



# MATABONITE REPORT

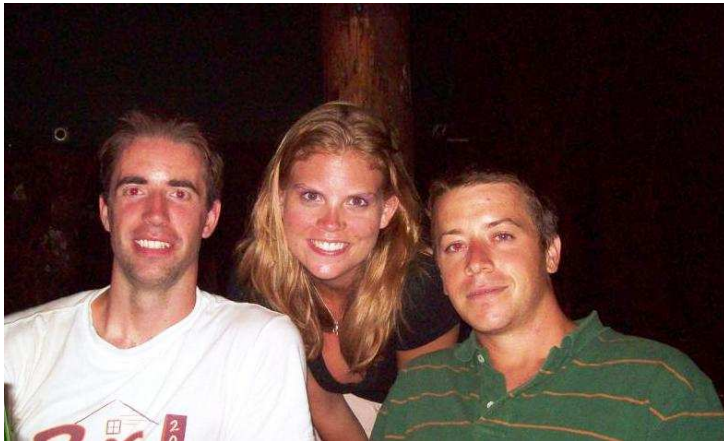
An occasional newsletter to the friends of the Catholic Young Adult Association of Matabonite, Haiti, and the contributors to the David A. Goy Memorial Fund. Also available on the internet: [www.richmonddiocese.org/haiti](http://www.richmonddiocese.org/haiti)

July 2009

## NEWS FROM GABRIEL THÉLUS

We're sorry but we do not have a report from Gabriel for this newsletter. Over the past few months his time has been occupied with construction of the Bishop F. Walter Sullivan Mission House and the Water Project. On top of that he's hosted mission trips from Tulane Medical School, Penn State, Virginia Tech, and Radford University. Although we will not be able to duplicate Gabriel's unique flavor and writing style in this report, we will attempt to inform you of what's been going on in Matabonite recently. We expect to have a report in Gabriel's own words in our next newsletter.

Please keep two amazing young men in your prayers: Shane Barnett and Chris Vanderhoof. Shane is a recent engineering graduate from Virginia Tech. He is spending an entire year in Jacsonville in support of Gabriel and Haitian Community of St. Rose of Lima (Haiti CSR). Chris Vanderhoof just graduated from Virginia Tech and is entering the Virginia Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine in August. He has arranged and led the last two Virginia Tech trips to Jacsonville and is currently spending his summer in Jacsonville to help the community.



Chris Vanderhoof, Alison Smith and Shane Barnett

## VISITORS

### Radford University, Radford, Va.

*A group of seven Radford University students visited Jacsonville in May. They were quickly put to work on the water distribution system at the school and in one day laid about 200 feet of pipeline. The group distributed many donated items including a laptop computer, manual drills, medical supplies, soccer uniforms and equipment, and clothes. They also had much fun playing and interacting with the St. Rose school children. The following personal report comes from Therese Ihrig, a rising sophomore at Radford University.*

The blare of the sun sweeps into the open window and the sounds of the roosters and goats blast out the silence of the

morning. It is time to experience Matabonite!

The bumpy and treacherous car ride through the country to Matabonite was an experience in itself and right away everything around us was giving me a new outlook and appreciation of my blessings. My mission in Matabonite was to help distribute donated items and create positive relations with the people here, particularly the children.

The community of Jacsonville in Matabonite is one of hope and vision. The entire atmosphere was awe-inspiring and the progress of the mission house alone was incredible. Along with the St. Rose of Lima School, the mission house will bring visitors and revenue along with a positive reputation.

As soon as we arrived in Matabonite we encountered the process of applying a concrete roof to the mission house. That was truly a sight. The workers were using nothing but sheer manpower to lift five-gallon buckets of dripping concrete straight up a two-story ladder. They would pass the bucket up to the next man on the ladder and so on and everyone had their own particular job. They were some of the hardest workers I have ever encountered.

Our cameras fascinated the children in the community. It was a joy to teach them new games like hopscotch, thumb war, jump rope, and many others. They even taught me some new games and the interaction was compelling, even with the language barrier.

Some of my memories from the trip are digging for the water project with masses of school children in their uniforms surrounding us, and playing soccer with the local kids who had a set soccer game time every day at 3:00. One of the students cut up a mango for me and another young girl had fun playing with my blonde hair.

Gabriel and his wife Maricile were such a joy and amazed me with their hospitality. To be honest I was fearful when anticipating our trip to Haiti due to the history and stories I had heard. I don't think anyone in our group would hesitate to go back now based on our experiences and good times in Matabonite. Traveling to a third world country is something I always wanted to do and now that I have done it, I am inspired to continue. I have family in Panama, and my future plans are to go there for a summer, getting to know the community there and learn more of the language.

### Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

*In March Chris Vanderhoof, Phil Frangipane, Donna Mehalko, Rebecca La Creta, Caitlin Laverdiere, Roxana Jara, Byron Wiedeman, Crystal Delgaudio traveled to Haiti. Here is a report on their experience.*

The group first toured Port-au-Prince and saw the presidential palace, and other monuments, and visited the *Sant Fré Zaveryen*, a house where young men from other parts of Haiti

can stay while pursuing post-secondary education in the capital. They stopped in Cange and toured Dr. Paul Farmer's organization, *Zanmi Lasante*, a health care complex where the poorest of the poor have an opportunity for receiving care with dignity. The complex has daily out-patient clinics and longer term care, particularly in the areas of HIV/AIDS and TB.

In Pandiassou they also visited with Br. Harry Eccles, who was teaching an English class for some first-year seminarians. Each visitor was paired off with one or two seminarians so that they could converse and learn about each other.

The trip was excellent and all the students enjoyed it a great deal. Virginia Tech spring break trips over the last three years have had a great impact on both the students and the community of Jacsonville. Many of the Virginia Tech students have been motivated to continue working in Haiti ministry. Two Tech students have returned to Haiti a second time, Alison Smith returned twice, Chris Vanderhoof has returned three times and is currently in Haiti for six weeks from June into July. Shane Barnett has lived in Haiti for six months with a few more to go.

While they were in Matabonite, they were joined by a group from Penn State, who focused on working on the mission house and repairs to the Penny Bridge while the Tech group began the site preparation for the cistern behind the St. Rose School. They also had meetings with local leadership to brainstorm ideas about a future trade school.

#### **Tulane University School of Medicine, New Orleans**

*Alison Smith, a rising second-year medical student at Tulane [and a Virginia Tech alumna who was with Chris and Shane on that original 2007 trip to Matabonite] sends us this report*

Over the course of six days eleven Tulane medical students and Dr. Robert Devereaux, a family physician from Giles County, Virginia and parishioner at St. Mary's Church in Blacksburg, saw over 500 patients in and around the village of Jacsonville and Savanette.

Day clinics were held for local residents at a minimal cost. Each patient completed a full health history in Kreyòl (with the help of local translators), vital signs, physical examination, eye examination, received necessary medicines, and a medical record card. The majority of people seen had simple health problems that could have been prevented with greater access to routine medical care and healthier living conditions. All children at St. Rose de Lima School were provided medications for parasitic worms that can impair their development.

The medical group collaborated with Catherine, a nurse from a clinic in Pignon, and Jerda, a graduate of St. Rose School and high school student who hopes to pursue training as a nurse. Other activities conducted during the short visit were to bring supplies for the St. Rose de Lima water project, facilitating a public health seminar for teachers, testing drinking water samples for coliform bacteria, and celebrating Mardi Gras!

Students that attended the trip from Tulane University School of Medicine were as follows: Richard Brucker, Karen Coffey, Shavaun Cotton, Christopher Goodenough, Meghan Hughes, Casey Rebholz, Lindsey Riggin, Alexandra Sledd, Alison Smith, Nicholas Somerville, and Jocelyn Wertz. They hope to return next March on another medical mission trip.

*The group would like to thank Schering-Plough Corporation and Dr. Mayer Heiman for donating medical supplies and the parish-*

*ioners of North American Martyrs Church (Monroeville, Penn.) for providing monetary donations for additional supplies.*

## **PROJECTS**

*Volunteer Shane Barnett provided us with these updates on recent construction projects in Matabonite.*

#### **The Bishop Walter F. Sullivan Mission House**

The second roof on the Mission House is now complete. We worked for three straight days with a couple hours' sleep each night doing the preparation work for the roof. Twenty-six cement workers along with several local Matabonite men spent every daylight hour getting the concrete roof poured. These men worked and distributed the concrete to the roof in an assembly line fashion. Mixing the concrete on the ground then passing it up a ladder, one man to the next, in five-gallon buckets. It was a thing of beauty ... like clockwork. These men were very hard workers—it was hot, they had been working for 2½ days straight, and that concrete sure looked heavy. We came away very impressed with the work, the quality of construction, and the magnificent Mission House.



**Pouring the roof on the Bishop Sullivan Mission House, Jacsonville, Matabonite, a guest house for visitors and volunteers**

Fr. Carlo presided over the first Mass ever in the Mission House—really a momentous occasion. Visitors now are most welcome and encouraged to have extended stays there—and teaching English is especially appreciated!

#### **Water Project**

Water is now flowing at the St Rose School. Yes, the water project is complete! It was wonderful to see and hear the clear stream of water splashing into the cistern on the hill above the school. Even more exciting was to watch the children drinking from (and playing in) the water fountains at the school. We came in on budget and within a hundred dollars of the amount raised. Thank you all for your support.

