

## Helping Haitians Help Themselves

PO Box 1062, West Bend, WI 53095 • [www.viphaiti.org](http://www.viphaiti.org)

### A Message from the President



This year has gone by so quickly for me, how about for you? The last few weeks I have been going through paperwork that

belonged to my parents and grandparents. All of them are no longer here. I found a scrapbook that was started by my Grandma in February of 1936. Old newspaper articles and pictures of people who I don't recognize but somehow are part of me. My Dad saved old report cards and pictures he drew in school. Maybe it is the time of year when we think of holidays spent with family and friends that are gone or maybe I just miss how simple things were when I was young. Decisions were made for me and things I needed to survive were provided by Grandpa, Grandma, Mom and Dad. My Mom used to tell the story that she didn't have to buy me a dress until I was 2 years old. The rest of the family was so excited to finally have a girl in the family, they kept buying my clothes for me. Hopefully this story brings memories of your own. Now think of the Haitian people who struggle each and every day to provide clean

water, food and a better life for their family. Please help us to provide some of these things for the people who so desperately can't do it alone. Some of us have been blessed to have very comfortable lives and are willing to share our good fortune. Sponsor a student, English Teacher salaries, 4-H grant, goats or water filters can make a big difference in the life of a family. Check out our website at [www.viphaiti.org](http://www.viphaiti.org) to see how to make a difference.

~Julie Stauss—President

### Are You an Online Shopper?

**amazon**smile  
You shop. **Amazon gives.**

Join us on [amazonsmile.com](http://amazonsmile.com) and register to support Ventures in People. After choosing VIP for your charity, every time you shop through Amazon Smile, VIP gets a donation from Amazon just because you shopped online! Shop Amazon Smile to continue to help support our projects in Haiti!

## Student Education

If you would be in Haiti right now looking ahead to the celebration of Christmas, you would begin by painting plastic water bottles bright colors and hanging them from trees or using plastic bags as decorations.



The Christmas tree is important to the Haitians. Those who can afford it decorate their trees with lots of ornaments and lights. For those who are poor, they cut down pine branches and put what ever they have around it to decorate them. Those who can always put a nativity scene at the bottom of the tree.



On Christmas Eve children place their cleaned shoes, filled with straw, under the tree in hopes that Santa (Tonton Nwel) will replace

the straw with gifts in and around the shoe.

Our Education Coordinator in Haiti, Louis Tenior Guerrier, tells us that many people go to Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, and when they come home they eat a meal called, *Reveillon* (Christmas Supper or the French call it “Wake Up”). The meal consists of rice and beans and chicken. It normally begins in the early hours of the morning along with some singing and dancing until dawn. Children are allowed to go out and sometimes the parents don’t know where they are. The older children are expected to watch over the young ones and they all drink “Anisette” which is a drink made by soaking anise leaves in rum and sweetened with sugar. On Christmas Day the people are usually tired so they may exchange gifts and be with family. On New Year’s Day they eat pumpkin soup (Joumou). This is symbolic to the Haitians as it stands for their freedom. The French would not let them have it when they were slaves. That is behind them now so pumpkin soup is eaten by all at the beginning of the New Year.

The children have about two weeks off from school around this holiday. We hope that all of the children in our VIP program will have a time of worship, good food, song & dance, and a shoe filled with a gift. Thank you to all our sponsors for filling each our their shoes with the gift of education.

