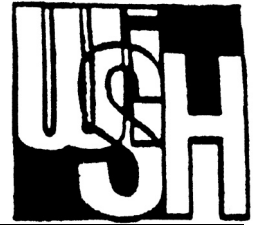




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**W.I.S.H. An Inter-Denominational Mission Serving the People of LaGonave, Haiti Since 1968 Mar/Apr 2010**

## Alexanders to Share Update from Island April 24th in Grand Haven

**Port-au-Prince has been the focus of media reports. How was LaGonave affected? Join us at the Grand Haven Community Center, 421 Columbus Avenue, the Escanaba Room at 6:00 PM to learn about conditions on the island since the earthquake and how your contributions are making a difference.**

### Your Quake Relief Dollars at Work

When thousands of refugees were stranded on the dock at the mainland and there was no fuel for the public ferry, WISH provided the fuel so the ferry could bring the refugees to LaGonave. Tricia went into the WISH dental clinic and gathered all the supplies that could possibly help for a medical field hospital on the mainland. She also ran a guest house in Port-au-Prince for several days as stranded teams waited for emergency evacuation. Butch picked up other stranded teams by boat so they could arrange alternative transportation out of the country. Butch and Tricia were able to assist families in the

*(Continued on page 3)*



**Butch made several trips across the sea, transporting 88,000 pounds of food shipped from New York.**

### Opportunity in the Rubble

*Reflections from Dr. Jack Heck & Jana Howard*

Education is the hope for Haiti's children to rise above the circumstances of a birth into poverty. In just 36 seconds on January 12, some of Haiti's brightest and most promising students perished, but some survived the devastation only to have their educational dreams crushed.

Donald Joachim, a second year dental student and Murielle Keno, in her third year of a five-year program at the same private

*(Continued on page 2)*



**Dr. Heck coaches Donald through his first extraction.**

(Continued from page 1)

dental school in Port-au-Prince, left school early January 12. They survived, but their school, some of their instructors, and fellow students did not. Like thousands of other refugees, Donald and Murielle came back to their families on LaGonave. They did not know how or when their education would resume.

On February 20, just one day after American Airlines resumed flights to Haiti, our itinerary, booked in October, was back on schedule as we landed in Port-au-Prince. It didn't look like the same airport, more like a military base. Numerous planes of all sizes from a variety of countries shared close quarters on the tarmac while they unloaded tons of supplies. The grounds surrounding the airstrip were completely covered by tents and stacks of pallets filled with relief aid, military supplies and vehicles. At the small airport, (MAF) the planes were parked so closely together that they had to be manually pushed into place with wings nearly overlapping.

***The Haitian flag fluttered in the breeze at half mast.***

As the MAF plane glided over Anse-a-Galets on our descent, the landscape was dotted with bright blue tarps and a collage of canopies. Although most houses are still standing, many are considered structurally unsafe, forcing families to sleep outside in makeshift shelters. Most of the refugees have been absorbed into the homes of family and friends who were native to the island, further overcrowding ex-



Murielle's first extraction gets a "high-5" from Jane!

**Sadly, it was determined that the clinic will have to come down ....**

isting homes. This was only our first glimpse of how the devastation in Port-au-Prince had claimed LaGonave. In the days that followed, the true impact on the island became more evident.

The dental clinic was inspected to assess its safety. The concrete roof has some large cracks but further inspection revealed more structural cracks in the walls. Sadly, it was determined that the clinic will have to come down and be re-



Franz, our interpreter/assistant/ photographer, captured our unique dental team of five Haitians and two Americans.

(Continued on page 5)



*(Continued from page 1)*

recovery of their children's bodies and final burial on LaGonave.

With the only tractors and trailers capable of moving the tons of food and medical supplies that have been donated, WISH is a valuable cog in the wheel for the recovery efforts on LaGonave. A small group of people from New York sent a shipment of 88,000 pounds of beans, rice and cooking oil for the islanders. WISH was able to transport the aid across the sea from the customs port at St. Marc to LaGonave, requiring several trips to

complete the entire load, and then, using our tractors and trailers to safely move the food from the island wharf to the secure storage area on the Wesleyan compound. The food was then distributed by local pastors, avoiding any civil unrest.

Your quake relief dollars have also enabled WISH to purchase food locally to fill



**Food bags, containing beans and rice, were given to each family at church.**

the void until the next stateside food shipments arrive. Currently, a container is being packed in St. Louis with additional food and relief supplies. Another \$5800 has been used to purchase tents at a discounted price from Dunham's to provide shelter from the seasonal rains. Boy Scout Troop 1129 and Troop 1139 in Fremont, MI, and Troop 1133 in Hesperia, MI will be waterproofing the tents April 10 prior to shipping. With your continued support, WISH can play a key role in the permanent solution to getting people back in their homes. Many homes on the island need only to be repaired if the necessary materials can be provided.



