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First
Class
Postage



NOUVEL FONDWA

ASOSYASYON
PEYIZAN
FONDWA

Box 13062 • Delmas, Haiti

www.windowonhaiti.com/fondwa/fondwa.htm

Number 17 • May 2000 - March 2001

Dear Friends,

Peace and greetings from Fondwa!

We want to apologize to you for not being able to keep you informed as often as we've wanted to. We've been in a transition period the last few months which has made it difficult for us to publish regular updates. Despite this, your continuing support of our work in Fondwa has been tireless and we want to express our sincerest thanks for that.

Once again we'd also like to express our gratitude to our former volunteers Corey Hastings, Sue Conlin and Jim Khun. Their work and their stay in Fondwa have contributed to the foundation of APF and will continue to be part of our growth and advancement. They have opened the gates for other international volunteers to come to Fondwa.

In this issue, we are very pleased to be able to present to you our new Fondwa international volunteer team, which has grown to seven within the past few months. You will find out more about their work here; in fact, this newsletter is a product of their collaborative effort.

Following is some recent news we want to share with you.

First, we are taking a few more steps in our mission for economic sustainability:

a) To increase the restaurant's clientele, we have opened a guest house in Tonngato. This is a new business for APF.

b) We will also soon open an auto parts shop in the Tonngato area. This will create new jobs in the region and more services for the people. The profits will be used to repay the loans to *Fonkaze* for the purchase of the *Tonngato Commercial Center* building.

c) And we will soon open a general store at the *Commercial Center*, with the profits to be used to help us cover the salaries of our technical team in Port-au-Prince and in Fondwa.

d) We are in the process of opening our trade school in carpentry and masonry. It will be run as a small commercial enterprise, as well as a training center. The profits will be used to cover the teachers' salaries. We are in a critical situation with regards to paying the *St. Antoine* teachers and our technical team. By redirecting the profits back into the community in the form of technical assistance, we are taking necessary steps for self-sustainability.

e) And we are building a new pig sty for the school. This is part of our *Piggy Bank Project* which will also help us to cover the *St. Antoine* teachers' salaries.

Second, we are in the process of starting an APF/USA non-profit organization we are calling *Partners in Progress* (PIP), with the help of friends in the Pittsburgh area. PIP will coordinate the fund raising efforts of all our friends in the U.S. They will also educate people about our work here in Fondwa. Their first board meeting will be sometime this summer. If you'd like more information on this, please contact Joyce Rothermel at: jrothermel@pittsburghfoodbank.org.

Third, we are excited about the opportunity to include a truly international component to APF, not only with the growth of our international volunteer team, but also with the return of three Fondwa youths who spent the last year studying in France, and with the expansion of our tourist educational program to Cuba and to Europe. In particular, we'd like to express our gratitude for groups that have visited us and shown their continuing support of our work, either by returning to work as volunteers, or planning fund raisers for us upon returning home.

We hope that you have a wonderful 2001, and that you can continue to support us despite the news of recent political chaos in Haiti. May the Lord of the children bless you and guide you in your journey of life.

All the best,

Father Joseph Philippe, CSSp
Apf222@aol.com

Report On:

The Tonngato Commercial Center

The APF bakery had a difficult run this past year. After the departure of Corey Hastings in July 2000, it was a Fondwa youth, **Hèraut Beauvais**, who was handed the reins to resolve the different problems the bakery was facing. Since then, we have regained our year 2000 peak production of bread and have begun operating on Sundays due to a rising demand for bread by ti machann traveling to Port-au-Prince early Monday mornings. We are optimistic that these recent changes to the operation of the bakery will bring us a productive and profitable 2001.

The presence of the pig sties and the work of our Cuban veterinarian has identified a need for animal feed products like corn and wheat bran in our APF store. In April, the store will begin selling these products, which will not only aid our efforts to work with the peasants in animal production, but also help boost our store financially, which has suffered this past year due to inflated costs for basic products.

In January, the doors of the new *APF Tonngato Guest House and Training Center* were opened. We hope that this new addition to our

Tonngato Commercial Center will do a few things: first, to host guests of our tourist educational program who wish to stay for only a couple of nights, as well as other passersby on the Jakmel road; second, to have a place for our ongoing technical training seminars with the peasants; third, to attract overnight visitors to our Restaurant. Most of APF's activities have, until now, been centralized in the APF Center located in the Bellvue region. We hope that our expansion into the Tonngato area will create more jobs in the region as well as create an APF locale representative of the peasants who live outside central Fondwa.

The Agricultural Activities of the APF

Since October 1999, Cuban veterinarian **Dr. Julio Simone Maure** and agronomist **Norberto Fernandez** have been helping to develop our Cuban/Haitian program for a sustainable economy. They have since put in place a technical team to support the work already accomplished and to assure that the peasants will continue to adopt the techniques that the Cuban team has taught.

