



Contributions, Address Changes
and Newsletter Responses
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W.I.S.H. An Inter-Denominational Mission Serving the People of LaGonave, Haiti Since 1968 May/June 2009

WISH Board Sets Priorities

The WISH Board of Directors convened in Grand Haven April 18th for a full day of reviewing reports and projects from the past year and establishing a plan for next year. Butch and Tricia Alexander are enthusiastic about their service as field directors for WISH. They now have over 400 prayer partners and are currently at 65% of their support needed. Butch and Tricia have hosted 6 work teams. Some of the topics discussed at the meeting included: **Water:** Butch reported that he has not experienced a problem with vandalism on the waterline and some local people have initiated improvements at their community water fountains. The board voted to put a hold on the reverse osmosis water system at this time. The wells have been drilled and capped until it becomes necessary to complete this alternative water system for the mission.

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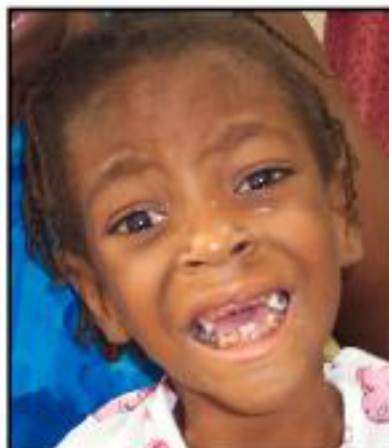


WISH Board, Front row: Tom Larson, Jane Howard, Bob Shelton, Bruce Roquet. Row 2: Wayne Grace, Jack Heck, Dale Holzhausen. Row 3: Peter Fries, Herb Boelens, Dick Doan. Top row: Bob Port, Fred Hoonhorst, Bob Praechter.

3-Year Old's Family Grateful for Dental Teams

Reflections from Dr. Jack Heck and Jane Howard

The WISH dental clinic has patients gathered at the gate every morning. Most patients require multiple procedures for conditions that have been untreated for years. This year, 3-year old Gardy was a vivid reminder



Gardy's front teeth were decayed to black root tips with multiple abscesses and rampant decay.

of the reason we have returned, year after year since 1983.

The extended family members who share the same room with Gardy were not getting any sleep because of little Gardy's painful cries.

When Gardy's mother and cousin brought him into the dental clinic, he refused to cooperate for an oral exam but

as he cried we could see his mouth had rampant decay. All the upper front teeth had decayed to the gum line leaving only black root tips and it was evident that other teeth had abscessed.

We coordinated our services with the mission hospital to have Gardy sedated in an operating room for the necessary extractions. We just never imagined we would have to extract 17 of his 20 baby teeth! Gardy now has only three upper teeth until his permanent teeth begin to erupt in about three more years.

The following day the family brought Gardy to the clinic and we could see that he was already feeling much better. His family was grateful that everyone could once again sleep peacefully.

The experience only leaves us to wonder how much longer little Gardy would have suffered if we hadn't been there. There are undoubtedly more "Gardys" suffering with dental pain where no treatment is available until a dental team volunteers.

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At present, the waterline source is producing maximum pressure since Joe Larakers was able to remove large roots that had clogged the line. Dick Doan advised that the waterline pipe should be moved to the opposite side of the ravine to reduce the risk of breaks from falling boulders.

Library: Butch reported that the security walls and gates to the site are finished and the crew was digging the footings for the two-story building.

Feeding Program: Over the past year the program cost was \$15,600. This provides beans and rice to about 180 saline children per week. One week it feeds the school children 3 days and the non-students 2 days and vice versa the following week. The 22 people living in the "poor house" receive one bag of rice and 3 bags of beans each week. It is estimated that the cost per meal is about 65 cents. The board stressed the need for contributors to the feeding program to have a long-term commitment.

When there is no food, children drink sugar water or chew sugar cane to sustain them until the next meal.

