

Zanmi Detroit

April 2006

Volume 4, No. 1

Haitian Network Group of Detroit

From the President



Dr. Marie Soledad Nelson

In upcoming weeks, the Haiti Outreach Mission (HOM) will head to Haiti to fulfill the commitment it made to the residents of Mirebalais, Haiti. The founders of this program are Haitian-born, Dr. Dominique Monde-Matthews and her husband Roger Matthews. Since its inception in 1998, the mission has built a bakery, a school and an orphanage in the town. The mission normally spends a period of 10 days in Haiti and consists of medical personnel, construction workers, electricians, computer experts, and translators that work on various projects in the town of Mirebalais. The medical team normally treats over one thousand patients during the short time. Critical cases are usually referred to hospitals in Port-au-Prince or Cange, Haiti.

The Haiti Outreach Mission has made a great impact while improving the lives of the residents of Mirebalais. I can tell you the story of a nine-year-old girl that we met approximately four years ago during one of our trips. She was diagnosed with a heart condition which required surgery and HOM arranged for her to travel to Detroit to receive the life saving operation at Children's Hospital of Michigan.

Last year we were fortunate enough to have Dr. Mimi Adams on our team. She is the first dentist to serve the mission and she left us all speechless with the work that she was able to accomplish during such a short period of time. This year was also marked by the achievement of one of our long term goals; we were able to staff the Mirebalais clinic with a physician and a dentist who can treat patients year round during our absence.

HOM continues to grow and is largely supported by Detroit area churches and several local fundraisers. Yearly, a group of 45-50 people journey to Haiti, but only a handful of Haitians from the community make the trip. A few members of the community have been extremely supportive of this program; however, there is room for a lot more to be done. In order to see our dreams for Haiti come true, we must take an active role in the remarkable work that has been pioneered by the Mathews family. I encourage members to join our

mission to improve Haiti and not be content to let others do this job for us.

Many of us are unaware that conditions in Haiti have severely deteriorated since we left the country years ago. When I first returned to Haiti with HOM, I found a country lacking the basic necessities we take for granted in the United States. Electricity, food and water are supplied to the people either inconsistently or not at all. The situation has worsened to a point that I now see my involvement with the mission as an obligation rather than a simple gesture of altruism.

You can support this program in numerous ways. Attend one of the many fundraisers organized throughout the year. Help us pack medications and food to send to Haiti. Most importantly, accompany us on our next trip to Haiti and witness the state of affairs for yourself. The need is so great that whatever you can do is sure to help someone. This is a cry for my fellow Haitians in the Detroit Metropolitan area to come together in aid of our people. I hope to see you soon. Remember that "L'Union Fait la Force" and that together we can make a difference! ♦

Mark Your Calendar

May 6

Fundraiser for Ms. Haiti (Suggestions appreciated)

May 7

Fashion show
Lawrence Technological Institute
Science Auditorium
Time 3:00 PM

May 19

Haiti Outreach Mission Trip to Haiti

June 3

Awards Banquet
Keynote Speaker Dr. Leslie Balan-Gaubert

October

HNGD Film Festival

December 16

HNGD Christmas Party

Special Thanks

Rosario Danier

On September 18, 2004, Haiti's fourth largest city, Gonaives, was hit by tropical storm Jeanne. Within hours, the city was flooded and over 2,000 people perished. Many were washed out to sea and more than 200,000 were left homeless. Upwards of 80% of the city was affected by the disaster. As one of the poorest countries in the western hemisphere, Haiti was ravaged and unable to cope with the aftermath of a natural disaster similar to Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and the tsunami in the Indian city of Kashmir.



Pierre Richard Lamarre, a very active Haitian in the community, took matters into his own hands and decided to help. He requested the assistance of the Haitian Network Group of Detroit. As a non-profit organization, The HNGD used all its resources to galvanize the community into action. Through persistent and tireless effort, fund raising activities generated more than \$10,000, which was donated to the Haiti Red Cross.

During a time of great need, we were able to count on the friends of HNGD like the Caribbean Cultural and Carnival Organization (CCCO) and many others who donated generously.

