



WINDOWS ON OUR WORLDS

News from PARTNERS IN PROGRESS (PIP) – Winter Special 2013

Friends of Partners in Progress (PIP), in this special winter edition of the Windows on Our Worlds newsletter we want to say most sincerely “mesi anpil” – “thank you very much” to our many friends and benefactors. Your loyal and generous support alone enables us to equip our Haitian partners with some of the technical, material, and financial resources they need to continue making their “odds-defying” progress toward building more resilient, sustainable communities in rural Haiti. Our donors – all of you – are special to us. Here we highlight just a few of your stories. Thanks to all of you for your continued solidarity with PIP and our Haitian partners. Ansaam nou ka rive pi lwen! - Together we can go farther!

“Hearts for Haiti” Volunteers Support St. Antoine School and PIP Outreach

Since 2001 **Sacred Heart Church** (Pittsburgh, PA) has been committed to supporting the **Association of Peasants of Fondwa** (APF) in the Fondwa community by adopting as its “sister school” the (then) newly reorganized, **St. Antoine School**, where education is esteemed as a “path to a better future”. Former Sacred Heart staff person, **Betty Hanigan**, after completing a PIP-sponsored “reverse mission pilgrimage” to Haiti in early 2001,



organized the “**Hearts for Haiti**” committee which mobilizes the church and school communities of Sacred Heart to raise the funds PIP uses to subsidize the salaries of St. Antoine School personnel. The “Hearts for Haiti” program is committed to raising \$18,000 annually, but normally exceeds that goal by as much as 50%!

“**Hearts for Haiti**” depends on PIP outreach presentations and the “**Windows on Our Worlds**” newsletter for current news and information about progress at the St. Antoine School. To further support of PIP’s mission, members of the “Hearts for Haiti” committee, working with PIP administrative assistant, **Becky Newlin**, volunteer their time to prepare the quarterly mailings PIP sends to its nearly 2000 friends and benefactors. Partners in Progress extends a “gwo mesi” (“BIG thank you”) to “Hearts for Haiti” volunteers **Nancy Blankenstein, Nancy Burrows, Marilyn Christian, Ellen Gunnell, Betty Hanigan, Michelle Hebert, Mary Lucidi, Mary McCormick, Pat Miller, Mary Ann Reynolds, Gretchen Stiehl, and Margie Ward.**

Young “Entrepreneur” Supports Rural Development in Haiti via Annual Event

Each year during the annual Fort Ligonier Days weekend in mid-October 12 year old **Claire Sirofchuck** of Ligonier, PA rises early – no matter the weather – to don her colonial period costume and organize a sidewalk stand in front of her parents’ main street **Main Exhibit Gallery** where she sells coffee, tea and cookies to many of the nearly 100,000 visitors who are attracted to the annual weekend celebration.

Normally Claire is at her station from 8 am until noon. However, during the time she’s participating in the two-hour-long Saturday parade, her refreshment business continues to operate on an “honor system”! The coffee and tea are donated by Claire’s parents – **Paul and Mandy Sirofchuck** – and cookies are homemade by her grandma, **Helen Sirofchuck**. The entire proceeds from Claire’s annual “Fort Days” entrepreneurial endeavors are used to support the work of Partners in Progress in rural Haiti.



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All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

The official registration and financial information of Partners in Progress may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling, toll-free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

“Anne’s Friends for Haiti” Continue a Legacy of Sustainable Rural Development

Before her untimely death from brain cancer in April 2011, PIP board member **Anne Mullaney** wanted to “*make a difference*” in the lives of children in Haiti and believed that she could do that by supporting PIP’s mission “*to promote and support sustainable community development in rural Haiti*”. In particular Anne undertook to raise the resources needed to complete the construction of a new elementary school classroom complex in the rural community of Deslandes on behalf of PIP’s **Centre d’Inspiration Jeunesse** (CIJ) or “Youth Inspiration Center” partners.

Following her death, members of Anne’s family and many of her closest friends created the “**Anne’s Friends for Haiti**” group to celebrate her life and honor her memory by continuing her work for PIP. They began raising funds to complete the second of three planned classroom buildings for the school, which is constructed of high-quality, locally-made “compressed earth blocks” (CEBs). Recently they sponsored a very successful fundraising and “friend-raising” event at **Mullaney’s Harp and Fiddle Irish Pub** in Pittsburgh’s “strip district”. The event, coordinated by pub manager, **Dave Regan**, and the **Anne’s Friends for Haiti** group, brought together many of Anne’s friends and family members along with regulars from the Harp and Fiddle “pub community”.



Ohio Crafters Create “Pillowcase Dresses” to Support “Skip a Lunch” Program

The **Creative Crafters** group at **Holy Angels Church** in Bainbridge, Ohio got together originally because they shared a mutual interest in creative activities. But the women who gathered to create also wanted to reach out to others who could be helped by their skilled handiwork. After seeing examples of “pillowcase dresses” used in Africa and hearing about the difficulties of daily life in Haiti they began making their own versions of “pillowcase dresses”. Creative Crafter and PIP supporter **Bonnie Brobowski** contacted PIP to find an outlet for their creations.



The dresses found a ready outlet through the pre-school nutrition and early education “head start” program at the **St. Louis de Montfort Church** in the Delmas section of Port au Prince. The “head start” program for “at risk” pre-schoolers was started by Holy Union Sister **Eileen Davey** and is supported by PIP’s “**Skip a Lunch**” program, originated by long-time PIP-supporter **Marlene Shaw** of Republic, PA.



Eight Year Old Develops Passion for Benefitting Children in Haiti Through PIP



Although only 8 years old, **Rebekah Young** developed an interest in PIP after hearing about the poverty in Haiti from her aunts **Vera Swiergol** and **Mary Kay Sedlacek**, both of whom became PIP supporters after visiting Haiti on a PIP-sponsored immersion delegation or “reverse mission pilgrimage”. Her true passion for the children of Haiti was ignited when her grandmother, **Glenda Gibb** was instrumental in getting children enrolled in the religious education program at their church to collect money for PIP as a Lenten service project. Rebekah was surprised to learn just how little money it takes to purchase necessities for children in Haiti.

Rebekah began inviting church-goers to drop “money for Haitian children” into a basket. In her mind, she “*was able to envision each brick, each backpack, and each bowl of rice the donations would yield*”. Rebekah also gathers loose change she finds when laundry is turned out and claims small bills left lying on the kitchen table too long! Like a typical 8-year-old, she makes a list for Santa at Christmas. This past year her list had only two items on it—a drum set and money for Haiti.

Partners in Progress

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