

Tragedy Strikes Merjuste Family



The Merjuste Family

Bergeline Merjuste (center back), the daughter of the janitor of our clinic, died suddenly within 10 hours when afflicted with cholera following helping a sick neighbor wash clothes. Bergeline was the fourth child in the family (older children not in the picture), and the oldest girl. She was 20 years old. She was taken to the hospital, but the disease had already overtaken her. Four other members of the family were also afflicted, but survived. Cholera is a disease usually caused by water or food contaminated by cholera bacteria in human feci. The symptoms are vomiting, diarrhea, severe stomachache and dehydration. Untreated, it can be fatal about 50% of the time. With treatment it is fatal less than 1%.

At least 60 others in the community were also afflicted including Wilnor Charlemagne, a member of the clinic committee. Two died. The Foundation responded rapidly. People using the same water source as the Merjuste family were immediately alerted to the potential danger by our Executive Director Emile Maceus. The clinic was stocked with rehydration serum and antibiotics and the staff distributed liquid chlorine to those who came to the clinic along with education on the causes. The staff also later went door to door talking about prevention and giving out Aquatablets to cleanse water and oral serum for dehydration.

There was some understandable panic. People came to the clinic desiring masks (around 20 the first day). Although of no value against cholera, they were given out when requested. Both the Capois la Mort and Wesleyenne schools temporarily closed. These tragic deaths underscore the urgency of having adequate sanitation, restrooms and toilets. The Foundation's present number one funding goal is to build a rest room at the Fond Doux Community Clinic.

Shelter from Rain and Storm

The rains come. For those of us who live in the United States, we go inside and we are dry. We take it for granted; but for many of our Haitian friends there is nowhere dry -- not even a dry place to sleep! Our Haitian partners told us there are 30 families, a good portion of the small village of Platon, who cannot keep their homes dry when it rains. Obviously, we cannot build them all houses, or even new roofs. They asked us for and received 30 tarps so 30 families can stay dry in the present rainy season.



Shopping for Suitable Tarps

Sometimes the problem is that the family cannot afford to purchase material to repair the roof.



Platon House with leaking roof

Other times the problem may be that the house never had a good roof to begin with and they cannot find or cannot afford suitable roofing. Thatching is the use of dry vegetation as roofing material.

Fond Doux Flyer July 2023



Inadequate Thatched Roof in Platon

Tarps are not a permanent or a great solution, but for some it is the only solution. The Foundation was able to respond to this crisis because some people decided to contribute to the Fond Doux Foundation. Were you one of them? Thank you. It cost just \$72 dollars for each 5-meter by 6-meter heavy duty tarp. But what a difference it makes! We also purchased some tarps for some families in Fond Doux.

The Fanfan Family



Fanfan Family Home

The Fanfan family consists of mother, Charlotte, and 4 children. Two of the children are in school, Ricardo Franklin (6 years old) and Markenson Noel (12 years old). They attend school at Christian Academy Ecole de Jonas on a Foundation scholarship. The two youngest children are one and three years old. Charlotte had been employed for a while at College Mixte Capois la Mort as a kindergarten assistant; but unfortunately, the school has money problems and she did not get

paid. So, the Foundation has been helping her with food and helping her look for a different job. Recently, she also received a tarp to try to keep her dry. She needs a house.

The Gene Family



Gene Family Home

Ancito Gene is a university student on a Foundation scholarship as well as an English language student. He is a member of the Haitian Fond Doux Foundation Committee and the leader of the English Club in Ravine Parc. He was previously a teacher in the Hope for Tomorrow School in Ravine Parc and intends to return there as a fully qualified teacher on completion of his studies. The family consists of him, his mother and 3 siblings. When the rains came, everything in their house became wet. They removed clothing and mats to keep them dry and took them to an aunt's house. But the room at the aunt is so small that they do not have enough room for them all to lie down and sleep.

The Gene family was given a tarp to try and keep them dry. A tarp is at best a temporary and inadequate solution. But once again, it has been our only solution.

The Anoriscar Family

Nosline Anoriscar is one of our scholarship students attending the Hope for Tomorrow School in Ravine Parc, just outside of Fond Doux. She lives with her mother, Noel Gelerne, and three older sisters, Jiny, Danica and Andrecia. Her father Oscar is deceased. Her two brothers Jean and Stanley live with an uncle. They used to have a larger house with a thatched roof. It was unrepairable. Now they live in this house.