Three model gardens based on soil conservation and changes in plant density techniques have been constructed in the year 2000. Two pig sties and a chicken coop have been built, which has allowed us to

distribute pigs and chickens in Fondwa and surrounding regions. In the coming year, APF would like to construct 16 model gardens and tree nurseries, new pig sties, and to launch a massive vaccination campaign for all the area animals. APF has also just organized a series of training sessions based on the Cuban techniques, which we plan to continue this year.

We have much to accomplish; but, as we enter the second year of this project, we are confident that we can build upon the successes of this past year, and realize our goals for 2001.

We hope these recent changes to the *Commercial Center* in Tonngato will begin to address the difficulties we faced in 2000 and remain more in tune with the local realities of Fondwa and of APF.

Students Return From a Year Abroad

After a year-long study in France, Fondwa youths **Emmanuel Beauvais**, **Christophe Rodrigue**, and **Cadet Dorelian**, have returned to Haiti. Following the training they received in France, all three have been given responsibilities working with APF.

Emmanuel is now the lead organizer of the agricultural technical team working with the Cubans. His energy has been crucial to the peasants' active participation in trainings. This last month he has been organizing the next *APF Executive Committee* elections which will take place in April.

Christophe has since become an administrator for APF, working primarily on managing the bakery, the credit cooperative,

as well as a number of other responsibilities in our APF office in Port-au-Prince.

After studying construction and auto mechanics during his time in France, Cadet has since been working to put in place our first vocational training school in carpentry and masonry and an auto parts shop on the Jakmel road. He has also helped us to build a new pig sty for our *Piggy Bank Project* for the school. We hope to use the profits from this project to pay the *St. Antoine* teachers' salaries. Cadet will also oversee all the construction activities APF plans to undertake.

With the return of our youths to Fondwa, we foresee a promising next few years for APF.

Tourism Pro

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It is this simple fact that Educational Tourism Program sharing, the life of the Haitian experience for those of us in the first-world.

And it is a fact that Methodist Church of Germ some dozen visits to this northern Philadelphian's have returned more people than when they left.

In 1997, FUMCOG returned to Fondwa to include the church students spent a week of education no State-side side.

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Education In Fondwa:

The St. Antoine School

After a month-long initial assessment process back in April 2000, **Frans and Gerdien Goossens** of Holland returned to us in November for a three year assignment.

Frans, teacher (with 25 years of experience), architect, artist, and gardener extraordinaire, will be working with a school renovation team (which includes **Anselot Philippe, Sr. Simone**, and some of the teachers) to improve the *St. Antoine School's* organizational structure and make proposals for a new curriculum.

This is a long-term process, as Frans believes innovation takes much time in Haiti, especially in the field of education. He will begin networking with other schools in Haiti, exchanging information and educational materials. And after extensive discussions, meetings, and assessments with our *St. Antoine* teachers, he hopes the teachers will begin working together to achieve quality education here in Fondwa.

With the help of the Holland-based *Starren Corporation* (see: *A Dutch Christmas Thought* on page four) and the Haitian NGO *FOKAL*, we have begun construction of the new school! First is the kindergarten section (which includes three classrooms, a meeting room, a water reservoir, a storage room and a toilet). We are still looking to finance the last third of the costs for this new building. We would appreciate any support you might be willing to provide us in completing the school's construction.

Frans is also looking to give computer lessons to the students. We would be grateful for donations of secondhand PC's (110 volt).

The Visitor's Program

Gerdien, who has experience in the tourist industry in Holland, will be working on the *APF Tourist Educational Program* with the help of **Nina Bekkers**, a Dutch student in International Tourism. She will start where **Sue Conlin, Corey Hastings** and **Jim Khun** left off, in terms of improving the program -- developing seminars for our visitors on life for the peasant woman in Haiti and on the role of voodoo religion (with a visit to a local temple). She will also begin helping *KOJEDAF*, Fondwa's youth group, develop exchanges with other young visitors to Fondwa.

If you are interested in organizing or joining a group to come visit us, please contact Sr. **Anita Von Wellshelm** at 1-800-275-4805 or by email at avonw@rscj.org.

Hopefully, by the time you come visit us, Frans and Gerdien will have mastered wine-making from all the different fruits produced here in Fondwa (a hobby of theirs in Holland)! Cheers!



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• It was very moving to see the way the older youth at the orphanage took care of the younger ones and played with fort, the aren't lacking for love.... they are surrounded by it!

• We were graciously entertained in their home with several grand children around helping to greet us. The specialty of the house is hot chocolate, made from a cocoa-like bean grown on their own farm. They had some for everyone... more than 20 people!

• We returned to the Community Center to the sound of dance music and the party was underway! Most of us got into the dancing and so did the Cubans... it was a great way to bring to an end our last full day in Fondwa. And what a full day it was; I'm exhausted!

