



# HAITI HEALTHCARE NEWS

An occasional bulletin to report on the work of the Haitian Healthcare Foundation, Inc., of the Diocese of Richmond, available also at [www.richmonddiocese.org/haiti](http://www.richmonddiocese.org/haiti).

November 2007

## LASCAHOBAS COALITION: THE DENTAL CLINIC PROJECT

*From the Haiti Health Care Foundation's Vice President, Susan Pleasants, we have this update on the HHCF's piece of the Lascahobas Coalition's project—a dental clinic.*

Last year, I remember Paul Farmer telling an auditorium of people at the annual Thomas White Symposium, that he wanted someday to see a stadium full of people working together to help the Haitian people. In December, the Haitian Health Care Foundation approved a proposal to form a coalition of parishes and supporters to work together in the Lascahobas area of Haiti.

The goal of this coalition is to help one another with resources, ideas, and to support our health care partner, *Zanmi Lasante* [Partners in Health ([www.pih.org](http://www.pih.org))]. We realized that without each other is it a difficult journey and without *Zanmi Lasante* we would not have health care for over 70,000 people in our parishes around Lascahobas. The Coalition's first step was to raise \$10,000.00 to support the efforts of *Zanmi Lasante* to build a new hospital. This was done quickly and a check was presented to Dr. David Walton following his graduation from the Howard Hiatt Residency in Global Health Equity and Internal Medicine program at Harvard Medical School. We are truly blessed to have him and Dr. Desiré Roland to care for our people. Dr. Walton wanted to designate these funds for a dental clinic in Lacolline.



Progress is being made on the Lacolline hospital

The second goal of the coalition was to support the development of dental care in the Lascahobas area. This is a new service for our people who have not had access before to professionally trained staff. I am happy to say that significant progress has been made in this area. We are devel-

oping a network of interested and supportive dentists. Also, we have been working with Leo Blumle of Holy Family Catholic Church in Virginia Beach, and Medical Missionaries, to procure dental equipment and other equipment for a new clinic being built in Lacolline. We have obtained most of the large pieces for the dental clinic, saving about \$100,000! Medical Missionaries just helped coordinate a huge shipment of equipment to Lacolline for the new hospital. It is a beautiful example of cooperation.

According to Dr. Desiré Roland, this dental clinic will have an estimated 12,000 visits per year with a significant outpatient education program. We are in the final process of writing, in cooperation with Partners in Health, a full proposal to describe this program and secure additional funding. A major focus of this proposal will be the "Dentists for Haiti" program which will be chaired by Board member Kathy Faw, a dynamic person with a background in nursing and dental care. We will be focusing on recruiting support by dentists across our Diocese and the nation.

We have had many meetings have occurred with PIH staff, ZL staff, dentists in Cange, and local dentists. Special thanks go to Fred Arietta of Patterson Dental, for responding to my request to help outline the basic needs of a clinic.



Part of the dental suit

The new dental clinic will be free-standing next to the new hospital. Many of you have contributed to this project either with equipment, money, kind words, or prayers. So we are eternally grateful. You will be honored on a Founder's Plaque at the new clinic.

For the members of the coalition some wonderful events have occurred, *Zanmi Lasante* met with the AFAL, the

women's group in Lascahobas, to discuss the expansion of medical care, Zanmi Lasante has sent mobile clinics to both the parishes of Dos Palais and Gros Moulin (located high on a mountain about 4-5 hours walking from Lascahobas, according to Dr. David Walton who has made the journey), Dr. Tom Fame (Salem, Virginia) is doing great work in a very isolated area building schools and feeding the children, St. Ann's parish in Ashland, Virginia, has contributed two dental chairs to our efforts.

Leo Blumle's group at Holy Family parish is doing some very exciting work with Zanmi Lasante to refurbish a Ministry of Health clinic so as to offer medical and dental care up on the mountain in Baptiste. They have procured many thousands of dollars worth of medical equipment and supplies for ZL clinics in Haiti. No doubt, the recent contribution of suture material helped to save lives.



Dental cabinets donated by Dr. Jeffrey Day

Virginia Women's Center has made charitable donations to other organizations over the years but they felt that Midwives for Haiti would be a better fit for their efforts. VWC is doing in Virginia what Midwives for Haiti does in Haiti--Haiti just has a few extra challenges.

