



# HAITI LUTHERAN MISSION SOCIETY

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## Summer 2014 Newsletter

**Haiti Progress:** Is there any progress in Haiti is a question often asked of us and John Hall @ Trinity / Hope. John recently wrote “ while driving to the schools we see that the electric grid is rapidly expanding, major roadways between some cities are improved, and drainage ditches are being installed.” The UN has helped to facilitate these improvements out of necessity so they could move their own assets across the country while keeping the peace. They have also been credited with pushing the gangs to fewer locations. This has decreased violence, kidnapping, and robberies. It appears that this government is more honest and less inept than previous regimes. It is now working with organizations like the Clinton Foundation to improve conditions for some people.

(Editors note: the Globe and Mail reported last month that Haiti has slipped 16 countries down the world corruption list in the last two years.)

John further reports that since 1999 1.5 million people have converted from Voodoo to Christianity in a country of 9 million. It should be said that the earthquake had a great effect to this end. Trinity / Hope is finding it a struggle to cope with the high food costs which are averaging 10 to 15% more than 2 years ago. Hopefully the new crop will turn that problem around. Our goal is to feed the children physically and spiritually each day. When we ask them if they believe in Christ, 90 to 95% of them say “ Oui ! ”

Trinity / Hope school feeding program serves 17, 500 meals every school day @ 27 cents US.

### Excerpts from a letter from Pastor Benoit just before Easter.

The LCH is pleased to share with you the Good News that both our TV and FM radio ministries are back on the air with full power. John Gebuhr from Omaha, Neb. Has been doing an excellent job fixing everything up. (Editors note : they are currently using a generator but it is expensive to run).

As we approach Easter, there is a great need for the Gospel to be preached in its purity. In order to reach the Voodoo people who believe that Jesus died on Good Friday but did not rise again, and have a huge celebration to that end.



*Pastor Benoit on the drums*

The LCH is preparing to launch a counterattack to show the Voodoo people that with his resurrection 3 days later we have cause to celebrate on Easter morning and that he did not stay in the tomb, but was raised from the dead and is exalted so that heaven is again open to humankind. These intensive programs will be done with the aid of former Voodoo priests and will be broadcast on both TV and FM stations. I expect lots of conversion all over the country as these former Voodoo priests will unite their efforts to tell the Good News of the Gospel. This has been a very powerful tool in the past.

The LCH plans to plant six more Churches this month of July. We have plans to target 6 big Voodoo areas to establish these Churches. Please pray for the light of the Gospel to shine in these dark places. A group of evangelists from California will help in the process of planting these Churches. Both our TV and FM stations will broadcast these crusades live, so these crusades will be watched all over the country. (editors note: In actual fact 4 new Churches were formed early in July by the evangelism team.)

There is a plan to set up a Sewing Centre for learning and personal use in the city of Gonaives. There is a house for sale near Faith L.C. which would be ideal for the school, but with a price tag of US \$70,000.00 that is still in the wishful thinking stage. We consider a loan the best way to approach this idea.

The National Committee would also like to start up a concrete producing plant. The need is urgent and would save lives in the event of a hurricane or earthquake. They did not realize it but by using surface spring water they were actually infusing the cement with a slight saline solution. This in turn would rust out the rebar much quicker than normal. So there are thousands of these roofs all

over the country. Even the roof of the Seminary building is suffering the same problem and is leaking as a result. Dido for Pastor Benoit's house. Such a setup will be very expensive and take quite some training but the most immediate problem is that the rock crusher is out of order at the quarry.

They have located new bearings in the Dominican Rep. and Jamaica. Hopefully repairs will be done by the end of Aug. With a constant source of sand and gravel, perhaps then we can think about concrete again. I, Howard have not seen a whiff of misappropriation of funds to date, but to guard against any greed on their part the board has pushed for them to open a separate bank account for the reception of our funds. Pastor Benoit writes: "Finally a new bank account has been opened by the LCH National Committee ( for some reason it is not easy to have two bank accounts in one name in Haiti). This account will be used solely for funds originating from Canada (HLMS). This will make reporting much easier. I thank Mac Sherman for the idea."



*Hardware Street Vendor, part of the Micro loan program.*

## 17th CONTAINER

On May 9th we packed our 17th container with 2800 cubic feet of goods. Besides the regular lot of clothing, shoes, bedding, kitchen items, and sewing supplies etc., of special note on board were 197 chairs. These are like gold what with the rampant growth in Churches and lack of furniture, generally. Pictured here is one stack of chairs with clothes jammed in between each chair.



