

Special Edition

ERITAJ CHRONICLE

A newsletter for the friends and supporters of Haiti

Haiti: 1804-2004: 200 years of Freedom: A Celebration and Atonement

November/December 2003

Eritaj Foundation
73 Union Avenue
Framingham, MA 01702
508-620-1424
www.eritajfoundation.org
eritajfoundation@msn.com

Light of Haiti

It is a near-blinding light saturating the tarmac, the handrails of the mobile stairway, the people crowded chock-a-block on the observation deck as you descend at first curiously into Haiti.

It is a radiant yet vulnerable, welcoming light on the faces of small children totally unguarded as they approach you, accede to your entreaties to sing, to dance, to recite poetry. They seek only to please.

It is a fresh, breaking light on the spiral crotons, the red hibiscus and the furtive geckos in the morning gardens of Gros Marin. Gently overtaking the sleepy shade from the grape trees protecting the presbytere porch in Cavaillon.

Splashing unavoidable recognition on the ubiquitous breadfruit trees.

It is the light-reflecting faces of women at the tete du source, washing their clothes against the rocks in the noonday sun, and of the chapelle directeur and his animateur son standing tall as they recount their efforts and vision to nourish a hungry community of faith in their quiet village tucked away behind God's back.

It is the lingering light of crepuscule on the gently undulating Caribbean waves, the ancient pastoral hillsides of Flamand, the quiet waters parted almost imperceptibly by a hand-dug-out canoe, and on the community of Islee waving goodbye from a retreating shoreline.

While there is also a darkness of momentary human misunderstanding and our longstanding hemispheric neglect and blind-sightedness regarding this orphaned sister nation, at the end of the day, there are multitudes of stars in fearless witness to the call for justice.

And amid the long night of darkness there is the healing, fastening light of reconciliation, the exhilarating light of praise and re-creation, the constant, unquenchable light of hope.

"There may be some openings now developing in the relationship between the Government of Haiti whereby actions taken in Haiti are responded to with a renewed flow of some of the arrested international funds. This would be positive, and efforts on both sides should be pressed imaginatively to encourage it to happen. Haiti's isolation is enormously harmful, and the international funders are not exclusively to blame for it."

Dr. Jonathan Moore
Former U.S. Ambassador
to the United Nations

Gail Goodridge
Social Justice Committee
St Charles Borromeo Catholic Church
Arlington, Virginia

News from Haiti

Brought to us from Haiti by AlterPresse, Réseau alternatif haïtien d'information du Groupe Medialternatif

❖ **Position de la FONDHABISA à l'occasion de la journée mondiale de l'habitat en Haïti:**

La Fondation Haïtienne pour l'Habitat et l'Intégration des Sans-abri FONDHABISA a commémoré la journée mondiale de l'habitat (6 octobre 2003) sous le thème «l'Eau et l'Assainissement pour les Villes». En dépit des initiatives prises dans le cadre des Objectifs du Millénaire de Développement, a constaté FONDHABISA, la situation de l'eau et de l'assainissement en Haïti est alarmante si ce n'est pas catastrophique. Selon la fondation, 52% de citoyens et 45% de ruraux n'ont pas accès à l'eau potable.

❖ **Sécuriser les activités de pêche dans la zone frontalière sud-est d'Haïti:**

Les pêcheurs de Anses-à-Pitres, Sud-est d'Haïti, dénoncent des abus de la marine dominicaine et demandent au gouvernement haïtien de les encadrer. Selon un rapport du Groupe d'Appui aux Rapatriés et Réfugiés (GARR), 20 pêcheurs haïtiens et dominicains ont été victimes des interventions arbitraires de la marine dominicaine entre août 2002 et juillet 2003, causant des pertes évaluées à plusieurs milliers de dollars en équipements et produits de pêche.

❖ **Société haïtienne, fermée à l'émancipation de la rurale:**

«La société haïtienne ne se montre pas encore prête à accepter l'émancipation des femmes», a déclaré à AlterPresse le Coordonnateur exécutif de l'Association des Paysans de Valeur (APV), Yvon Faustin, à l'occasion

du 15 octobre, journée internationale des femmes rurales. Selon des données officielles, 49 % de la population active haïtienne sont des femmes qui entreprennent des activités agricoles. Dans 26% des cas elles sont chefs de familles mono parentales en milieu rural.

