

Helping Haitians Help Themselves

PO Box 1062, West Bend, WI 53095 • www.viphaiti.org

A Message from the President



Several years ago, I went on a cruise. Beyond the scenery, the food and the company it is the steward that took care of my cabin that I remember most.

He talked about where he was from and how excited he was that he would be at his home for Christmas that year. He spoke of the traditions in his family. Small inexpensive gifts that are wrapped and food that is prepared. The thing that he was most looking forward to was that each year new curtains are hung in every window. His country sounds a lot like Haiti, an underprivileged country in the Caribbean. There are no screens or glass to keep the elements out. I think it is amazing that new curtains are enough for this family to be grateful to receive each year. Every December since my trip I think of this young man and wonder is he at home hanging curtains?

Is there something that is a must for your family every year? My niece and her husband are coming from Texas for Christmas. She wants to share with him the traditions that she has grown up with. We no longer exchange gifts but love spending

time together as a family. Are you having a hard time shopping for someone on your list? Maybe this year something purchased for someone less fortunate would be ideal. There are many options—sponsor a student, a water filter or two or a grant for a 4-H club.

We spend so much energy, money and time getting ready for Christmas (or whatever holiday you celebrate) we are tired by the time it arrives. Please enjoy your family and friends, sharing old stories and making new memories.

Without you, none of the things we do would be possible. This season, check out our website at www.viphaiti.org for more information. A Thank You is too simple of an expression for your continued support and assistance in 'Helping Haitians Help Themselves'. From all of us on the board of Ventures In People we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

-Julie Stauss, President

Thank You!

Gift given in honor of

George Schowalter

By Chris and Karen Karnish

4-H: 'Tis the Season

There is no denying that the holiday season and the tradition of gift giving go hand in hand. It is encouraging to see how this time of year brings out the generosity in people, but sometimes the material and consumeristic nature of it all annoys me. Can you relate? I read an article recently that said the average American home owns 300,000 items. No, that is not a typo—300,000! Yet, our society bombards us with the message of more, more, more, especially around the holidays.

How often do we give or receive items that end up forgotten, broken, used up, or discarded before the next holiday even comes along? How often do we give material gifts just because of social expectations? There is nothing wrong with gifting- I will be picking out some unique gifts and handcrafting a few items.

But, I also believe that there is another way to make our giving more meaningful this Christmas: include Ventures in People or other charities.

I work in a profession where it is very common to receive gifts around the holidays. Usually I am inundated with more chocolates, coffee mugs, and candles that I know what to do with. This year, I decided to ask potential gift-givers to donate to one of my favorite charities instead. (And yep, VIP is on the list!) Many people need help more than me, so I would rather pay it forward.

Perhaps you will join me. Do you have any loved ones who you know will want to spend

money on you, but there is really nothing you need? Ask them to donate to VIP on your behalf. Is there someone who is hard to shop for every year? Provide an education, clean water, 4-H grant, or goat sponsorship in their honor.

When you include Ventures in People in your holiday giving, you can reconnect with the true meaning of the season and feel good knowing that your money is making a life-changing difference in people's lives!

Holiday Blessings,

Jocelyn Ritger

Ventures in People 4-H Coordinator

Water Filters: Does it Work?

I am often asked does the Point One filter work. I have distributed about 5,000 (not all from VIP) of these filters in Haiti throughout the last four years. We have called recipients and community organizers and asked that question. Almost everyone says "YES!" How do they know? "Because we do not get diarrhea any more since using the filter." Another question is how long does it last? The manufacturer originally had a claim of 1 million gallons. My calculations for a family of five is 180 years of use. The company has since replaced that claim with a lifetime warranty. Of course there is a small amount of maintenance required. When too much dirt gets into the filter it has to be back flushed. This is a simple procedure that recipients are taught and try on their own before they receive their filter. So Yes—They work!

Ken Schumann

Education: Sponsorship Program



Adventiste School

One of the schools that some of VIP's sponsored children attend is **ADVENTISTE**.



Ferdius Fils (right) talking with Louis

The principal of the school is **Carton Louis Ferdus Fils**. He taught for fifteen years at Adventiste before becoming the principal in 1987. He received his education from government schools and his

church. 478 students attend this school from Kindergarten through Secondary. There are 40 teachers, and in the Secondary there is one teacher for every subject taught. The teachers are from the area and most of them received their education at a four-year Normal School in Port au Prince. Since 1978 students have been served food at the school each day. However, right now they are not. The World Bank gave money to the government for food, but the government didn't distribute it to the schools. Students are given government exams which they must pass in order to advance to the next grade. Adventiste is one of the original schools chosen by VIP at the beginning of the education program. By helping sponsor children you help the students, families and the schools.

Education: English Program

We want you to meet Johnny Philogene (right) who is one of the English teachers supported by VIP. He teaches English in grades 3 and 4 at Adventiste School. He



attended the Caribbean English School in Port au Prince for four years. His dream was to teach English and to be a translator. Following is what Johnny responded on video to Ann's question about why he thinks it's important for students to learn English: "It is a good opportunity for the students who are learning English right now because, when I was a child I did not have this opportunity to learn English at this age so I really like the program. I hope God gives you the opportunity to keep on doing the same thing, and He is going to bless you for what you are doing for the nation. I am talking about Haiti. I am happy to take part in it."



Education: Continued

Ann Neumann and Karen Hintz just returned from Haiti and were able to take a picture of every child in our program but one. A great accomplishment! It was a joy for them to be with the children as well as with principals and staff. Our education coordinator, Louis Tenior Guerrier, accompanied them translating and keeping records. We have already gotten most of the pictures out to our sponsors.

We share with you a quote from Abraham Lincoln— **“The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next.”**

We thank everyone who partners with Ventures in People in educating the children of Mirebalais, Haiti.

Ready To Get Involved?

We need you! Come and join us for a board meeting next year. We meet in West Bend on 5 Monday nights throughout the year.

Here are the dates for 2018:

February 19th

April 16th

June 18th

September 17th

November 19th

For more information contact Julie at julie.stauss@viphaiti.org



Looking for an adventure?

Willing to help?

Come to Haiti with VIP!

Start thinking about a trip in
January 2019.

We will continue to place details in newsletters to come!