A special thanks goes out to a Catholic group of ladies in Welland who sewed some 300 little girl dresses for inclusion in the load. Some children's clothes in Haiti are more expensive than adults clothing. We also did a favour for a Catholic group called KAMI.

On board is an oil press on their behalf (less than 1% of load) to press oil out of seeds from the Jatropha trees which they have planted in the north. The oil is usable in a burner made there much like burning French fry oil in a diesel motor.

This is one small step to limit usage of charcoal for cooking. Revenel was excited to hear about this venture. 200 Creole New Testaments were also packed in. It is hoped that the container gets released before the Evangelism team arrives in July. 10 huge truck tires donated by Lorne Koch in London rounded out a very valuable load. Late in June Pastor Benoit met with a Catholic group called Food for the Poor.



They have better contacts with the government and have offered to handle any containers through them. We were able to effect a name change on the documents and the latest news is that the release of the container is set for Wed. July 30. The reason for the change is that the government has been changing the rules and trying to get money for humanitarian loads where none existed before.

## SHORT NEWS ITEMS

**Tax Savings!** HLMS has opened an account able to receive donations of stocks, bonds, or mutual funds. The advantage is that you can save tax on the gain and also get a tax receipt for your donation. Our Society has set up an account at RBC Dominion Securities in St.Catharines. To donate just call 905 988-5883 or 905 988-5882. Any questions can also be directed to Wally Bogusat, our chairman at 905 468-2595.

**Aseline Voiccy** is a young married girl from Pastor Benoit's congregation who is also head of music on the National Committee. She has a huge voice within a very petite frame. She entered a Nation - wide contest by a cell phone company with the first prize being an all expense music tour to N.A. and England, plus cash. She won second prize and for her efforts received \$40,000.00 Haitian ( about \$5,000.00 US ) which will now allow her to go to university.

**Diesel Motor** from a truck which we included in our container last fall has been installed into a Mobile Medical Bus and is running great.

**Water Bottles:** We acquired a large source of water bottles recently. Not wanting to ship air the board has decided to purchase bags of rice and fill the empty voids with the rice and creole bible verse.

**Biosand Water Filters:** The board sent \$2,000.00 earlier this year for 10 filters. There are still some areas in the North West where there is still a cholera problem and Pastor Benoit made the request. City people prefer the bottled water for its taste but the need for filters still remains out in the country.

**Radio/TV Station:** is operating 8 hours per day from 4 to midnight. John Gebuhr from Omaha, along with another electrician spent two weeks

there last month fixing equipment and training the staff to run some new equipment.

**Guest House:** continues to be such a great blessing in the words of Pastor Benoit. Individuals need only pay \$55.00 per day for full room and board. With a new stove, used cupboards, mattresses, and other helpful items sent in our containers it is now quite functional. Situated on the East side of Gonaives next to farms means that it is very safe to stay there. We wander out many times without any fear.

## HYDRO LINE

Progress, while slow is being made on the hydro installation up to the TV tower. Much has been written about the savings of hydro versus diesel fuel. All the poles are up and the government has furnished one of 3 wires in order that they can extend the hydro to a village just beyond the TV tower site. By the time this is published there will likely be only the transformers to install. This project is fully funded with the lion share coming from a single donor in Canada. Further funding also came from Church of the Master in Omaha, Neb.



*Hot Dog Vendo, part of the  
Micro loan program.*

## New JUBILEE Church

May 5th saw the dedication of the new Church in Jubilee. Jubilee is the slum area down at the dock area of Gonaives. In attendance was a large contingent from the Florida/ Georgia district. This mission is only two years old and making huge inroads in a distinctly Voodoo area. This is also very special for the HLMS.

We spent near \$10,000.00 to produce our DVD, of which copies are available free. Mission Haiti in Florida was given copies and a couple upon viewing this DVD decided to fund a new structure for Our Savior L.C. in Jubilee, by donating \$8,000.00. HLMS had given \$1,100.00 in order to kick start the new Building.