❖ **Lutte contre la faim: de la parole aux actes:**

Le Directeur général du Fonds des Nations unies pour l'Alimentation et l'Agriculture (FAO), Jacques Diouf, dans son message à l'occasion de la Journée mondiale de l'alimentation ce 16 octobre a demandé aux gouvernements d'agir concrètement en matière de lutte contre la faim. Il a rappelé que 840 millions de personnes, dont 800 millions dans les pays en développement, continuent à souffrir chroniquement de la faim.

❖ **Exprimer le refus de la misère en Haïti:**

Pour marquer en Haïti la journée mondiale du refus de la misère (17 octobre), Haïti Quart Monde a réalisé des rassemblements dans plusieurs régions du pays et une

exposition à Port-au-Prince pour exprimer le refus de la misère, a indiqué le responsable de l'association, Jacqueline Plaisir, dans une interview accordée à AlterPresse.

❖ **Haïti face aux Objectifs du Millénaire pour le**

Développement: Le Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD) a commémoré, ce 20 octobre à Pétion-ville (périphérie Est de Port-au-Prince), la Journée Internationale pour l'éradication de la pauvreté sous le thème : « Apport à Haïti du commerce multilatéral et des Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement ». Au cours d'une conférence-débats les économistes Narcisse Fièvre et Vernet Larose ont fait savoir, en substance, que la libéralisation commerciale ne favorise pas automatiquement la croissance économique et le développement humain.



Claude Pierre: Market with Blue Background

New Partnership for Haiti Act of 2003

Editor's note: This Act was introduced by Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA). Sponsors include: Reps. Corrine Brown, Christensen, Conyers, Cummings, Jackson-Lee, Millender-McDonald, Owens, Payne, Thompson, Wexler, Wynn

I believe this legislation will help Haitians overcome the many social, economic, and physical challenges currently before them. The New Partnership for Haiti Act is a comprehensive plan for future engagement between the U.S. and Haitian Government. My legislation partners Haitians and Americans together to execute an environmentally sound approach at rebuilding and developing basic sanitation, water, and health infrastructures in Haiti.

Roads

-The New Partnership for Haiti Act would bring the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to train and educate Haitians on how to rebuild, pave, and maintain roads to provide access to rural and urban areas to health clinics.

Sanitation and water

-Haiti's water quality is life-threatening. A study released in May of 2003 ranking water quality around the world. Haiti ranked last of 147 countries.
-The New Partnership for Haiti Act will avail funds through USAID to partner with Haiti on rebuilding of sanitation, water purification projects, and education for Haitians on how to maintain these programs themselves in the future.

Health and Infrastructure Professional Exchange

-The New Partnership for Haiti Act will start a pilot program for American Health Professionals and Engineers who are interested in going to Haiti and helping with the development process.
-These health care professionals and engineers would be under the supervision of USAID, and qualify for tuition or retirement benefits deferment until they return to the United States.

Haiti needs a new partnership with the United States because

- Only 45% of Haitians have access

to safe water and 28% to sanitation

- 76% of Haiti's children under the age of five are underweight, or suffer from stunting
- 63% of Haitians are undernourished
- 80% of the population lives in abject poverty
- The unemployment rate is estimated to be around 60%
- 90% of all HIV/AIDS cases in the Caribbean are from Haiti
- Haiti's infant mortality rate is 93 deaths per 1,000 live births.
- For every doctor in Haiti, there are only 10,000 people

We worked together to get the humanitarian loans, which had been held up by the InterAmerican Development Bank released on May 9, 2003; let's now move forward and partner with Haiti to execute much needed programs, build up infrastructure, and bring 8.3 million Haitians out of abject poverty.

*Aysha House
Office of Congresswoman
Barbara Lee (D-CA)
1724 Longworth House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-2661*



Wilbert Laurent: Sugar Cane Cutters

We are currently accepting quotes, reflections, short articles about Haiti through June 2004 for the Eritaj Chronicle, a newsletter for the friends and supporters of Haiti.

They will be featured in four special editions of our bimonthly publication. Email your reflections, quotes and short articles preferably on the 3rd weeks of December, February and April at eritajfoundation@msn.com. Please use Freedom, Justice, Democracy, Development as main themes for your writings.

Thank you to all contributors to this publication. Artworks contributed by Haitian Art Today www.haitianarttoday.org

Quotes and reflections

Haiti: 1804-2004: 200 years of Freedom

❖ “The plight of the people of Haiti has now been brought to the attention of the international community. As a person living with HIV/AIDS in Africa, I am urging communities, leadership and government departments in Haiti to seize this opportunity to make significant changes in the lives of the ordinary citizens affected with HIV/AIDS.”

