

Haiti Happenings: I swelter at the desk, antenna up for the big tarantulas that moved indoors after recent rains, and wander just how to approach all that is happening in a place where “nothing ever happens.”

Rapidly approaching is the need to write a claim for GBGM funds for water proposals on South La Gonave. The director of Haiti Outreach met with a local church representative in our living room, a few days ago, and miraculously reached a reciprocal agreement on use of the church rig by Haiti Outreach. The plan must be approved by both parties after review by the La Gonave circuit treasurer and Evangelist. That won't happen until the Church Conference this coming weekend. Our GBGM deadline? September 30. Prye!!

I mentioned rain, which was badly needed, and tarantulas which are not! Gardeners are planting corn and a few will have more melons. Many lost their crops with the “dry spell”. Two charcoal boats left port last evening but markets are paying far less than planned and those who bought extra wood to cut are spending most of what they will make for workers and food to feed them. Daily, we have young men with nursing wives, asking for food. The old get skinnier.

The community leader told us the US is hiring and feeding workers to build erosion barriers soon, and, the Catholic Church will be doing a food for the poor distribution tomorrow on south La Gonave. He said international agencies identified South La Gonave for emergency food. Last week we heard the mayor's would be hiring road crews for small wages and food. La Gonave has finally made it on the map. Mesi, Senior!

KEC has set up a fund to purchase 50 books for each of the six grades of primary school for sale in a book store in Soucafilip. Parents will not have to travel to the mainland which saves \$12.00 US. Students often go the year without all their books. \$4,751.00 will purchase 2230 books for a cost of 2.13 per book. Parents also pay for a uniform and tuition ranging from \$21.00 to \$65.00 per year. Most have annual incomes below \$1000.00 a year with more than 2 children in school. School is not priority for many, especially when teachers are students themselves. Prye!!

Next month we head for the US and share time with grandkids and presentations to our faithful support. With internet as limited there as here, we will attempt to address the critical issues of water on the west end of La Gonave and repair of the well in Dent Griern.

We continue to work with cooperatives and finance groups struggling to keep some type of industry alive on La Gonave. Like the locals, we give thanks for the hope of new programs, and pray for economic transformation of our little portion of God's great big world. A world in pain not unlike that of childbirth.

The critical issues for much of the world and for La Gonave are food, water and education. Thanks to Bruce Blumer for the following poem in response to a previous blurb. And, would someone invent a faster broom to chase tarantulas out the door? Shirley, La Gonave, 11 Dawout 2008

Extended Cabinet,

I've been receiving emails from our missionaries in Haiti, who are facing an arm's length list of issues. So I share my Thursday Thoughts with you:

Today I mourn for the people of Haiti.
I mourn a place where people won't eat today.
Where children won't go to school this year.
Where someone will die today because there is no medical care.
Where people will wander, looking for work or for hope or for shade.
Where we could help.

But we're worried about \$4 gas while a child starves.
But we're worried about the stock market while a woman dies in childbirth.
But we're worried about higher prices at the restaurant while a family eats mud.
But we're worried road construction detours while someone can't find clean water to
drink.
But we're worried about meaningless worries.

So we respond with nickels and dimes.
So we watch candidates spend worthless millions to become President.
So we listen to athletes gripe about salaries that equal Haiti's gross national product.
So we waste a yearly Haitian salary at the casino.
So we build new houses and take vacations and get the latest electronics.

While someone won't eat today.
Where a child won't go to school.
Where someone will die today.
Where someone will wander.
Where we could help.

Bruce L. Blumer