Any time you have your life positively, fundamentally changed, you have a better life to live. The earlier you can undergo such a change, the longer you have to gain from it's benefits. One score of Philadelphia's youth have already had their lives changed. The future will see scores more.

Jim Khun leads the group across the valley to visit Mimik and the new pig sty.



News From Old Friends . . . And New

≡ A Letter from Sue Conlin

Here is an excerpt of a letter Sue Conlin wrote to friends and family following her departure this past July. Sue spent three years with us in Fondwa as APF nurse and tourist program coordinator (along with Corey Hastings and Jim Khun) while living and working at *Fatima House* (the Fondwa Orphanage).

Here, she reflects on her time in Haiti:

I am back in the States permanently, having left Haiti on July 17 2000. I am feeling sad about leaving Haiti. The people of Fondwa were so extraordinarily kind and welcoming to me. I will miss the sense of being cared for by an entire community. I recognize I will also miss the feeling that my job is part of a very important larger effort.

Very often people ask me: "Do you think there is any hope for Haiti?"

Yes, I see definitely hope for Haiti: in the peasant movement and in education. The three major problems facing Haiti are poverty, environmental disaster and a government that lacks the will to serve the people. Solutions to all of these problems must start with an educated population.

The peasantry, the bulk of the population, will become more knowledgeable, more able to assess information, more able to influence local policy and ultimately national policy.

And the peasant organizations are giving the people a voice. The vibrant peasant movement represents a spontaneous effort on the part of the people at the base to improve their lives. They are learning democracy, are learning to accept responsibility and control. In spite of all the current difficulties in Haiti, I definitely see hope for the future.

Blessings, Sue Conlin.

≡ A Dutch Christmas Thought

The *Starren Corporation*, a Holland-based industrial manufacturing company, upon learning of the three-year commitment Frans and Gerdien Goossens made to work in Fondwa, lent their support to their efforts by doing something a little different this past Christmas. Instead of presenting their employees with an annual Christmas gift, *Starren* decided to present a gift to Fondwa, on behalf of their employees. Below is an excerpt of their Christmas card. We would like to thank them for their generosity.

What shall we do for Christmas? Shall we go for the chocolates and the bottle of wine or shall we choose something entirely different? Why a good cause? The answer is cliché and consequently very true: we are exceedingly well-off in the Netherlands. And when one has the privileged position to do something for people who are in a substantially worse situation, one should not let it go by. But perhaps the most important reason for us is the fact that their project is based on a long-term approach.

The local population will receive education and support so they can maintain in their own livelihood in the long run. The contribution from Starren will be used primarily to build a new kindergarten. Furniture, educational materials, teaching accessories for the teachers, toys — there is a need for even the most elementary matters. Starren believes this is the very essence of real aid. No Christmas gifts for employees and business relations, but a gift to two people, or rather a gift to 700 children from a poverty-stricken area in Haiti.

Starren wishes them all the strength and success they need in Haiti.

A healthy and happy year 2001.

*Berry Thomas,
Director, Starren B.V. Holland*

≡ A Benefit Party for Fondwa

Wanting to share their Fondwa experiences with friends and family after returning home to St. Louis, Missouri from a visit with us in July 2000, **Michael and Betty Kuelker** threw a benefit party for Fondwa.

They planned a Fondwa cultural night which included Haitian music, Caribbean food, and, as Michael recently wrote us, "We raised money (us\$1,115) and consciousness, and had a good time on top of it." They plan to organize more benefits in the future.

We would like to thank them for thinking of us.

≡ Our Volunteer Team

Within the past few months, Fondwa welcomed five new volunteers, expanding our international volunteer team to seven. In addition to veterinarian Dr. Julio Simon Maure and agronomist Norberto Banos Fernandez, from Cuba, Fondwa has now become home to individuals from Holland, France, and the United States. We've already reported to you on the work of Frans and Gerdien Goossens.

Our other volunteers: **Neeltje Bekkers**, known as Nina, arrived in Fondwa in January. A student from the Netherlands, she will work with Gerdien on the *Tourist Educational Program*. She is researching ways to expand the program to include a visit to Cuba, as well as generating interest in our program in Europe. Her six-month stay in Fondwa is part of her studies on International Tourism Management and Consultancy.

After a month-long visit with us in 1999, arranged through our on-going partnership with *CEPAL*, **Thomas Pitaud** from France returned to Fondwa in September 2000. He completed his studies at the *Department of Tropical Agronomy* in Guadeloupe (the Caribbeans) this past summer. He has been working closely with the Cuban team on developing technical training with the peasants, among his many other responsibilities at the *APF Center*.

After a three day visit to Fondwa last July with a *Global Exchange* delegation, California native **Joyce Kim** returned to us in January to spend one year helping us with our fund raising efforts and to start our first vocational training school in carpentry and masonry.

Contributions to APF can be made out to APF and sent to:

APF
Box 13062
Delmas, Haiti

We respect all requests that donations be used for specific projects.