Milly Katana, Advocacy Officer
Health Rights Action Group
Kampala, Uganda

❖ “Pa mande sa kreyòl ka fè pou ou, men mande pito sa w ka fè pou kreyòl”

“Tout sa n ap fè pou Ayiti cheri, nou dwe fè l tèt kalte”

Emmanuel W. Védrine, Author
An Annotated Bibliography on
Haitian Creole: A review of publications from colonial times to 2000
700 pages; Publisher & Distributor:
Educa Vision 7550 NW 47th Ave. ;
Coconut Creek, FL. 33073;
www.educavision.com

❖ What Haiti needs first is Peace and Harmony. The people of Haiti have suffered too much...

Yanick Garnier
Eritaj Volunteer

❖ My wishes for Haiti:
Haiti Cherie, Bonne Fete!
It won't be long before you change the course of things and become an abundantly prosperous nation.

Tout vwazin va sezi, le figi ou vin'n bel!

Patrick Lacroix, Pitit ou
Artist, Dancer & Choreographer

❖ There seems to be a lot of activity around celebrating the independence bicentennial, but with little or no direct benefit to Haiti.

That seems like an unforgivable waste of time, money and emotional energy. A living symbol is not the same thing as a living nation.

Stuart Leiderman
The Environmental
Response

❖ The founders of For Haiti with Love have been working in the North of Haiti for over 35 years. As we watch the country change, it is only for the worse. We encourage people to help directly to feed and provide medical care to the poorest of the poor.

For Haiti with Love, Inc.
www.forhaitiwithlove.org

❖ For Haiti, I wish economic recovery spurred by cancellation of all debt and resulting peace which will follow.

For the people, may they work together as one nation in a spirit of love, forgiveness, and joy and show us how it is done.

Lovingly and prayerfully,
Dominica Lo Bianco, OSF
Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia
Our religious congregation has been involved with Haiti in a variety of ways. We have some sisters working here in the states with Haitian people who have migrated here. Also a team of our sisters has gone to Haiti nearly every year for the past six years. They check eyes and give glasses and other support.
www.osfphila.org



F. Pierre: Rara

❖ “Les tous petits deviennent un jour les pilliers de la société. Il faut les soigner, les nourrir et les voir grandir en sagesse, en physique et en intelligence.”

Madame Milca Rouzard née Coq,
Presidente

La Providence, Chaumont, France
providencehaiti2003@yahoo.fr
La Providence est une association à but non lucratif créée en France cette année et dont le siège social est au 10 rue du docteur Calmette 52000, Chaumont. Cette association recherche des fonds pour ouvrir une pension pour enfants et un dispensaire aux Gonaïves. US contacts: J. Du Chatelier(954) 964-4520 minou125fr@yahoo.fr E. Jeune (407) 996-7881 emmajeune@yahoo.com

Continued on next page

Quotes and reflections

Continued from previous page

❖ A new phenomenon has emerged as an increasing number of Haitian organizations initiated a movement to harness Haitian human capital in the U.S. toward sustainable development in Haiti. They are actively seeking a broader relationship - in fact, a true partnership with the motherland. The initiative is gaining considerable momentum and the challenge for the Haitian Diaspora is to capitalize on its sound human capital in a concerted effort to urgently build or strengthen Haiti depleted human resources.

The overall task of the Haitian Diaspora is not only to stimulate and facilitate brain exchange, but also to encourage structural reforms to foster an environment of open-

ness, efficiency, competition and innovation. The strategic thrusts designed to achieve these goals specifically include the recognition of the need for institutional reform call for by the Minister of Health and Population in his opening remarks at the recent Haitian Health Sector Summit in June 2003. Health professionals need challenges where they can apply their skills. Priority must therefore, be given to stimulate jobs and research which are relevant for people returning from abroad, but always in connection with local conditions and needs. These challenges can only be met, therefore, if there is a strong commitment of all stakeholders. The GOH in collaboration with the Haitian Diaspora can establish networks of skilled expatriates and



Photography: Martin Berinstein

Duval Lochard: The Two

offering them inducements, encouraging them back to Haiti to take part in regular networking sessions.

(Excerpted: Read full article at www.eritajfoundation.org)

Paultre P. Desrosiers, MD, MPH, Ph.D.