Fond Doux Flyer July 2023



Anoriscar Family Home

But when the rain came, everything they have got wet -- all clothes, books, and beds (mats). When the rain comes, they can't sleep because they cannot find a dry spot to stay. They sit through the night seeking an elusive dry corner. No place to go! We gave a tarp.

Is there a better solution? Emile Maceus, the Executive Director of the Foundation, suggested building a small one-room house, a 13 foot by 13-foot room with a 6-and-a-half-foot wide porch. He obtained an estimate of \$4,375 to build such a house. The Board would clearly like to do more than give tarps, but what we do depends entirely upon our resources. Although our capital fund drive emphasis is for a restroom at the clinic (an absolute necessity) and to build a community center/school near the Methodist Church (We have not reached our goals for them yet), we will accept contributions to our housing fund also. With your help we can do more than tarps. But it is expensive and slow. Occasionally a new roof can be the solution.

Saint Surin Roof

Fritzmenn Saint Surin has been a leader in the Fond Doux Community for many years, a deacon in the Primitive Church and a volunteer with the Fond Doux Foundation in many activities, even helping with open air clinics in Platon. He has served on the Haitian Fond Doux Foundation Committee from its first inception. Two of his children have been partners with the Foundation as well. Schneider served on the FDFC like his father until he went to the Dominican Republic to study. Jowasky has served as a reporter for the Flyer. However, over a year ago Fritzmenn became extremely ill. He also lost his job. He cannot finish the house he was building. The board of the Foundation decided to

help him place a roof over two rooms so that the family could have a place to move into. In return, Fritzmenn agreed to provide 200 hours of services to the board including visiting folks to tell them about the clinic.



\$1500 to Build a Cement Roof

For those of us who live in the United States, we take dry shelter for granted. Can we make it so for some others as well? We can try!

Food Distribution



Food Distribution at Emile's Home

As reported last month, because of political disruption and the doubling of food prices, many people in Fond Doux are hungry. The board of the Fond Doux Foundation authorized an emergency distribution of food targeting the most vulnerable in the community, especially the aged and infirm. The Executive Director of the Foundation, Emile Maceus, was tasked with identifying the recipients and distributing the food. Some he distributed from his home. For others, he delivered food to their homes.

Fond Doux Flyer July 2023



Delivering Food for the Vulnerable

Everything that we do is made possible because someone cared. Our donor base is small, but they are very generous. Thank you for making this possible.

A Community Garden



A Haitian Garden

The answer to hunger in Fond Doux is not a food subsidy from the Foundation. That is at best an emergency solution. The only sustainable solution is

the ability of the people of Fond Doux to produce their own food or to find a job that pays enough to buy food. The Foundation has authorized the use of the land recently purchased to be used for a community garden until we are ready to develop the property. The supervision of this garden is expected to be by members of the Methodist Church. Some garden tools have already been purchased. When we begin to develop the campus, it is possible, perhaps even likely, that we will purchase other land for gardens.

Flooding Hits Polistin Family

Our former music leader and former music scholarship student, Ismaelo Polistin, moved to Léogane. When we heard that flooding had occurred in that community we asked him how he fared. This is his reply:

"Good morning, dear pastor! Well, the flooding hasn't affected me too much, but I have two brothers who are victims of the flooding. So, the water entered their houses and caused a lot of damage and they didn't have a chance to take anything from their house. They lost everything, dear pastor, because the waters came with strength and we have not had any comfort. One of my brothers didn't have a chance to move upstairs in his house because his house is destroyed. So, for now, he is living with another member of my family in Léogane. The other one had a chance to move upstairs in his house. Unfortunately, he also lost everything."

We offered a tarp. That is all we have. In Haiti, there is no "safety net." We do what we can!

"SO LITTLE CAN DO SO MUCH"

To learn about our projects or to donate, you may contact the Foundation in a number of ways:

Website: www.fonddouxfoundation.org

Email: John@fonddouxfoundation.org

Address:

Fond Doux Foundation

PO Box 51443

Durham, NC

Website manager: Brent Engel

Newsletter editor: John Clousing

The Fond Doux Foundation engages friend-to-friend with people in and around the village of Fond Doux, Haiti, helping to provide better access to medical care and health education, improved nutrition through agriculture and animal husbandry, educational scholarships, and intercultural faith-based activities. FDF is a 501(c)3 organization based in Durham, North Carolina.