**Many people are still living in makeshift shelters. The rainy season is coming. Just imagine .....**



## Community Filled Our Bags with Love for LaGonave

By Jane Howard

There has always been a tremendous amount of community support for our dental missions to Haiti, but this year was unlike any other. As soon as the first reports of the January 12 earthquake hit the media, our office phone rang non-stop for several days. We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of concern and support from family, friends, patients, churches, schools, and organizations. Everyone wanted to know how they could help. Most people wanted a personal connection for their donation to earthquake relief. We were honored to be that connection through West Indies Self Help as we flew into Haiti on February 20.

A unique addition to this year's baggage was pillowcase dresses, handmade by various individuals and groups. We were amazed when the ladies of Woman's Life Club 11, came to our office at the end of a day and began pulling dresses out of a large bag. Each dress had a special decorative button and bow on the shoulder strap. Colorful fabric of ladybugs, flowers, butterflies, and dots as dress after dress came out of the bag until 73 dresses filled our waiting room! But they didn't stop there. Another bag contained handmade shorts with newly purchased tee-shirts for little boys along with a generous monetary contribution. Still another box was filled with handmade hair bows, friendship bracelets, and hand-crafted necklaces. For several days leading up to our departure, more pillowcase dresses were delivered by the



**Each girl at the island orphanage received a new dress.**

ladies at First Presbyterian Church, and friends and family who joined the movement. More than 200 dresses and 100 pairs of shorts were carefully packed into our eight 50-pound bags, double our airline allotment.



**The orphanage boys were happy to have a new pair of shorts and a tee-shirt.**

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Bags ....

*(Continued from page 4)*

Also included in the bags were pharmaceuticals from Port Huron Hospital for delivery to the Wesleyan Hospital. Antibiotics were top on the list of priority drugs for treating earthquake survivors. We purchased children's vitamins, Tylenol, and pain medication with a gift card donated by Wal-Mart. One girl donated her personal collection of Beanie Babies, bringing smiles to the children in the hospital as well as our young dental patients.

The overwhelming devastation in Haiti is far reaching. The country will be in recovery long after the physical injuries have healed. For generations to come, survivors will share stories of their experience on January 12, 2010, stories of heroic rescues, untold hardships in living conditions, and stories of the generosity of people from many nations who came together to heal this tiny Caribbean nation. We were privileged

## Opportunity.....

*(Continued from page 2)*

placed, but for now we would cautiously work in the clinic, monitoring the cracks.

While we were unpacking and restocking the clinic, (most supplies had been depleted for emergency medical relief in Port-au-Prince) we heard about Donald and Murielle, the two displaced dental students. We immediately extended an invitation for them to join us in the clinic. With no prior clinical experience, it was exciting to guide them through their first extractions, first anesthetic, and first cleanings. Donald speaks fluent English so he was able to translate instructions and explanations for Murielle. In a very short time, both students were working independently, with assistance as needed. They were very pleased with this opportunity to further their education and apply some of the theories they had only studied. Whenever it is possible for them to return to school, they are sure to be at the top of their class.

Franz was our very efficient office manager and interpreter. We rely on him to organize the crowds that gather at the gate each morning, distributing numbers and managing emergen-

to be the hands in Haiti to share the compassion and generosity of so many individuals from the Port Huron community.



**This 6-year old received a dress, Beanie Baby, and hair bow for bravery in the dental chair!**

cies, while also keeping us supplied with sterile instruments.

Dr. Heck has been sponsoring Marie Carmel Thomas in a Port-au-Prince nursing school for two years. She, too, had left school early January 12 to take care of her sister who was ill. Marie Carmel also joined us in the dental clinic as a chair side dental assistant for a couple days until she began an intern position at the Wesleyan Hospital.

Donald's father, Dr. Luc, is a local dentist, formally educated in Port-au-Prince. He offers limited dental services for islanders, primarily making dentures and acrylic partials. We had worked with Dr. Luc many years ago, extracting teeth in a remote clinic. What a joy it was when Dr. Luc joined us one day and we became a dental team of seven, and five were Haitians!

A lengthy interruption in the educational system will be a huge set-back for many students. Fortunately, for these three promising professionals, they will be able to retain and apply much of their knowledge during this period of uncertainty.



Dear WISH Board of Directors, <sup>6</sup>

What a blessing you have been to the people of Haiti! Thank you for the use of some of your dental clinic supplies and equipment for medical relief efforts following the devastating earthquake of January 12<sup>th</sup>. They were an answer to prayer.

The items from the dental clinic were among the first supplies used to care for people immediately after the quake. Those instruments saved lives. Without them, we would have had no supplies to begin our relief work. The equipment was used and sterilized and used again for countless wound debridements, which removed non-viable tissue from injuries and helped to prevent gangrene. Your instruments enabled medical personnel to save limbs and lives. The availability of your equipment and the ready access to it were miraculous. Without it, we would not have been able to begin our work at such a critical time. People are alive today because of your generosity.

Thank you for equipping us to be Jesus' hands and feet during such a crucial time. Your kindness and generosity in sharing your equipment played a pivotal role in relief efforts. Thank you!

In His service,

Diane Busch, PA  
Wesleyan Medical  
Missionary to Haiti