Dr. Eads spoke to his partners about the poverty in Haiti and its impact on the health care system. It was not difficult to make a case that a need exists but his focus was to describe M4H's goals, methods and accomplishments. He wanted to make a convincing case that it is a program which is making progress and is worthy of support. After some questions and discussion everyone present voted to support the project and to donate \$10,000.

Dr. Eads would like VWC to become a long-term supporter of M4H, who will be working with him to include VWC's employees and doctors in communications about our work in Haiti. He hopes that with time they may view this project as *their* project and become just as passionate as he is about seeing it succeed.

The Haitian Health Care Foundation is a supporter of the Midwives for Haiti project, that trains Haitian midwives for work among rural women.

## FOUNDATION ASSOCIATES

As you know, we have been inviting (and continue to invite) our readers to join our efforts by becoming Haitian Health Care Foundation Associate Members. So far we have 35 Associates, whose skills and interests we will be involving in the work of the Foundation. Associates receive minutes of Board meetings and of the committees which work in the area of their particular interest. We hope that the website will also give them and us access to ways of collaborating in this health care ministry. Here are our current Associates:

Leo Blumle	Pix Mahler
Sheryl Burrell	Reid McGehee
Audrey Cobb	Deborah A. Meslar-Little
Frank & Gloria D'Alessandro	Bev & Al Mirmelstein
James Daniero	Linda Mitchell
Marc S. DeGennaro	Chris & Anne Peterson
Tom & Janie Eckman	Stephen Powelson
Leslie Fehan	Mary Preston
John Gallini	Janie Pudhorodsky
Carolyn Halbert	Stu Reid
Lisbet Hanson	Chris Roberson
Trish Jenkins	Don Trinite
John Kenerson	Kim Wesdock
Anne Knasel	Doug & Diane Willson
Elaine Kroner	Donna Marie Zaccagnini

The Foundation continues to look for individuals with varied experience, talents or interest in our mission. If you think you may be one of those individuals, please send your mailing address to Dr. Greg Pudhorodsky at [gregp23@embarqmail.com](mailto:gregp23@embarqmail.com) and information about this program will be mailed to you.

*A recent email from Dr. Paul Farmer, of Partners in Health, says it all:*

It is indeed beautiful to see such "pragmatic solidarity" instead of the usual uncoordinated process we see in Haiti and Africa and elsewhere.

Thanks to all of you,  
*Paul Farmer*

## MIDWIFE TRAINING PROJECT GETS SUPPORT

When Nadene Brunk, a local midwife, and Dr. Stephen Eads, a Richmond physician, started to go to Haiti, people in their office, the Virginia Women's Center, were curious about what they were doing. As they learned about the program some of them began to help by making donations or lending their time for projects here at home. The practice manager, Brenda Burgess, wanted to actively participate and is now a member of the Board of Directors of Midwives for Haiti, or M4H. She invited Dr. Eads to do a presentation at their October all-doctors meeting.

## ZANMI AGRIKÒL, A GROWING MIRACLE

*Susan Pleasants reports on another project she encountered on her recent visit.*

Feeding children, saving trees, teaching, researching, producing a cash crop, Zanmi Lasante never ceases to amaze me with their compassionate insightful approach to addressing the problems in Haiti. This problem of hunger is a heart-breaking reality in a world where there is a solution. I was fortunate to visit the Zanmi Agrikòl farm on October 4, 2007 and wanted to share this information with you as a possible model for future work in Haiti.

### Project description

Zanmi Agrikòl is a division of Partners in Health (Zanmi Lasante in Haiti). The farm site is located just north of Mirebalais and is 20 hectares in size. The land was obtained approximately 10 years ago by Gilliane Warne and Father Fritz Lafontant and is currently being rented. The agronomist for the site is Stenio Louis-Jeune. Dr. Desiré Roland, Medical Director of Zanmi Lasante Lascahobas and Lacolline, arranged a "spur of the moment" visit for me with Stenio. Thimothé Samuel, diocesan driver, went with us and assisted with translation. The farm produces corn, peanuts, pistachios, black beans, plantains, sugar cane, tomatoes, and green leafy vegetables. The primary objective of the farm is to feed the poor, and it serves over 1,000 children and their families who are referred by the multiple Zanmi Lasante clinics located throughout the central plateau of Haiti. The farm used to produce a significant amount of plantains but now the focus has switched to crops which support the production of several products to eliminate hunger: enriched peanut butter, or Nourimanba, and Nourimil, an enriched meal composed of corn, beans, pistachio, and other ingredients. The peanut butter is produced with the aid of an ingenious husking device made in Haiti.

