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Farsight is dedicated to seeing a need and responding. Our goal is to give a "Hand Up" rather than just a "Hand Out"

Janet Wix is deep in thought. The mountain and the people of Seguin have a way of overwhelming the senses and placing a tight grip around your heart. Janet is probably thinking, "What more can I do?"



I want to begin this letter with a tribute to all the women that have been a part of the Farsight teams. I may not always get them to pose for a photograph as the last group did at left, BUT I want the whole world to know that the work could not be done without them.

Cooking where boiling water is a challenge, doing dishes in boiling water, maintaining 30+ gallons of sterilized, filtered water, providing first aid for the team and any injured person who seeks help, mixing cement, carrying blocks, driving nails, pushing wheelbarrows, negotiating with the local kids for carrying water to camp, building latrines, showers, and bunk beds, taking a census of the 100+ families on the mountain, everyone on the team gets to share in ALL the work to be done.

It is a credit to the women that they go beyond carrying their share of the load by contributing a heart to the team that would be greatly missed if they were not there. I introduce to you the women of Farsight.

Team I - Panama 1992 Team II - Mexico 1994 Team III - Haiti 1996

Cynthia Halstead
 Amanda Halstead
 Carol Bloomfield
 Ginger Bloomfield
 Amber Bloomfield

Cynthia Halstead
 Amanda Halstead
 Melissa Mallee
 Julie James

Cynthia Halstead
 Amanda Halstead
 Marie Sperry

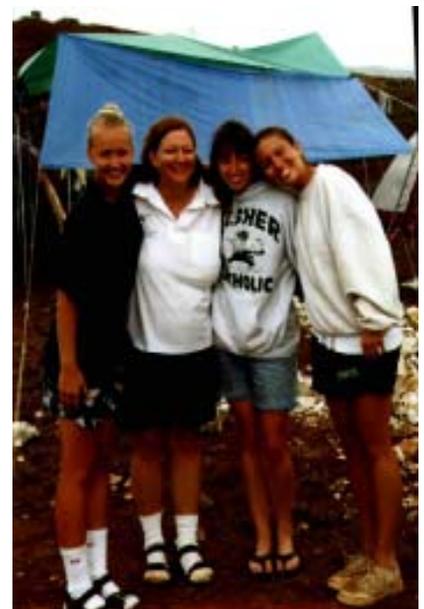
Team IV - Haiti 1997 Team V - Haiti 1997

(Pictured @ right)
 Amanda Halstead
 Cynthia Halstead
 Renee Kroeplin
 Jessica Tomaro

Amanda Halstead
 Emily Baldwin
 Marilyn Athey

Team VI - Haiti 1997

Renee Kroeplin
 Becky Starr
 Nicole Dean



Team 98-1 Haiti 1998 Pictured above (l to r)

Janet Wix, Michelle Christner, Shari Williams, Tara Cox, Heather Hill, Melissa Gilbert.

206 YEARS AGO the Catholic church and the slave owners established that white was good or of God and black was bad or of Satan. Therefore, slaves did not have souls, did not need God, and could be treated like any other piece of livestock. A slave by the name of Boukman called a secret meeting of slaves in a place called Bois-Caiman on August 14, 1791. Since their owners would not share God with them they decided to give themselves to “another god”. They sacrificed a pig, drank its blood and dedicated all of Haiti to their new Voodoo god, Satan. Shortly thereafter the slaves revolted and killed every “white” man, woman, and child on the island. Bois-Caiman, and in particular the tree where the pig was sacrificed, became the high holy place of their Voodoo practices; a place where only the witch doctors could enter; a place where animal sacrifices were made every year on August 14th. **UNTIL** last August 14, 1997. On this date, a thousand Christians came together in Port Au Prince and announced that they were going to Bois-Caiman and take Haiti back from Satan. There were also many Christians who did not join in the six-hour march for fear of the power of the witch doctors and their Voodoo curses. When the Christians arrived at Bois-Caiman the witch doctors hid in fear of the crowd. The Christians entered the Voodoo high holy place and, forming a circle, marched around the holy tree seven times. They sang praises to God, prayed, and held a communion service. Many said they saw and/or felt Satan leave. After the Christians left, the witch doctors returned to offer their annual sacrifices. The victory was confirmed when the witch doctors came to the government and filed a complaint that their holy place had been defiled and **their magic no longer worked**. After some consideration, the government said that all of Haiti is open to all Haitians. Christians now visit Bois-Caiman daily for prayer and communion to keep Satan from coming back. Several witch doctors have been converted to Christianity. They are witnesses to the power of the Most High God!

