

**Beyond Survival** : For two years you have endured "entries" in my blurb journal as Joe and I served as Long Term Volunteers on La gonave, Haiti. I have shared our joys and frustrations; insights and oversights; delights and disappointments; and, encounters with bats, rats and rascals. You have offered encouragement, responded to our needs, and provided hope for the future for many.

A family crisis moved up our departure date and created more than the normal chaos of life. Working around no less than 17 people at all times, in three days we sorted items to store, things to pack and give away. A baptism and three "fets" were postponed until we return in January. Promises and prayers for the future were offered then we put keys on the table and walked down the stairs, ending chapter one of "life on La gonave."

It is 5 am, very chilly outside, our daughter is asleep in the guest room and I'm sipping perked coffee. It is still dark and no "critters" are walking on my computer screen or biting my ankles! Toto, I think I'm back in Kansas!

A daily phone call comes from the island with weather reports, greetings, inquiries about our health and family, and seeking assurance we are preparing to return in January. The phone cards we left will soon run out and I close my eyes to a mental slide show of faces. My soft chair and ice cream are nice, but work on La gonave isn't finished.

Two wells continue to present challenges for Haiti Outreach, a Haitian based organization that drills wells, builds schools, hospitals and roads. A group of geologists started "geolophysic testing" on the east end of LG last week and will do six areas for us on the west end In November. Remaining GBGM grant money received in 2008, has been approved for testing, then a new plan is needed.

Before leaving we signed a three year contract with a Haitian development group, AAPLAG. They provided professional training for 18 community leaders and will continue to give regular reinforcement and support for the newly formed APG. This local association will develop groups for zone 6 on south la gonave. Already, a large goat park is developing and medicines are available for livestock; a fishing co-operative is purchasing fish and selling on the mainland with 11 more fishermen requesting to join; and, many gardens, planted late are ready to produce.

With designated money for advance education, we have 24 students enrolled in university, vocational training and High School with applications from 30 more. Most are members of the EMH Methodist Youth Group. One young med school student is organizing medical clinics for la gonave and a civil engineering student was first in his class of 120 with 100 % in all of his classes. There are great expectations that we will find sponsors in the coming months for many who have no hope for advanced education.

We are so grateful to those who have been part of this mission. We pray that some of you will help us "write chapter two" of the saga of South La Gonave. We are committed to help as the EMH moves through transition, and churches, schools and industry move from "simply surviving" toward improved economy and a better life for all.

Grace and Peace+ Joe & Pastor Shirley