We would like to extend our gratitude to those who have opened their hearts to lend a hand to our compatriots here and aboard. It is under these unfortunate circumstances that we have come to realize the goal and mission of the Haitian network Group is not only to provide the opportunity for Haitian and Friends to network, but also to comfort ourselves with the knowledge that our friends and community will always be there to help us. ♦



Victims of Hurricane Jeanne

Miss Haiti 2006

Catherine Auguste

Ms. Tania Balan-Gaubert will represent Haiti in the 2006 Caribbean Cultural and Carnival Organization (CCCO) Pageant. Her father, Dr. William Leslie Balan-Gaubert has been a supporter of our organization as well as a guest speaker on several occasions. Although born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, Tania identifies heartily with her Haitian roots (both her parents are from Haiti.) She enjoys Haitian cuisine and

enjoyed her recent visit to Haiti. She is a full time student on academic scholarship at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. She is studying psychology and intends to pursue advanced graduate work leading to a PhD. Her active memberships include the New Student Orientation, B.L.U.E (Black Ladies United at Earlham), and the Track & Field team. Reading, drawing and painting are among her hobbies. As the previous Miss Haiti (2004), and her cousin, I am proud that she will be representing our beloved Haiti. We wish you good luck Tania and we love you dearly! ♦



Tania Balan-Gaubert

Detroit's Haitian Star

Catherine Auguste

Jessica Lamarre, who most of the community has watched grow up, is no longer a little girl. Since the age of 5, Jessica has had extensive training in ballet, tap, jazz, modern, African, and hip-hop dance. From there she continued to explore various areas of the performing arts. She began signing at an early age in the choir at her elementary school and continued through high school. During her high school career she started performing in plays and musicals. Now, at the age of 19, she is a first year student at Wayne State University majoring in communications and she continues to pursue dancing and signing. She is a vocalist in the dynamic group "Roc Stea'd" along with lyricist Brittany Elliot. Together they create sounds that have never been heard before. They



Jessica Lamarre



Brittany Elliot

performed together in the play "Honor and Shame" at the African American Museum in Detroit, where they demonstrated their strong talent and love for the arts. "The best feeling in the world is performing on stage where I can release any type of anger or feelings and showcase what I love doing whether it is singing, dancing, or acting", says Jessica. Performing has taken Jessica far. She has had the privilege to perform on stage with people such as Mariah Carey, President Clinton, and as a cast member in the well-known play "The Harlem Nutcracker." Jessica's passion for singing and dancing will surely carry her to success. With supportive family, friends, and community she is destined to become a true star. We could not be more proud of her accomplishments and anxiously await her next sensational performance! ♦

Literary Corner



The Haitian

For Rosario
Stella L. Crews

More than an Island
Way of thinking or a chance
To expose the world to
A tropical dance.
These are Creole days
Infused by syllables
From France.

Price of a sire, madear's
Flower grown stealthy
Into a behemoth
Sized tower.
In stride power
Measured like languages
By hours.

In the work of the day
Or at rest for the week
Extend the mind's
Best way to speak.
These are Creole ways,
Like a sand shifted beach
Altered constructs
From Nord Amerique

Meet Molly

Molly Cahill

Greetings! My name is Molly Cahill of Howell MI. I recently moved from Dallas TX, but am originally from Naples, Florida. I have a B.S. from the University of Miami and an Information Technology degree from the International College of Naples.

I have been a proud HNGD member for over one year and I accepted the appointment to the HNGD board as secretary in January 2006.

After relocating to Michigan, though I was surrounded by a myriad of beautiful and colorful fall leaves, I longed to communicate and socialize with other Haitians. I began a search online and discovered the HNGD. I learned more about this non profit organization by attending meetings regularly. In this manner, I learned that the HNGD had a strong passion for the Haitian community in the Detroit area, and also had a great dedication to those in Haiti. HNGD not only promotes Haitian culture, but strives to keep Haitians connected and informed of key issues. It is truly a group that serves as a refuge for many. ♦

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Please visit my Web site at www.marykay.com/mdanjou. Remember: I'm always here to help you, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Please feel free to contact me via email or telephone if I can assist you with a product selection, questions or any order requests you may have.

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Zanmi Detroit is published by the Haitian Network Group of Detroit,
 whose mission is to promote Haitian culture and
 provide a forum for Haitians and friends to network.

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