My first thought when I heard about this was the story of a similar event recorded in Acts 16: 16-19; the fortune-telling slave girl that Paul set free from a demon, making her owners angry over the income they had lost. The next thought was a parable Jesus told in Luke 11:24-26; He told of what happens when an evil spirit is removed but no Godly spirit is put in to take its place. The evil spirit returns with seven friends and moves back in making the final condition worse than the first. My final thought was:

WOW! Have I got a lot to do. . . and fast!

Doors are opening, new opportunities are making themselves known daily. God’s timing, as always, is perfect. I have just spent a year earning the trust and respect of the families on the mountain. While the physical work has been slow and difficult due to the remote, inaccessible location, shortage of material, and limited funding, inter-personal relationships have flourished.

Last month we took a census to get a clear picture of how many people there are connected to the Church. We announced in church on Sunday for everyone to come to the camp on Tuesday to be counted. Sixty families came from as far away as **FOUR HOURS** walk. The average size of a family was **seven** (420 people connected to the church). **Seventy-three children (24%) had not survived early childhood.**

We also held a town meeting in the church building. Forty men took time off from their fields to meet with me and discuss the future of Seguin and their families. Many of the men stood and spoke from their heart concerning life on the mountain. They spoke of a need for clean water that is not an hour’s walk from home. They talked about the need for a medical person closer than the eight hour walk to Jacmel. They said, “Many times when someone gets hurt they die before we can carry them down the mountain for help.” They talked about the need for a short-wave radio in the village for emergencies. They told about buying and planting seeds that did not grow so they missed a planting season, had nothing to sell, and no money to buy more seeds or food for their families. They told about people who had come to the village with great talk and many promises but at a price. When the price was paid, the promise-makers disappeared.

THEN, they said that I and the groups I bring would always be welcome in Seguin because we came asking for nothing, only that we be allowed to work alongside them and try to make things better. They saw in us a Christian spirit and a good heart. They would be honored to work with us to make Seguin a better place for them and their children. How does one respond to a statement like that? I was without words. My mind raced, they needed water, medicine, good seed, and a brother they could trust. Their need is so great! It is exceeded only by the size of their hearts and the power of God! I mentioned doors opening. Was it coincidence that we met Maggie Lea on the airplane and that her dad is connected to USAID? I don’t believe in coincidence anymore. Mr. Lea organized three meetings with key people in the USAID program and me. If I can present a project properly there may be funds available for materials and supplies to accomplish some of what is so desperately needed on the mountain. I am still searching for support for my family so that I can afford to continue devoting a fulltime effort to this work. After a year of this work the real question is “How can I afford not to?” The past year has been a test of our faith and our finances. A combination of Cindy’s new job, friends, family, and church support, our savings, and the equity from our house have kept the family and the work going. I can’t wait to see what great things God has planned for this year as we rely on Him more as our personal funds run out. My son Paul says we need to find people who can afford pizza and people who can afford cable TV. “If everyone on our mailing list would sacrifice the price of a pizza or cable TV each month the work would flourish”.

I have always been fascinated with numbers. Numbers have a way of defining things and showing the details that make up the big picture. The church building - school building - medical clinic - town hall may not look like much more than some farmer's barn. Numbers though, may change the way you look at it and also change what you see:

- >500 Tons of rock, hand carried for fill and footings.
- >1000+ gallons of water, carried in 5-6 gallon buckets from over a mile away.
- >500 miles walked to bring the water to the building site.
- >3000 cement blocks carried by hand, many carried more than a mile, some women carrying 3 at a time.
- >200 bags of cement, each weighing 100 pounds.
- >Men working in their fields from 4-7 a.m. so they can work on the building from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- >Men, women, and children coming as far as a four hour walk to work on the building. Then making the return walk home in the dark. A four hour walk in the mountains is about 16 miles. I, for one, have skipped a church service or work project because a 16-mile **drive** was just too much.

