

WISH NEWSLETTER

JAN/FEB 2005

HERE'S WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING ON LAGONAVE

Work teams were a welcome start for this new year on LaGonave. Two dental teams overlapped in January and Dick Doan will be there for a month to work with Joe Larakers on solutions for the waterline situation.

The Ice Plant continues to operate with only three machines currently running due to mechanical problems. However the cooler weather has reduced the demand for ice so we are still able to meet consumer needs. Ants are eating holes in the plastic bags used to manufacture ice in the refrigeration machines. The ants also get into the food, eat holes in clothes and linens, and they bite. Joe is constantly working on measures to control these pests.

The WISH Mall project is providing business opportunities for local craftsmen. New galvanized corrugated roofing was recently installed on units #6,#7, and #8 (see photo below) with concrete foundations completed for units #9,#10, and #11. Joe reports that many people have approached him for an opportunity to open their own business in one of these units. Candidates are very carefully screened for moral and spiritual integrity.



The Saline Church construction continues as two block walls were recently completed inside the building. The WISH Benevolence Fund provides food for the many poor people and children of this destitute area on the "saline", or salt flats created by the tides.

The mainland wharf has sadly deteriorated. Work is underway to repair and construct a safe and functional docking area for the mission boats when they cross to the mainland and load supplies.

The WISH Web Site provides back-ground information about our mission and the most current newsletter with **color photos**. So, log on to WWW.haitiwish.org for the best view in living color!

SEE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR MORE STORIES



Randy Chaisson, Dick Doan, Caleb Stephenson, Mike Billings, Dean Stephenson, and Maurice Robert stand beneath the steel water tanks which will use solar energy to warm water for showers. Dick became acquainted with this team from New Brunswick Canada last summer at a Wesleyan Camp. Future teams will praise this amenity!

LOCAL SHOEMAKER OPENS BUSINESS IN WISH MALL



Above, Pierre Joseph displays one of his custom-made shoes at the door of his shop. The Dutch-doors provide security and help to keep the dust out.

Inside the shop, below, Pierre displays his finished work.



The WISH Mall provides a secure shop space with electricity for reputable entrepreneurs to open their own businesses. Pierre Joseph is just one of those grateful artisans who opened his own cobbler shop in this prime location last September. Learning his trade as an apprentice some 40 years ago in Port-au-Prince, Pierre has been making, repairing, and reconditioning shoes in Anse-a-Galets for about 15 years. He is also skilled in upholstering everything from chairs to motorcycles. Through this business, Pierre is able to support his extended family. He is also passing on the skills of his trade to a young apprentice who is also supporting a family.

Several people are often seen trying on shoes in the small space inside the shop. With materials purchased in Port-au-Prince, Pierre makes an average pair of shoes for \$10-\$12 dollars US. A pair of custom-made leather sandals costs about \$8. He will totally recondition a pair of shoes, including new soles, for around \$5 for women and \$7 for men. Since most Haitians walk several miles every day, the rough, rocky roads of LaGonave can wear through a pair of soles very quickly. There doesn't seem to be any shortage of work for this craftsman in the foreseeable future.

Remembering Abby

Abby Byl, who served many years as secretary for the WISH Board of Directors, passed away February 2 in Grand Haven, just one week short of her 90th birthday. She is survived by her husband, Bill, sons, Bill Jr., Daniel, and daughter, Susan. Bill and Abby visited WISH founder, Tony Wolf, on LaGonave in the 1970's. Abby's hospitality, efficiency, and energy were a blessing to all who knew her. Memorials may be made to WISH or the building fund for 2nd Christian Reformed Church in Grand Haven.

their experience in mission dentistry and were surprised and impressed to find such a nice dental facility in this environment. The team was encouraged by the number of requests they had for fillings and cleanings. As this Boston team returned home to a major blizzard with three feet of snow, they reflected on their warmer days back on LaGonave. The team was grateful for the opportunity to “use our professional skills to benefit those less fortunate and for the opportunity to spend a week in the company of Pastor Joe and Pat Larakers, an inspirational couple.”



This patient is very fortunate to receive root canal treatment to save her severely decayed tooth.

While the Boston team worked in the clinic, Dr. Greg Dorowski and his daughter, Elizabeth, from Long Island, extracted teeth in some outlying mountain and coastal villages. This team was hosted by the Service Christian organization in Anse a Galets. As Dr. Ric's team departed, Dr. Greg moved into the WISH clinic for an additional three days. Dr. Greg has been to LaGonave for several years and always appreciates the opportunity to use the WISH clinic where he is able to offer full dental services. Elizabeth has joined him on many of those trips and is now ready to enter dental school. The experience she has gained through assisting her father in mission dentistry is sure to give her an advantage in dental school.

CONTAINER STALLED IN MIAMI

Customs inspectors in Miami have impounded our sea container pending additional paperwork related to its contents and rigid packing requirements for some items. On the positive side, we've avoided paying storage fees while we were waiting for word from Haiti that it was safe to ship. However, additional charges have accumulated to hire people to handle the necessary papers and repacking of the container. Please surround this issue with your prayers for its release and that we will receive funds to cover 100% of the costs.

Classified

HELP WANTED - person experienced in low-temp refrigeration to assist with ice plant maintenance. Contact Bob Port at 314-781-1864 or email rport@sbcglobal.net.