

Village Highlights

World Wide Village Incorporated Update

April 2008

"The Hatian people are strong, they are resilient, and they will play their part to elevate themselves from extreme poverty, but they cannot do it alone."

(Kimberly Green, accomplished philanthropist, writer and documentary filmmaker, as written in The Huffington Post, February 16, 2008)

In This Issue

Building Bridges to Help Haiti

Arcahaie School Decked Out with Desks

Pastors Get Revved Up

Hunger and Food Shortage

International Food Aid Conference

Planning Meeting for Festival for Haiti 2008

Saturday, Apr 26th

10:00 am

**Rudder Capital Offices
2980 Commers Drive
Suite 200
Eagan, MN**

We need many volunteers to make the event a success. Please consider attending and becoming a part of the team!

***Festival Date:
November 1, 2008***

World Wide Village actively serves the people of Haiti through research, investigation and collaboration with other ministries and organizations. This newsletter provides a brief update on our recent activities and the population we serve.

Building Bridges to Help Haiti

Last month World Wide Village joined the newly formed Haitian Assistance Networking Group, an organization seeking to build bridges among organizations that provide assistance to the people of Haiti. Randy and Pat Mortensen participated in a March 15 meeting of the group in Florida, sponsored by the Miami Rotary Club. Pat says they are optimistic that World Wide Village will benefit from the connections made. So far more than 30 organizations have committed to further work on collaborative efforts.

Arcahaie Decked Out with Desks



New writing desks at our Arcahaie Christian school have transformed the daily academic experience of more than 300 primary students, who until now were relegated to doing school work on their laps. Generous donations by World Wide Village supporters enabled us to purchase materials and hire local Haitians to complete this important project. While primitive by U.S. standards, the desks have improved not only the ergonomics of the classrooms, but the morale as well.

Pastors Get Revved Up

Two Haitian pastors shifted their ministries into high gear when World Wide Village presented each of them with a new dirt bike in January. The bikes make traveling to churches and surrounding villages much faster and safer than arduous trips by foot or donkey. Free-wheeling Pastors Sorel and Bathold, are part of Pastor Rene Joseph's ministry organization in the mountainous region northwest of Port Salut.



The Chinese-manufactured 125cc Jailing Enduro dirt bikes, which cost just \$1800 USD each (including license and insurance for a year), present an inexpensive means for vastly expanding pastoral ministries in remote areas of Haiti. For this reason, we intend to continue providing the bikes to pastors as funds permit.

(Photo: Pastor Rene Joseph (center) and Pat Mortensen present Pastor Sorel with the title and ownership documents for his new dirt bike.)

Hunger and Food Shortages

Prices of rice and beans, staples of the Haitian diet, have increased dramatically in recent months as food costs continue to rise worldwide. As a result, even more people in this desperately poor country are going hungry, creating an anxious and volatile situation. As one Haitian businessman put it, "Hunger breeds rebellion."

Market traders in Cap Haitien say that cooking oil and rice have doubled in price in the past few months. An American couple, Troy and Tara Livesay, who serve as missionaries in Haiti, recently noted in their blog (<http://livesayhaiti.blogspot.com/>) that the cost of rice in their area is up about 40 percent since 2006. "We cannot imagine trying to absorb that sort of increase as a Haitian making very little each month," they write.



As the number of people facing hunger increases, the voice of protest grows louder, though to no obvious gain. "It is understandable that people are getting angry," write the Livesays, "but unfortunately the protesting results in little positive change. We're praying for a great rainy season, growing gardens and that cooler heads prevail."

Haiti's desperate situation is exacerbated by two major vulnerabilities. First, its economy depends greatly on the United States. Funds from Haitians living in the U.S. who send money to relatives in Haiti account for 21 percent of the nation's gross domestic product. American tourists also contribute to the country's economy. So the economic slowdown in America is being felt in Haiti and an extended slump would spell disaster. Second, Haiti imports much of its food and all its oil. With world commodity prices at record levels, the nation's recent progress in controlling inflation - one of several successes since the U.N. began trying to rebuild Haiti in 2004 - is being threatened.

(Photo: Though street markets bustle with activity, soaring food costs are causing increased hunger and frustration among Haiti's poor.)

USAID/USDA International Food Aid Conference

World Wide Village has been invited to participate this month in the largest food aid conference in the United States. More than 700 people are expected to gather for the 10th Annual International Food Aid Conference. Participants from more than 25 countries will take part, representing private voluntary organizations, commodity and transportation companies, university scientists and administrators, as well as policy and operations staff from the USAID and USDA. The conference will be held April 14-16 in Kansas City.



Please keep World Wide Village and the people of Haiti in your prayers and consider contributing to its vital work in one of the world's most impoverished nations.

Until next time,

Randy + Pat

*Randy and Pat Mortensen
World Wide Village Incorporated*