



SAO Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2

Where There Is No Vision, The People Perish!

September 2005

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Mission Statement

Sonje Ayiti Organization, Inc. (SAO) is an Atlanta-metro based nonprofit organization, whose purpose is to empower the lives of families living on the Caribbean island of Haiti & the immigrant-refugees living in the United States. SAO seeks to educate, feed, clothe, and provide medical assistance to those in need throughout Haiti in an effort to reverse community, cultural, and economic deterioration. In addition, SAO strives to assist the immigrants-refugees living the United States develop working skills to become self-sufficient and contributive members of society.



Students in school in Gros Sable.



Primary school in Grande Source.



The only medical equipment in the clinic of Porrier.

Site-visit to the Northwestern tip of Haiti

On July 14, 2005, in the midst of turmoil, we traveled to Haiti to complete our weeklong assessment. From July 15th – 21st, we visited the seven (7) rural sections of Jean Rabel - Lacoma, Guinodeé, La Réserve, La Montagne, Dessources, Grande Source and Dion Dion.

Among the many areas that were assessed, education was one of the top priorities. Many of the primary schools barely had a structure, were overcrowded, lacked teaching materials/equipment, and were understaffed. For example, in Porrier, the teacher: student ration is 2:115. Sadly, we also met many teenage youths who have never entered a classroom.

As far as health, there is only one hospital and two clinics for a population of 139,000, where one of the clinics is not even equipped (see photo to the left). Moreover, the physician to patient ratio is 3:139,000.

Many individuals made this site-visit possible: our driver, Ricot Philor, the local foundation-Foundasyon Grann Lison, Caroline Benoit, Jose Vincent, Rochenel Alexandre, Maxo Rousseau, Marc Orel Dévilma, Finance Marc Hilaire, and those who believe in our cause. May the Lord bless you abundantly! **Together we will make a difference.**

Gabrielle Vincent, President



Primary School in Porrier.

Sponsor a School or Make a Donation Today!

Announcement

On September 9th, 2005, Sonje Ayiti (SAO) and Haiti Je Me Souviens (HJMS) came together to discuss collaboration efforts. SAO and HJMS decided to split Haiti into two parts, where SAO would work in the northern region of Haiti and HJMS would work in the southern region. This collaboration is dynamic because (i) all projects would be implemented in both regions, making the efforts to improve Haiti more efficient and timely and (ii) more areas of Haiti can be reached. For individuals and/or organizations who would like to be involved in this collaboration, please contact SAO at the address below or HJMS at 105 NE 3rd St Hallandale, FL 33009 or Tel. (754) 204-0580.

Réné, the blind man.



A Blind Man Seeing Clearly

To many, vision is rested in the confined space of the eyes, to some it is the distinct ability to visualize and dream of a desired situation, but to others it is a mere reflection of life, reality, and the struggle for survival. Deep in the country sides of Jean-Rabel, far away from the lighted street of Port-au-Prince, across the many dried rivers of the far-west, longs the shining and brilliant light of a heart and a soul that refuses to surrender to the violent force of nature and the cruel tenacity of darkness. Though, never seen nor exposed to the luminous sight of our modern society, René, a man enslaved by blindness since his early age, has managed to enjoy the full beauty of the river in the most majestic way than most of us with full vision could ever dream of. Limited by his lost of sight and the harshness of a poverty-stricken region, life had offered him two simple options: to give up or to see through his blindness. "The latter was obviously my choice," explained an enthusiastic René. Every morning the kids of the neighborhood would follow one another from the river in formation style, each carrying a small bucket full of small stones, following religiously the golden rule of "oldest carries the biggest". The children, enjoying a fulfilling morning since they can not afford to attend school, would not stop, until the old man pleaded for mercy after realizing by a hand touch that his barrels were already full. In his little hut, the gifted artist would carve from dusk to dawn until every little unshaped piece of stone is turned into a piece of art. These carefully crafted pieces of stone would be transported and sold for nearly pennies and become the cornerstones of marvelous architectures erected by the "better-offs" throughout the republic. These unique pieces have become the signature of architects that Mr. René never shakes hands with, and have become the unique features of palaces that he will never step feet in. In spite of all, Mr. René, finds the greatest satisfaction of just being alive and healthy enough to contribute to a world that has been so cruel, uncompassionate, and unfair to him. For René, there is greater joy in giving than in receiving. For 60 years, Mr. René has been savoring the ultimate satisfaction of the soul by giving to Haiti (us), to humanity, and to life the best of his ability, his art. As I reflect on Mr. René passion and dedication, I can't help to think that maybe it's time for me and you to share his joy and savor that indescribable satisfaction by giving Mr. René a new source of vision, a new dream and a new reality. One in which his family and his children can eat a meal, wear a pair of shoes, and maybe a humble house that can showcase one of his piece stone.

James Marcus

What Can You Do to Help?

There are many ways to show that we are ambassadors of Christ and living examples of His transforming power. For pennies a day, you can help a child learn to read and write and/or master a trade. For dollars a day, you can help a family regain hope, build a school and even improve an entire community/village. Open your hearts and pockets, and support our projects today.

Sponsor-a-Child → \$50/annually per child, covers tuition, food, school supplies, and uniforms.

Sponsor-a-School → \$3,000-\$5,000/annually per school, covers teachers' salaries, school equipments, and teaching materials.

Make a Monthly Pledge → For example, .80 cents a day = \$25/month. Funds will go towards the purchase of goats, cows, chickens, seeds, agricultural tools, and building supplies.

Purchase a SAO t-shirt for \$15. All proceeds go towards all educational projects.

We are also in the need of the following items. Remember all material donations must be in good and useable condition.

School and Medical Equipments
Construction Materials/Equipments
Agricultural Equipments: Plows, Hoes, Picks, etc.
Fishing Tools: hooks, nets, fishing poles, etc.

Thank You !!!

*Dr. Eustache Jean-Louis
Dr. Lhérisson Domond
Théodore Michel
Maria Bénitez
Stephenson High School
Bistro Créole
Rosie Home Beauty
Phenomenal Auto Repair
National Association for the
Prevention of Starvation
(NAPS)
Mary Mitchell (MOM)
United Nations-Atlanta Chpt.
Ed Arnold
Harmony of the Divine Light
Emmanuel Church
Bon Samaritan Haitian
Alliance Church
Eben-Ezer Baptist Church
Jerusalem SDA Church
Open Bible Church*

Checks or money orders
can be mailed to:

SAO

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