

ERITAJ CHRONICLE

A newsletter for the friends and supporters of Haiti

March/April 2006

Eritaj Foundation, Inc.
*Partnership for
a Better Haiti*

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Association for the Children of Regnier

Maryse Cadet formed the Orphanage of Regnier in 1995 which later became the Association for the Children of Regnier (ACR). The group has successfully recruited the residents of Regnier to help improve the condition of life of the children in the region. One villager gave a piece of land, another offered a room to house an elementary school. The school began in November 1995 in just a room with 24 orphans, one teacher and one cook. Three years later, ACR started its first construction project. Three classes were held under the open shed built and three others in the house.

ACR steadily expands with the unremitting support of its members and today serves 450 children of Regnier and others from the neighboring villages of Ducis, Bezin, Bourgoie, Boval, Carre, Gerard, Gilgeau, Leduck, and Tufet. Despite all this achievement, resources are scarce. Some of the construction projects remain unfinished. With the expansion, the organization's budget, which depended entirely on member donations in the past, is no longer sufficient to sustain operations.

The Association for the Children of Regnier Haiti, Inc. is working fervently to reduce abject poverty in the region. The school provides a daily meal to children and offers adult education and



literacy to their parents. Like various other rural communities in the country, Regnier is facing some serious difficulties. Many children have never attended school because their parents cannot afford the tuition. To make matters worse, neighboring rivers cause frequent flooding during the rainy season, which destroys land and crops and prevents the children from attending school.

Give the gift of education to a child at ACR. Contact the association at: www.childrenofregnier.org; P O Box 1257, Baldwin, NY 11510; Tel: 516 554-4141; 516 652-6024; acr1995@hotmail.com

Regnier is a village in the town of Torbeck, about 30 kilometers from the Cayes, in the south of Haiti. With its dry and sandy plain, Regnier has a population of 12,000. The people lives primarily from agricultural product of their land. The main crops are corn, millet, sweet potatoes and pigeon peas. The area is accessible through an extension of the Torbeck-Ducis, about 4 kilometers away from Ducis.

Gift of Education

Alumni of Haitian schools are encouraged to form student associations to support education in Haiti and to develop a better future for their alma mater.

If you already have a group, send us your news for the *Eritaj Chronicle* at eritajfoundation@msn.com or call 508-620-1424.

Our Churches, Our Strength

Harvest of Haiti

A few years ago, Pat Kut, M.D. and I met a Haitian Pastor in our home town of Port Huron, Michigan. We took him to lunch and he told us of the horrors of Haiti, particularly in the mountains, where no one wants to go. Within two months, Pat and I packed 1000 lbs of medicine and flew to Haiti and took a brutal 12-hour truck drive to Jean Rabel.

We spent three weeks there, saw thousands of people most of whom have never seen a doctor. A couple months later, we took a second trip. After that, we decided to form a non profit called the Harvest of Haiti and increased our trips to five per year. Our primary purpose is to bring medical clinics in the area, to drill water wells and place Bio-Sand filters in every village we come in contact with. As a result of the clean water, cases of diarrhea and other related illnesses have sharply decreased.

We support an orphanage in Anse Rouge and go to Jean Rabel from there by boat. Our support comes from individuals who live in



our town and two churches. We need all the help we can get, every dollar received goes to Haiti. We volunteer and pay our own plane fares. This has become a labor of love for us and there is no stopping now. The forgotten people of the Northern Mountains depend on us and we could never let them down. It is always difficult to leave

Haiti. I would spend time alone for a week, reminiscing of the gentle and loving people of Haiti. The children call me 'Goud man', a name earned for the shiny "gourde" (Haiti currency) I'd give to them. I eagerly look forward to our upcoming trip in March. Pat Moore, Director Harvest of Haiti

Epi sol y la leve Ayiti

Poetry in Creole by E. W. VEDRINE

Se nan w rev mwen te ye
Epi m espante.
Se Kafoufey mwen ta prale
Epi lem rive bo Simitye
Mwen pa w okenn pov k ap mande.
O o, m di: sa k pase?
M di nan kem, pinga jeneral la do
Voye yo an vakans nan peyi
Titanyen
Paske l voye deja anpil pov an
vakans
Nan peyi sa a depi nan komansman
30 Septanm 91.
Anpil moun pa t ka di yon mo
Jeneral ta te tou deja andyable,
Donk, fok ou ta riske vi w pou ta
pwoteste.

