. The ride through the city was a wild one through so much chaos. I remember the smell of devastation, sights of people looking lost, the heat of the day on my skin, the sounds of fearful shouting....even the taste of the air was unsettling. In answering the Gospel Call to serve, I asked myself, "What have I gotten myself into?"



It was late afternoon when we traveled up the mountain to Trouin. We got situated - set up our tents and finally were able to join our hosts, Fr. Julibois and others, for a meal. I had no idea what exactly I was eating but it was a delicious meal, lovingly prepared for us.

The sights & sound in Trouin were much less chaotic than in Port-Au-Prince. Nonetheless, there was a lingering fear of aftershocks. I could see the fear in the eyes and their reluctance to enter any structure even their own homes. Even with this ever-present fear, the village of Trouin was attempting to get back to normal. Children were attending school. Mass was celebrated in a make-shift Chapel because their beloved church building was structurally compromised. The outdoor market was open for business.



Sandy, the Master of Logistics, had a plan for us to survey the damage, plus a plan for us to meet with the FOPH sponsored children. In addition the "2 Bobs and a Bucket" were assigned the task of installing solar panels for the water purification system.

We had two delightful translators / interpreters - Christophe and Rones. They were lifesavers in helping with communication! I was worried about not being able to communicate, but body language - a smile, a hug, a knowing nod - can speak volumes. My four years of taking French in high school came in handy!

Every morning since my return from that trip, I am reminded so much of little things. When I brush my teeth I remember having to use bottled water while in Trouin. I am grateful for the clean running water. I no longer let the water run while brushing! My tooth brushing routine leads me to the memory of a young school girl, Brune Belgarde. She caught my eye - perhaps because of her engaging smile and sparkling eyes. I pray for her daily as her "autograph" is displayed on my dresser. I pray that she is doing well and that her smile and sparkle bring joy to others.



Although I have yet to return to Trouin, I do find ways to help and support our Friends in Haiti. Yep, I'm the "Crazy Can Lady" (as I'm fondly referred to by my family). I'm the one who collects and redeems cans and bottles and donates the money for FOPH's missions. I'm grateful for all those who have left their cans and bottles on my porch. I get excited when they appear! As I'm writing this I just heard the clink of bottles - someone just dropped off a donation!

One last memory....I hold in my heart the generous hospitality and love shown to us by our friends in Trouin - it was and remains to be truly life giving!

Jean Edmunds - "The Crazy Can Lady"



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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

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 or (309) 526-3499.

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So for ALL your shopping this year –remember [Amazon Smile.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile) –Friends of the People of Haiti.

MESI AMPIL!

(That's Haitian Creole for Thank you very much!)

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!!!