WISH Mall: The shop owners are very happy to have this facility providing electricity to operate their businesses and secure units for their wares. Bob Port, Bob Praechter and Frank Illingsworth made a trip to the island in March to service ice plant equipment. The repairs they made were only temporary until they can return with some new ice boxes increase production and freeze time.



Frank Illingsworth checks gauges on ice plant compressors. Renovations are necessary to increase production.



Doris and Herb Boelens admire a Haitian-made wooden bowl they received at the Grand Haven meeting as a thank you gift for Herb's service of more than 30 years as WISH treasurer. Herb passed the treasurer's duties to Tom Larson, however he remains a valuable member of the WISH board of directors. Herb shared some of his memories of the mission's early years with founder, Tony Wolf, and the original board members.



Boulders to rocks to stones to gravel ...

Men on the WISH crew sit in the hot sun and use sledge hammers to smash rocks into the proper size for construction projects. Left, the men work on a mound of stones they made from the larger rocks behind them.

The product of their current labors will be used for the foundation of the new (library) resource center. This gives a new sense of appreciation for the manual labor involved in building construction on LaGonave.



With Gardy sedated in a Wesleyan Hospital OR, we extracted 17 of his 20 baby teeth.



When Gardy and his mother came to the clinic the following day, he was feeling much better and everyone was sleeping well. We gave him sunglasses and a couple small toys for being such a good patient.

Port Huron Team Continues Tradition of Saline Parties

It was party-time again for the fourth annual Children of the Saline Celebration. These are the children who receive a meal of beans and rice through the WISH feeding program. They get food three days one week and two days the next week, alternating this schedule each week all year. The beans and rice provide a complete protein but the menu is always the same . . . until that special day hosted by the people in our community of Port Huron, Michigan.

With nearly 200 children involved, we divide the children into three groups, school girls on one day, school boys another day, and yet another day for the unschooled children.

This year's feast included chicken, spaghetti, plantains, tomatoes, potato salad, cake and juice. It was great fun to play soccer, Frisbee, and jump rope with the children. We always take a few minutes to tell them (through our interpreter) about our own community of Port Huron, and the many people who make the party possible. We only wish they could be there to feel the gratitude as the children sing and give thanks with prayer before the meal!

Pictured below are the children at the party who do not go to school, with Pastor Foglas in the front row. That's Butch holding 2 little girls in the back row.





Central Presbyterian Church of St. Louis sent a team of six people in March. They hosted Kid's Clubs at three local schools and Robbie Griggs directed a Pastor's Seminar for island pastors held at the Nazarene Church this year. Left, the team is pictured in front of a mural on the WISH wall painted by local artist Duns Sylvainie.

L-R: Deno Fabbre, Mark Mills, Robbie Griggs, Karen Klebe, Jana Goeke, Larry Stephey and Duns Sylvainie.

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Missionaries Encounter Hazardous Duty *Prayer Partners Needed*

Political unrest, disease, and travel risks are only a few of the hazards our missionaries face in the field. Some of you may remember years ago when Donna Doan fell on the slippery mud crossing the WISH compound and fractured her ankle. Since the beginning of this year there has been a series of injuries to island missionaries.

In February, Pastor Joe fell on a tile ledge in the bathroom and sustained serious injury to his front teeth, requiring extensive dental work in the U.S. In March Joy Irvine, our Wesleyan island neighbor, slipped on

the dusty floor while teaching an English class for the university and fractured her shoulder. That injury sent her stateside for treatment and recovery. Just after Butch returned to the island in May, it took several stitches at the Wesleyan Hospital to repair his smashed finger.

The latest in this series of missionary injuries was Tricia's fall in June. While tending to the indigent people at the gate, she slipped on wet ground and twisted her leg. A trip to the hospital in Port-au-Prince determined that it was not fractured but it may require an MRI to determine any ligament damage.

Injuries in Haiti are never a minor situation where inadequate healthcare, island evacuation, and risk of infection pose additional challenges for treatment.

Our missionaries need prayer partners to support them each day as they face hazards in service to the Lord.