M kontinye wout mwen
Lem rive Soudal, mwen pa t menm
Ka rekonet kote m te ye.
M we se nan yon bel site m ye
M pa we okenn ti kay kraze
Okenn pov k ap mande charite
Okenn timoun pye ate ak bokit dlo
Sou tet yo
Okenn chen mouri bo lari
Okenn rigol santi
M met de men nan machwe telman
m
sezi.
Delaetan, mwen desann Premy Avni
M franchi nan Palmis
M pa we okenn kochon k ap kouri
M pa we okenn pil fatra
M pa pran sant okenn santos
M pa pran sant okenn chen mouri

Okenn bagay santi.
M make twa pa
Epi m we m ateri bo lekol Jan
Venntwa
M kontinye desann toudwa
M pa we okenn tyoul blan
Okenn mandyan k ap tann blan
Pou di: 'I am hungry, give me five
cents please'
M franchi nan ri Magazendleta
M pa we okenn ray tren
Mwen we yon mesye ki t ap pase
Mwen di l: eskize m mesye, kote ray
tren yo,
Kisa Askò fe ak yo?
Li di: 'Tibonom nan te vann yo anvan
l pati'
M met de men nan machwe m
telman
m sezi.

MetroWest and Beyond

World Day of Prayer on Friday March 3rd

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service. The origins of World Day of Prayer date back to the 19th century when Christian women of the United States and Canada initiated a variety of cooperative activities in support of women's involvement in mission at home and in other parts of the world. The worship this year was developed by the women of South Africa. The theme for prayers is "Signs of the Times" and especially the devastation wreaked on Africa by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Haitians celebrate Black History Month

The Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts hosted a special "Black History Month Through Haitian Eyes" event on February 20, at Tamboo Restaurant in Brockton. An Honorary Committee

made of Mr. Jacques Borges of the City of Brockton, Dr. Riche Zamor of the Haitian Multi Service Center, Ms. Josette Dubois of the Brockton Public Schools and Dr. Marc Prou of the Africana Studies at U-Mass was joined by members of the Assembly and their guests to present poetry, music and presentations aimed at establishing historical connections between Haitians and Black Americans. Performers included musicians Gifrants, Steve Desrosiers, Kevin Elie; poets from Florida, Prosper Sylvain Jr (Makendal) and "Underscore" of the poetry ensemble Maroons; journalist Marcus Plaisimond; storyteller and speaker Charlot Lucien presenting "Intriguing Connections" Haitians and Black Americans Through History" on Power Point. The event was coordinated by Brockton-based event coordinator Jenny Elie.

Haitian Students Foundation

The Haitian Students Foundation, Inc. a charitable, tax exempt 501(c)(3), is hosting a benefit dinner on Saturday March 25, 2006 in Palm Beach, FL at 7:00 PM at the Presidential Dining Room of Palm

Beach Community College in Lake Worth. Proceeds will fund scholarships for Haitian. Students. For information contact, Ralph Cheriza at 561-703-4921 or 561-689-0143.

Help prepare for Haiti Salon 2007

We invite you to www.haitisalon.com to learn about a two and a half day gathering slated for spring of 2007 at Brooklyn College. We will convene people committed to justice, peace and democracy in Haiti. The intent of Haiti Salon is to foster:

- Dialogue, understanding & tolerance
- Learning & networking
- Democratic practices
- Trust & awareness toward more informed decisions and improved collaboration

Eritaj Foundation is pleased to be a part of this initiative, with Mirlande Butler, Eritaj's Director, serving on Haiti Salon planning committee. Join HaitiSalon listserv www.haitisalon.com and participate in on-line discussions that will shape this event.