*Worshippers at the newly built and dedicated church in Jubilee during a recent service. Florida-Georgia District team members of President Greg Walton, Executive Director of Outreach Doug Kallesen and Executive Director of Finance/LCEF Vice President Dan Reichard participated in the service during their recent visit to the island nation.*

## GIRLS ORPHANAGE DEDICATION

Shown here are the first residents of the girls' orphanage with director Mademoiselle Weslande (back row). All these girls are from the Jubilee area and have suffered extreme hunger and abuse. Wed. April 30 was their first night in their new home. They are now safe, getting medical care, enjoying 3 meals a day and looking forward to attending school.



*Florida-Georgia District President Greg Walton and District Exe-xutives Dough Kallesen, Mark Brink and Dan Reichard visited the newly opened girls home in Gonaives with Misson: Haiti Executive Director Helen Roenfeldt. After living in the facility for just two days, these former street girls said they never want to leave: they are receiving three meals a day and clothing, have a safe place to sleep and will start school in the fall.*

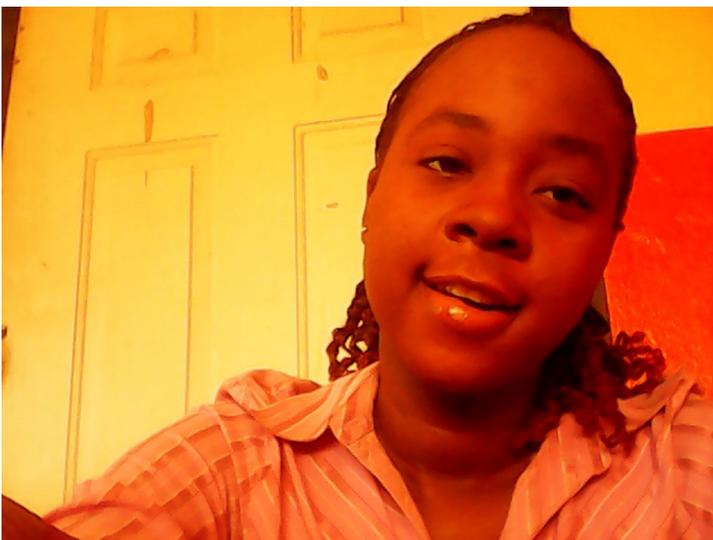


*Shown here are the first residents of the LCH's Girls' Orphanage with Director Mademoiselle Weslande in May. All the girls are from the street girls of Jubilee and have suffered extreme hunger and abuse. They are now safe, getting medical care, enjoying three meals a day and looking forward to starting school.*

**Rose Myrtha Augustin** is one blessed girl. A wonderful couple here in Canada, LCC members, have committed to 4 years of support to put Rose through Medical School in order to become a paediatrician. Rose is an orphan girl who is currently living with her aunt in Gonaives. Thank you to Pastor Benoit for setting this up. He reports: " I have had 3 meetings with Rose in which she made a commitment to stay in Haiti after her studies and will serve the needs of the LCH medical clinics.

She is a member of Faith L.C. in Gonaives and will attend university in Port-au-Prince. She is 23 years old and has completed her college courses. This will require 4 years of schooling and one year as an intern. Her courses begin in October." Rose asked the couple to see her as their Haitian far away adopted daughter and she will see them as her Canadian adopted parents. What a marvelous gesture indeed!

However, this will not cover all her costs. They have committed to pay for her university fees and books which amount to \$1900.00, but Rose will need a further \$3,500 for housing, food, and other sundries. **Are there other people who might take up part of the challenge in order to see to this girls education?** Keep in mind that it would be a commitment for X number of dollars for 4 years running.



## Pastoral Support

For the last few years our Society had weaned the Haiti Church off a monthly support for Pastors. The quarry and in particular the rock crusher have been the main funding resource for the LCH. However with the crusher temporarily out of order their income has been much reduced.

Our Society responded by sending down US \$10,000.00 in May. The shortage is further exacerbated by the tremendous growth of the LCH which dilutes the amount of money available to all the Churches. It's a nice problem to have some would say. Geologists have affirmed the presence of white marble in the lower corner of the quarry. It is hoped that they may be able to reap the benefit of that resource in the future.

**Seminary Roof:** Pastor Benoit has notified us of the urgency to get the roof fixed before classes in the fall. At our next meeting the board will address this request.

## GIVING CATEGORIES

### GENERAL FUND

- Which covers the shipping of containers and any discretionary decisions of the board.

### SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM

- Around 27 cents per meal

### ROSE MYRTHA AUGUSTINE EDUCATION FUND

- For housing, food and other sundries