



# Haiti Outreach Newsletter

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## Meet Our Interns

Haiti Outreach is very pleased to have two great interns working with us in Haiti for the school year 2008-2009. Matt Ballog, whose home is in Coto de Caza, California, graduated from the Illinois Institute of Technology in



Chicago in May of 2008 with a degree in civil engineering. He began his internship with Haiti Outreach in August and will be leaving Haiti in April of this year in order to get

married and start his career in engineering and construction. Matt has had many responsibilities with us in Haiti. He has served as the contractor to hire workers and supervise the completion of the addition on the public secondary school in Pignon. He has also been working on water system projects in Pignon and La Victoire. Matt says, "Haiti has taught me a lot and I have had a lot of fun working here."

Matt Finkel decided to become an intern with Haiti Outreach after completing his junior year at the University of Minnesota. A student majoring in computer engineering, Matt has been very useful in helping our computer system in Haiti get more efficient and helping to develop our custom FileMaker program that we use to manage our work there. Matt has also been working on developing dynamic maps of our well database. Matt hails from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, started with us in September, and will complete his internship in August. He says, "It has been an excellent experience down here so far, and I continue to learn every day." Matt will be returning to complete his senior year at UMN before he starts his career in computer engineering.

We will miss our "two Matts," who have served us well this year. We already have a few interns lined up for 2009 – 2010. Javan Minor is a geology student at Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL, a suburb of Chicago. Wheaton has an internship program called HNGR (Human Needs and Global Resources) where they support and give credit to students who spend six months in another country working on specific projects. Katherine Thibault has also agreed to be an intern with us this next year. She graduated from University of Wisconsin, Madison with a degree in international studies.

We began our program two years ago with Richfield, MN native Walter James. Walter had graduated from the University of Minnesota in December of 2006 and starting a 6 month internship in January of 2007. He did a great job for us and enjoyed being in Haiti, so he returned with us in October of 2007 and stayed for 8 more months. Today Walter is a graduate student at the University of Maryland, getting a Master's Degree in Public Policy.

During the winter/spring semester of 2008, we also had University of Minnesota mechanical engineering student Winston Elliott serve as an intern for Haiti Outreach. Winston's home is Miami, Florida, and he is completing his senior year at the UMN. Winston also did a great job for us. We wish him, Walter, and our two Matts well and thank them for their contribution to our community development work in Haiti.

## Crosslake Youth Group Sells Pumpkins, Raises \$2,264 for Haiti Outreach

The Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Youth Group in Crosslake, MN joined Deacon Jim Kirzeder (Haiti Outreach Board Member) in his continued efforts in Haiti by running a pumpkin patch to benefit Haiti Outreach. The Group sold pumpkins and gourds, supplied at no cost by the Pumpkin Patch fundraiser organization and the Youth Group was able to send 25% of the profits to their desired charity. The Youth Minister at Immaculate Heart church thought it would be a fun and great way to get the youth of the parish involved in Deacon Jim's mission in Haiti.

After the delivery of over 1000 pumpkins (of which all had to be unloaded one pumpkin at a time), the pumpkin patch was up and running. The patch had to be manned

8 hours a day for 3 weeks. Although the Group encountered snow, heavy frost and one tent collapse, all in all it went well. The youth helped unload the truck, distribute flyers and spent many hours selling pumpkins at the patch. Many other parishioners aided in the daytime hours of the patch when the youth were busy at school. The pumpkin patch created an opportunity for the youth group to help those in need, but the added blessing was many hours of parishioners having time to get to know each other.

The Pumpkin Patch was a great success. The Youth Group sold \$5,255.00 in pumpkins and also received an additional \$950.00 in donations. The Group plans to plant their own patch in 2009 to increase sales and donations to Haiti. Congratulations and thank you!



*Thank you Karen and Jack Gray for sharing this story.*

## Free Informational Luncheon and Fundraiser: April 28th in Excelsior, MN

Haiti Outreach is holding a free luncheon and fundraising event on Tuesday, April 28 starting promptly at noon and ending promptly at 1:00 pm at the Bayview Event Center in Excelsior, MN. This is a great time for our friends to bring their relatives, co-workers, and friends to become acquainted with Haiti Outreach, what we have accomplished using our model of sustainable community development, and our exciting plans to help develop the country of Haiti. Featured speaker at this event will be Neil Van Dine, our Country Director in Haiti, who will talk about our progress in well drilling, particularly on the island of La Gonave, and our community initiative program. Reservations are requested. Please call Pam Murray at 612-929-1122 or email her at [pammurray@haitioutreach.org](mailto:pammurray@haitioutreach.org) by April 21st. We would love to see you and your friends there!

## Key Visite: Built and Being Used

If you received our November, 2008 newsletter, you read the story about the construction of our “Kay Visite”, meaning “Guest House” in Haitian Creole, which was underway at that time. We are pleased to report that by March 1<sup>st</sup>, three travel groups have already used the new facility, and three additional groups will be using it in March. While the Kay Visite is not 100% complete, there only remains the completion of the painting and a few other odds and ends. We hope to have it totally done no later than June.

The Kay Visite consists of 8 bedrooms that comfortably sleep 16 people, each with its own bathroom, plus a kitchen, large combination living and dining room, storage rooms and an office. We hired a Haitian contracting firm to build the facility and had a number of great volunteer groups led by Board members Jim Kirzeder and Mark Hoiseth do the electrical, plumbing and other finishing work.