**“Jwaye Nowe”  
(Merry Christmas)!**

## Counting our Blessings

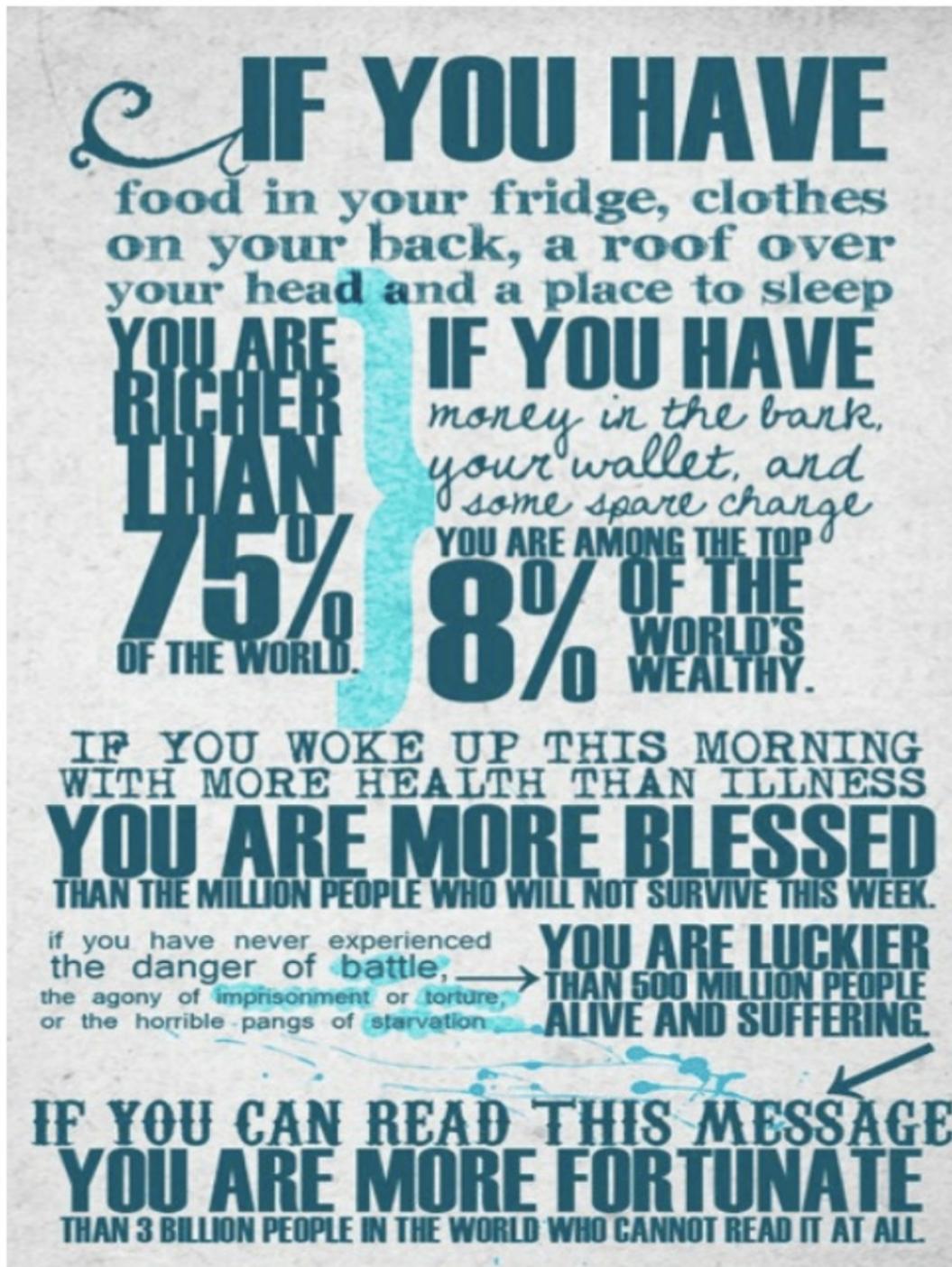
With the holidays upon us, it's easy to get stressed and overwhelmed with all the decorating, shopping, parties, baking, traveling, etc! And not to mention the impact on our wallets! Amidst all the things on your to-do list, I challenge you to take a moment to reflect on how fortunate you are compared to the rest of the world's population, including our friends in Haiti. Below is a passage that I feel puts our daily lives into perspective quite well.

I hope you'll join me in considering ways to simplify the holidays and share your love and blessings with others.

Wishing you a safe and heartwarming holiday season!

*Jocelyn Ritger*

Ventures in People  
4-H Coordinator

**IF YOU HAVE**  
food in your fridge, clothes on your back, a roof over your head and a place to sleep  
**YOU ARE RICHER THAN 75% OF THE WORLD.**

**IF YOU HAVE**  
money in the bank, your wallet, and some spare change  
**YOU ARE AMONG THE TOP 8% OF THE WORLD'S WEALTHY.**

**IF YOU WOKE UP THIS MORNING WITH MORE HEALTH THAN ILLNESS YOU ARE MORE BLESSED THAN THE MILLION PEOPLE WHO WILL NOT SURVIVE THIS WEEK.**

if you have never experienced the danger of battle, the agony of imprisonment or torture, or the horrible pangs of starvation → **YOU ARE LUCKIER THAN 500 MILLION PEOPLE ALIVE AND SUFFERING.**

**IF YOU CAN READ THIS MESSAGE YOU ARE MORE FORTUNATE THAN 3 BILLION PEOPLE IN THE WORLD WHO CANNOT READ IT AT ALL.**

Please note: I was unable to verify that these statistics are 100% accurate or updated, but I hope you still find the message thought-provoking.

## Get the Newsletter Electronically

Visit us at [viphaiti.org](http://viphaiti.org) to sign up online. Click on the Newsletter tab and register to get the newsletter by email. Then, Email Julie at [julie.stauss@viphaiti.org](mailto:julie.stauss@viphaiti.org) to remove your name and address from our physical mailing list.

# Thank You

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us on the Board here at Ventures in People. We want to thank you for all of your support throughout 2018. Thanks to you, this year alone we have been able to sponsor over 200 students, 29 4-H Clubs, 10 goats & goat care training, 5 English Teachers, and in a joint effort with the Rotarians distribute 1,150 water filters in Haiti. All because of you! THANK YOU! Let's make 2019 another great year!



## In Honor Of

Student Sponsorship donated in honor of Madi Grzesiak.

~Given by Beth & Mike Grzesiak

Student Sponsorship donated in honor of Marisa Gzesiak

~Given by Beth & Mike Grzesiak

Student Sponsorships donated in honor of Kate Make

~Given by Beth & Mike Grzesiak

Donation given in honor of George Schowalter

~Given by Ralph Schultz

Don't know what to get that person who has everything for Christmas? Want to remember a loved one? Need an idea for a birthday/anniversary gift? Donate to Ventures in People in Honor/ Remembrance of that special someone!

## Join Ventures in People

Interested in what happens at a board meeting? Want to get involved? Come join us in 2019! We meet in West Bend just 5 Mondays throughout the year!

February 18

April 15

June 17

September 16

November 18

Contact Julie for more information at [julie.stauss@viphaiti.org](mailto:julie.stauss@viphaiti.org)