We actually did all the work in the last two weeks of May after finishing the Mission House roof. We were hopeful that the work would be completed in time for engineers Leo Mulcahy and Steve Metzler's arrival. The 1,100 feet of pipeline was laid during "work parties" every night for a week. Around ten of the neighborhood youth would gather each night around 8:00 o'clock with flashlights and pick axes. They would dig until midnight or 1:00 a.m. Each person left with

only a bowl of rice and the satisfaction that the school kids would find life a little easier in the near future.

The 1,300 gallon cistern behind the school cafeteria was completed just in time, too. It took a week and a half to dig up rocks and have two masons lay them in a cylindrical shape. After completing the cistern, they built two hand washing/drinking stations; one outside of the latrines to accommodate five kids at a time and another grand station in front of the cafeteria accommodating fifteen. In addition, the kitchen now has a sink and countertop.



The new cistern on the hill above the school



Kids drinking from the station in front of the cafeteria.

Technicians installed solar panels on top of the newly-completed mission house roof. Cleverly there are no batteries with this system. Water is only pumped when there is sunlight and it is stored in the school or mission house cisterns, where it is available anytime. We concluded the pro-

ject with a dedication inviting all the key players from the community. The theme was "Dlo se lavi" ("Water is life"). All the staff and students are extremely happy to have running water at the school. This saves much time carrying water and allows the students to have clean hands and plenty to drink.

### St. Rose School

In May it was wonderful to have Fr. Carlo visit from Pignon to preside over First Communion for sixteen children and to baptize several others in the school auditorium, which is beautifully designed with a tiered floor spreading back from a raised stage. The only thing lacking is seating which has to be carried from classrooms across the campus whenever there is an event in the auditorium.

### Haiti CSR

Two David A. Goy Foundation Board members Karen Melendez and Barry Welsh traveled with the Radford University group. Among other activities, they were able to attend a meeting of the local coordinating committee now named **Haiti Community St. Rose of Lima** or as they called themselves, **Haiti CSR**. The Haiti CSR group takes responsibility for managing the school, defining and prioritizing projects, budgeting and financing of the operations, and communicating with supporters in the US. They conducted a very organized meeting with set agenda, voting rules, and subcommittee reports. This meeting was a great opportunity for the Goy Foundation and the Haiti CSR to meet face-to-face, plan for future priorities, and arrange communication channels. Some key priorities that came out of this meeting included:

- Raising salaries especially for teachers
- Paying back loans
- Purchasing a dump truck and a tractor
- Building or purchasing school auditorium seating
- Establishing internet access at the school
- Creating a computer lab at the school

You will surely hear more about these priorities in the near future as we create budgets and begin fund raising to support the efforts of the Haiti CSR and the community of Jacsonville.

## THE DAVID A. GOY FOUNDATION, Inc.

The David A. Goy Foundation, whose mission is the support of the community of Matabonite, has set up its operations at the office of St. Jude Catholic Church in Radford, Va., established a bank account, and has begun collecting donations in support of projects in Jacsonville. We are still awaiting non-profit status approval from the federal government but expect to get this designation soon. We established our Board meeting schedule for remainder of 2009.

Please contact Karen Melendez if you have any questions at [info@goyfoundation.org](mailto:info@goyfoundation.org). We plan to have our website [www.goyfoundation.org](http://www.goyfoundation.org) operational within the next few weeks.

From now on, contributors may use the Foundation address:

David A. Goy Foundation, Inc.  
1740 Tyler Road  
Christiansburg VA 24073-6154

# DAVID A. GOY MEMORIAL FUND FOR MATABONITE

RECEIVED THROUGH THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RICHMOND: July 2008-June 2009

## INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Donald & Glenda Barnett  
Br. Bede Benn, CFX  
Ronald Coon  
Ann Marie Daniel  
Rev. Willie Dell  
Jonathan & Leanna Dohanich  
John & Kathy Ficenech  
Herschel & Shirley Fike  
The Gallini Family  
Linda Goy  
Thomas & Mary Ann Harty  
Marie Hayes  
UK Herring  
Thomas & Barbie Hogan  
Kristel Kaye  
David & Lisa Linnell  
Jared Mach

Br. John Mahoney CFX  
Dr. Gabriel Makhlouf  
Douglas & Anette Mau  
Donna Mehalko  
Daphne Rogowski  
Charles & Laraine Simpson  
Richard & Martha Walker  
George Whitley  
Dorothy Wnorowski  
The Yelton Family

## GROUP CONTRIBUTORS

Sacred Heart Catholic Church,  
Remington IN

✂-----

I am enclosing a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ (please make check payable to David A. Goy Foundation, Inc.).  
I would like to designate it for (please check one):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support for the operating budget  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bishop Sullivan Mission House furnishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support for the workshop projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Support for a new truck                  |

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip

Checks should be sent directly to the Goy Foundation in the enclosed envelope.