Praise for Freedom and Justice, NAACP 12th Annual Gospel Fest

The South Middlesex Branch NAACP will host its 12th Annual Gospel Fest, *Total Praise for Freedom and Justice*, on Saturday, March 25, 2006 at 4:00 PM at The Greater Framingham Community Church (GFCC), Park and Franklin Streets, Framingham, MA 01702. Youth and adult choirs, choruses, dance groups and musicians from throughout the region will participate. Founded in February, 1909, The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its half-million adult and youth members throughout the United States and the world are premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, monitoring equal opportunity and justice in the public and private sectors.

Kom mwen te cho, m pa t ka jwenn dlo
Donk m achte yon fresko
Epi m kontinye mache al Kwabosal
Lem rive, mwen pa we okenn labou,
Okenn salte Mache Anba.
M we se yon gwo mache kouvri,
Bel bagay moden
Mwen pa we okenn mouch k ap vole.
Mi di: si Piram te la, kisa l ta di?
Dat l ap viv nan fredy Nouyok Siti
Jan l ta anvri we mouch.
M pa we okenn boureyte,
Okenn pote k ap pote,
Okenn pov anba galri k ap mande.
Mwen pa tande okenn moun k ap plenyen pou laviche
Souri nan figi tout moun,
Yo fre kou boujon yanm
Ou pa tande pesonn ap pale de

zenglendo
Se komsi tout t al nan Peyi Sanchapo
Men tout kote m pase, we brigad vijilans monte
Pou ranfose sekirite.
Mwen di, Ayiti chanje
Ayiti libere tout bon vre,
Eskanp figi li kanpe,
Zot va respekte pitit Desalin,
Yo p ap kontinye pase nou nan tenten.
Mwen di gen espwa, soley la leve Ayiti.
Mwen espante, m voup mwen reveye!
Epi m w soley la leve.
M di: apa se nan w rev mwen te ye!
(Koleksyon: Kri pou liberasyon)

Smith Community Health Center Reaches Out to the Haitian Community

For over 32 years, the Joseph M. Smith Community Health Center has been providing comprehensive, culturally competent and affordable primary health care services to all individuals and families regardless of circumstance. With two locations, Waltham and Allston, the health center sees over 14,000 patients each year for medical, dental, vision or counseling services.

Research in the Waltham community found prevalent health issues among the Haitian community to include high cardiovascular risk factors such as smoking and being overweight; babies being born at home in Haiti with the aid of midwives who may not be medically trained; and mental health system often not being used due to lack of acceptance or stigma. Additionally, Haitians are often hesitant to access health care services due to their immigrant status.

Major health problems in the Haitian community include high blood pressure, cancer, diabetes and potentially high risk for HIV/AIDS infection. A combination of the highest birthrate and short birth spacing has resulted in poor maternal and child health. Haitian families are in need of reproductive health programs that address pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. Fear of stigmatiza-

tion and lack of family support are major barriers to care as are language differences in learning about and accessing services and undocumented alien status. For those Haitians who are less acculturated, traditional health beliefs may be the source of misconceptions about health and disease process.

To help address some of the health issues prevalent in the local Haitian community, the health center hired a full-time Haitian outreach worker. Shela Desire has been with the Joseph M. Smith Community Health Center since 2004. She is a native of Haiti and speaks French and Creole. Shela works with individuals and families to help them access health care services. She is available to assist uninsured patients in applying for special programs such as Masshealth and the sliding fee program (some programs do not require social security numbers). She also translates for patients during the registration process and their appointment. Shela can also be found at many locations in the Waltham community including the local soup kitchen, food pantry and free clinic educating individuals on



Shela Desire

health care resources available to them through the JMSHC. She also provides free health screenings in Waltham, testing for glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure.

To learn more about services available at the Joseph M. Smith Community Health Center contact Shela Desire at (781) 693-3826 or sdesire@jmschc.org.

Support Eritaj Programs

Adopt a Child

\$120 full adoption; \$60 school tuition; \$30 books & supplies

Femmes en luttres

Helping Hands

Eritaj Chronicle

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