

Narrow Horizons:

Joe and I met for our conference on the catchment this am. It was sort of a planning session and discussion of yesterday's events. It is a good place to meet with a nice but limited view of the sea and overlook of the main street of sousafilip. It is also the only private place to talk that doesn't require climbing a mountain!

We discussed the discouraging conversation I had with Dr. Kris Thede concerning operation and management of a medical clinic. We talked of the discouraging management of EMH schools and feeding programs. We discussed our hope in a new fishing enterprise with empowerment of new leaders, and the encouraging development of two local, privately operated schools. Then we talked of the use of funds generated for lagonav programs with good stewardship and in good faith.

Looking at the beautiful morning sea, I realized my view of the horizon was limited. The successful programs we have experienced in two years here have had a narrow focus, with well defined goals. It seems, the broader the horizon, the more complex the system of power, and the less productivity and greater opportunity for corruption. A sobering thought, as Bruce Blumer would say.

Members of the EMH and LG Circuit are in meetings to address issues of the future i.e. to invite or not, Long Term Volunteers again; to allow use of the compound facility for a clinic; and, what limitations will be set for a future invitation. We wonder how many couples (which we recommend) will welcome the challenge and experience of life on la gonave and for how long?

Our sojourn has proven to us that many congregations and individuals want to give hope to the people on sud la gonav. An outpouring of response to program requests are evidence that information, connection and accountability are key factors for mission support. Ways to maintain those components in the future are critical to continued growth and development.

A study of simple survival compared to thriving and growing, seems related to the intensity of the focus. Definite boundaries are imperative in a country where borders of control are constantly changing or stagnating in hopelessness.

Joe and I are idealist and realist; Pisces and Virgo; dreamer and doer; talker and a thinker; and, perfectionist plus a "slam bammer." We have confused the devil out of people here. We have confused ourselves as we plan and revise until the revisions become a new plan. If my Kreyòl were better I would create a new proverb; "the way to appreciate the sea is to gaze on only one section of the horizon at a time.

In April we will be in the US for one of our last two "visits" before returning home for good. We are not comfy leaving without a plan for the future; for programs begun on sud la gonav; for Kansas in Haiti; and, for ourselves. A part of our being has become Ayitian. Our vision is significantly narrower but certainly not diminished.

Shirley, sud lagonav, 18 Mas 2009....