Both of these products are considered medications by the physicians working with the severely malnourished children. On site there is a large storage depot which has specifically designed metal storage containers for the dried crops. The farm employs 22 people of which nine are technicians. During the harvest season additional local workers, mostly women, are hired to help with picking.

The crops are grown twelve months of the year, with the exception of black beans which are grown November through March. There is a large pump used to draw water from the river, utilizing tubing to irrigate during the dry season. Tomatoes and green leafy vegetables are grown for the Zanmi Lasante medical clinic kitchens which feed the poor seeking medical care.

When a malnourished child is referred from one of the Zanmi Lasante medical clinics the physicians monitor the children closely. Each family is referred to the family assistant program which provides an assessment to determine their particular needs. They are given a female goat, the enriched nutritional products, a supply of chartechnology briquettes, seeds, tools, fruit trees, reforestation trees all

according to their particular needs.

### Chartechnology

This process involves the production on site of a charcoal briquettes which look very similar to charcoal, but burns longer and is easily produced. Made from dried sugar cane stalks, dried plantain products and flour, the mixture is cooked in a steel drum and then poured into a press which molds it into briquettes. This product was developed to keep the Haitians from cutting down their beloved trees. When a child is referred to Zanmi Agrikòl the family receives this product free of charge.



Stenio with a charbriquette press

### Teaching

Zanmi Agrikòl offers classes to local farmers and also walking tours to families referred to the program. I witnessed an interesting method of sprouting tomatoes seedlings using raised beds sheltered from the sun with a network of dried branches. There is a test plot for black beans to study seed production. Stenio keeps data for the farm production. I have just learned by email from Gilliane Warne that land adjacent to the farm has been purchased and there are plans to start an Agricultural/Vocational College.

### Sustainable Development Component

Ten hectares are devoted to growing mangos. A beautiful stand of mango trees located along the river look to be approximately ten years old. When I visited they were being pruned. The trees flower in December and take 7-8 months to produce fruit. The variety of mango being grown is *Fran-sik*, a favorite of many Haitians for its flavor and size. They are sold fresh and also a company in Port-au-Prince is producing dried mangos which are increasing in popularity in Haiti.

I was extremely encouraged by this farm and the ability to dramatically help the Haitian people. Many thanks to Dr. Desire, Stenio, and Thimothé for allowing me to see this "growing miracle."

# Haitian Healthcare Foundation, Inc.

## Individual and Group Contributors: 2007-2008

Dr. Sidney Barritt  
Leo Blumle  
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Ann Marie Carothers  
Dr Dolores Clement  
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John & Lisbet Kenerson  
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Pix Mahler  
Reid McGehee  
Deborah Meslar-Little  
Bev & Al Mirmelstein  
Linda Mitchell  
John Muldowney  
Chris & Anne Peterson  
Mary Preston  
Janie Pudhorodsky  
Stu Reid

Chris & Karen Roberson  
Edwin Sebolt  
George & Patricia Travera  
Don Trinite  
Kim Wesdock  
Doug & Diane Willson  
Donna Marie Zaccagnini

## Support for Haitian Medical and Dental Students

John & Marilyn Dohanich  
Carmella Maruzi & Mark Bladergroen  
Paul & Barbara Schellhammer

## Support for Midwifery Training Project

David & Lisa Linnell  
William McAveney  
Jen Sacksen

Deborah Thackrah  
Wayne & Helen Verlander

I am enclosing a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to: **Catholic Diocese of Richmond**).

I would like to designate it for (please check one):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Haiti Health Care Fund             | <input type="checkbox"/> Support for the Lascahobas Coalition Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support for our medical/dental students    | <input type="checkbox"/> Foundation Associate Member (\$25 a year)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support for the midwifery training project |   |

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