One major feature of the Kai Visite is the solar electrification system that now supplies both this building and our headquarters building with enough electricity that we no longer need to generate electricity using diesel fuel. This will save thousands of dollars every year because we will no longer need to purchase this fuel for this purpose. It also saves the wear and tear on our trucks, which had to travel most of a day to Cap Haitian and back to get our large holding tank refilled.

There are many people to thank for their generosity in donating thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of volunteer time to help us create this wonderful facility. They include Ken and Judi Van Dine, Tom and Elizabeth Tuttle, Chris and Holm, Bill and Amy Radichel, David and Margaret Prosser, Jim and Tom Kirzeder, Jim Dullinger, Billy Mack, Doug Troge, Rich Baumann, Mark Geraets, Chad Mayes, Roger Hilgers, Nathaniel Pearson, Ron Ringhand, and Larry and Nathan Barrett. We especially thank Board member Mark Hoiseth for his countless hours in designing the building, gathering a container load of materials to ship to Haiti, and traveling there a number of times to help with the finish work and lead our first travel group to use it. Board member Jim Kirzeder has also done tremendous service for Haiti Outreach in the last six months, not only with the Kay Visite but other projects such as hurricane repair in October.

If you would like to travel with Haiti Outreach to visit our community development projects, see the people and experience the culture of Haiti, and participate in a small work project, please visit our website ([www.HaitiOutreach.org](http://www.HaitiOutreach.org)) and select “Upcoming Trips” to get more details and keep informed of the trip schedule.

## Wells in Haiti: A Fitting Memorial for Iowa Rotarian

About ten years ago Jerry Willis, a member of the Chariton, Iowa Rotary Club, visited the community of Perches in northern Haiti with his church group. He noticed how the people had to travel long distances to get water from rivers that were most likely contaminated. There were NO clean water wells in the area. He returned to Chariton with the hope that one day he would go back to Perches and help the people there drill a well.

Unfortunately Jerry died a couple years ago with that hope unfulfilled, and so his family dedicated \$10,000 as a memorial to him for wells to be dug in Perches. Rotarians Jeanne and Corliss Klassen headed up an effort to raise an additional \$15,000 and applied to Rotary International for a \$25,000 matching grant. That grant was approved, making a total of \$50,000 available for the drilling of ten community wells in the Perches area.

Because of our long-standing record of drilling community wells in Haiti and our great relationship working with many Rotary clubs, we were asked to collaborate with the Chariton Rotary Club and the host Rotary Club in Cap Haitian, Haiti to drill these wells. We are happy to report that this project is now underway and three wells in the Perches area are now complete, with two more nearing completion. By sometime in May, all ten wells will have been drilled. Thousands of people will soon have clean and available water every day, due to the dedication of one man, his family and friends, and Rotary. As a result of this work, lives will literally be saved and many children and adults will remain healthy. We at Haiti Outreach, on behalf of the people in the Perches area, express our immense gratitude to Jerry and everyone else who made this project possible.

## Chicago Fundraiser on April 25

### Haiti Outreach - IIT Raises Funds for Computer Lab, Electrification

The Haiti Outreach Illinois Institute of Technology student division, along with other Chicago residents who support our community development work in Haiti, are holding a fundraiser on Saturday, April 25 from 6:00 – 9:00 pm at the McCormick Tribune Campus Center on the IIT campus. The Engineers Without Borders students have designed a solar electrification project that includes wiring a computer lab and equipment to access the Internet at the Lycee Nationale, the public secondary school in Pignon. They intend to raise the funds needed to not only create this system, but to purchase laptop computers so that the lab is functional.

The event begins with a social hour from 6 – 7:00 pm, with Haitian music, appetizers and a cash bar. The dinner and program follow, and feature the IIT students explaining that project and two clean water projects they have designed for Haiti. Guest speakers will include Haitian Consul Leslie Conde, Haiti Outreach Country Director Neil Van Dine and Hidson Nelson, Deputy to the Haitian Parliament representing the Pignon area. If you know anyone in the Chicago area who might be interested in attending this event or would like more information, please call toll free 866-795-3805 or check out these web sites: [www.HaitiOutreach.org](http://www.HaitiOutreach.org) and [www.iit.edu/~haiti](http://www.iit.edu/~haiti).

## Coming Events with Haiti Outreach Mark Your Calendars Today!

**Saturday, April 25 – In Chicago, IL – Haiti Outreach – IIT Fundraiser (see related story in this newsletter)**

**Tuesday, April 28 – In Excelsior, MN – Free Informational Luncheon and Fundraiser (see related story in this newsletter)**

**Friday, May 15 – In Minneapolis, MN – Sponsored by the Uptown Rotary Club and held at the Minnehaha Country Club - Scotch and Chocolate Tasting Fundraiser for Secondary School in La Victoire (details in separate mailing to go out in April)**

**June 15 – 23 – Intergenerational Trip to Haiti**

**Saturday, July 25 – In Minneapolis, MN overlooking Mississippi River – Rotary Partnership for Haiti Fundraiser for Secondary School in La Victoire (details in a separate mailing to go out in May)**

**August 3 – 11 – (Dates Tentative) Open Group Trip to Haiti**

**September 26 – In Bloomington, MN - Annual Fall Fundraiser (details to go out in July, invitations in August)**

**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR CURRENT INFORMATION ON THESE AND OTHER HAITI OUTREACH EVENTS – [WWW.HAITIOUTREACH.ORG](http://WWW.HAITIOUTREACH.ORG)**