My observations have reminded me of an observation Jesus made while watching an offering being collected at the temple. He saw the "widow's mite" as an offering greater than all the others combined. When I see women and children carrying blocks and water, and hear the cadence of men hoeing their fields in the pre-dawn light, I see God smiling and pleased with their sacrificial offering to HIM.

In all of this I may have found the secret to true happiness. It appears to be experienced best when one has nothing and yet they give their all to the Lord anyway.



Pre-dawn hoeing creates its own music and the movements appear fluid and dance-like as the men till several acres before working on the building.



Sunday, before we poured the rest of the floor, the church was packed on the poured portion. The building always seems to fill to capacity as quickly as we add to it.



For your information, two wheelbarrows, disassembled and duct-taped together make a great suitcase. We now have four wheelbarrows in Seguin. Maxo is driving this one to market to help us carry our charcoal a mile or so back to camp.



Mainstreet Seguin. Smoke billows from the huts where various commodities are being prepared. The open market is behind the photographer and the only way to experience it is to be there.

Team 98-2 May 23-30, 1998

I have an eleven-person team eager to go. Eight are returning team members. Once you have experienced the mountain, it keeps calling you back.

This multi-talented group will be working on several projects at once. There are decorative blocks to be laid in the windows to secure the building, along with doors to be made and hung. Teresa Murphy, a medical student at Nova University will be coordinating a clinic dispensing medicine for ringworm, pink eye, parasites, and skin rashes. We will also have vitamins for the kids and hope to have first-aid kits to give to the women along with instruction on how to use them. We need to collect more information on the families and the school-age children. And finally, we need to meet with the men to collect information for submitting a project proposal to USAID.

This will be our first time on the mountain during the rainy season. Rain is so critical to their survival that we dare not wish or pray for no rain. We do ask you to pray for passable rivers that we must cross without bridges and cabin roofs that don't leak. If all has gone as planned, the cabins will have tin roofs put on them this month. In March they leaked like sieves.

Pictured here are our two luxury cabins complete with eight bunks in each and, thanks to the leaks, a foot-deep carpet of grass. The kitchen facilities are on the left. The stone cross is courtesy of Dennis Grinn from Community Christian Church, Ft. Lauderdale. He is also on the board of directors and is returning on this trip.



Dear friends and family,

My mailing list has been growing these past few months. Many of you are on it because you responded to an appeal letter from a college student or other team member asking for your support. I want to thank you for your support of these young people. They would not be able to experience this life-changing work without you.

If you are receiving this newsletter and wish not to, please send me a note in the attached envelope. I will be visiting several churches in June; Cleveland, TN; Central City, KY; Farwell, MI; Saginaw, MI; Livonia, MI; Virginia Beach, VA. I still have some mid-week dates open and would be happy to present the work to an interested church, mission committee, or group.

Paul will be representing FCM at summer camps and VBS programs all summer.

We would like to start school in Seguin this fall. We need people able to sponsor a child. Our goal is to enroll one child from each family. That child will then pass on the education to others in the family. Clothing, books and materials, and a hot lunch for a dollar a day. It seems like such a small amount compared to the benefits it brings. As of right now, I don't have a single sponsor. I need 50. Go ahead, take on a child for a year. If, at the end of the year, you don't want to continue, I will find another sponsor for that child.

You can count the seeds in an apple, but you can't count the apples in a seed.

Your support, and your prayers become the seeds being planted high on this mountain in the poorest country in the western hemisphere and possibly in the world. We cannot even imagine the great good that will come as a result.

The souls to be saved are countless, and while we are ministering to those souls we will save some lives, relieve some pain, educate some children and help some families to live a little better than they are now. BUT, I can't do it without your help. Please keep this work in your prayers, mention it to your mission committee and Bible school at church, commit a small portion of God's blessings showered upon you and watch your blessings increase. This past year there were five college students unable to raise all of the cost of their trip. Unexpected truck repairs also took its toll on the budget. I have covered these expenses out of personal savings. I will not be able to do that for the trip in May without your support.

If any of you would like a mountain top experience, I am organizing new teams continually and would be happy to send you information so that you can determine if this is something you would want to do.

I also have missionaries in Jamaica and Mexico that would love to have a group come and help them in their work. These places are a bit less adventurous for those of you who may want a mission experience that is a little more civilized.

Thank you for your prayers and support, past, present, and future. May God increase His blessing upon you.

Love in Christ, Levern Halstead