Metrowest and Beyond

❖ The Haitian Studies Association at UMass, Haitian-Americans United Inc. Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts present: Charlot Lucien, A Special CD Release “Ti Cyprien, Doktè Ya Bezwen”: the Haitian story telling tradition at its best in Boston. Saturday December 13, 6:30-9:30PM Boston Arts Academy; 174 Ipswich St, Boston MA; (behind Fenway Park). Performances by acclaimed Haitian artists: Gifrants, Ninon, Patrick Lacroix, & Marc Mathelier (from New York). Hosts: Martine Pierre & Dr. Ludovic Comeau Jr, (from Chicago). Special Haitian regional treats include Tomtom and Labapen! CDs (copy \$12) will be signed by author. A free event and free parking! Info: 617-462-6733 or 617-276-3174

❖ Grassroot Coalition to Support Haiti meets in Milton, Massachusetts every last Friday of the month. We invite all individuals and groups who have programs in Haiti work-

ing in the areas of health, education, agriculture, development and relief to join. Come to share your project with others who are experiencing the same victories, struggles and commitment. Bring friends and materials about your program, find out how you can find support for your project. Call our office (508) 620-1424 for more information.

❖ Revolution|revolisyon|revolution 1804 - 2004: An Artistic Com-

memoration of the Haitian Revolution (Liv Lakay Pub. Co.). It is an anthology of poetry and visual art on the Haitian revolution in English, French and Kreyol. Over 35 artists involved, including Boston artists Charlot Lucien, Tontongi, Emmanuel Vedrine, Patrick Sylvain and Danielle Legros Georges. Introductions by Edwidge Danticat, Max Manigat and Cauvin Paul. Ella Turenne, Author, visual artist, performer www.blackwomyn.com

Christmas For Me: 3rd Annual Drive

Act now to say Merry Christmas to a child of Haiti!

It's that time of the year again! Many poor children in Haiti don't know what a toy looks like. Friends in the Metrowest community and in Ashland have helped to brighten Christmas day for children by contributing in-kind donations.

This year, you have a chance to join by making a tax deductible donation. We conveniently accept credit card to speed up the process. We hope to purchase most of the toys in Haiti to minimize the burden of shipping.

Call (508)620-1424 today to take part in the Christmas Drive.



Eritaj Foundation Inc.

Eritaj Foundation was established in the United States in 1999 to support projects in Haiti at the grass-root levels. It offers promotional, technical, in kind and financial assistance to help strengthen Haiti's precarious non-profit organizations. Our partners provide services in the areas of education and literacy, health care and disease prevention, relief, agriculture and development. Eritaj is entirely run by volunteers.

Programs

Femmes en Lutttes

(Women's Struggles) A microloan project for poor mothers. Eritaj makes small grants (\$500) to existing projects to implement the project. The women receive a small loan, average \$US 65 to carry craft-like activities like retailing, micro farming of hens and selling of their eggs. The loan incurred no interest but must be repaid in a 5 month-period. The women participate weekly in a support group activity for mutual sharing and support.

Gift of Education

- The Adopt A Child program exists with the specific support of donors.
- The James & Diana Thomson Education Fund provides scholarships to disadvantaged children in Haiti.

Poverty Reduction Series

Eritaj provides organizational structure, help in seeking funding while artists oversee all aspects of the recording, production and promotion of the CD produced. First project with American Jazz musician, Willie Sordillo, *Echoing*, is available with a donation to Eritaj.

Helping Hands

We carry annual drives of medical supplies, electronic equipments, non-perishable food and other goods for our partners. The Framingham *Tab* featured "The Joys of Giving (12/18/01)" among other articles about Eritaj's work in the Metrowest community.

Volunteer Program

Eritaj recruits volunteers to provide hands-on services in community organizations in Haiti. We have a database of organizations to place volunteers into. Volunteers from Switzerland and Ireland helped run Summer programs last year in Haiti..

Publications

Eritaj Chronicle, a newsletter for the friends and supporters of Haiti, is published 6 times a year. In addition to serving as a communication tool, it features the work of non-profit organizations in Haiti.

Grassroots Fund (\$250 to start)

Eritaj Foundation provides permanent, professional management of charitable funds without the expense and struggle of establishing a private foundation.

Grassroots Coalition to Support Haiti

Eritaj partners with service organizations that provide assistance in the areas of health care education, relief and development in Haiti.

Support Eritaj Programs

Adopt a Child

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

Femmes en lutttes

Helping Hands

Eritaj Chronicle

Method of payment:

1. Check or money order (to Eritaj Foundation, Inc.)
2. Credit card: Visa
MasterCard

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip_____

Phone_____ E-mail_____

Eritaj Foundation
P.O. Box 894
Framingham, MA 01701

**Non-Profit
Organization
Postage PAID
Permit No. 235
Framingham,
MASS**