

**The Fond Doux Flyer**

**April 2022**

**The Saturday Club**

**Hungry School Children**



**Venelson Vitelus leading Saturday Club**

**Platon School Children Eating**

Since February the Fond Doux Foundation has been cooperating with the Methodist Church of Fond Doux in sponsoring a Saturday Club for children. Methodist Church leaders, Jobsonn Paulo, Johnson Louis and Erlancie Ferrus have been leading Bible study lessons, Ismaelo Polistin of the FDF has been leading music and Jowasky Saint Surin, Venelson Vitelus and Ancitho Gene are introducing the English language to children. Makendy Lazard of the Simple English School is helping with creating an interesting curriculum for the children to make it fun. He is also helping train the leaders. Previously a music Club was meeting at the Primitive Church in Fond Doux. An abortive attempt to revive an English Club was started in the same location. It had disbanded when its leader Kinder Saint Surin emigrated to Chile several years ago. Since many children do not eat well, a snack time has also been a part of the program. This is part of an increasing partnership of the Fond Doux Foundation and the Methodist Church of Fond Doux.

Everyone knows that when children are hungry that it is difficult to learn. American schools have been providing school lunches for years. At the beginning of the school year the Foundation began providing \$50 per month for the most vulnerable children at the Good Samaritan School in Platon after the board discovered that many children were coming to school without eating. Many eat only one meal a day and some less than that. However, what we provide is only enough to provide crackers and snacks for some of the school children although several meals have also been provided. The board's research discovered that children in the developing world tend to suffer from deficiencies of iodine, vitamin A, iron and protein. Crackers do not provide for these deficiencies. In February the board of the Fond Doux Foundation decided to explore better ways to provide for the hungry children at the school, which the Foundation has supported for the last three years.



**Snack time with Erlancie and Johnson**

**Vita Mamba School Snack**

Dr. Patricia Wolfe, a pediatrician associated with Washington University, Saint Louis, MO, and a long-time worker in Haiti, has designed a food specifically to combat malnutrition in Haitian children that covers

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these deficiencies. It is called Vita Mamba. It uses peanut butter as its base and is fortified with other nutrients. The peanuts are grown in Haiti and the snack bars manufactured in Haiti. The board would like to include these snacks in a program to meet the nutritional needs of all students in the school.

### Donors Needed

To initiate this program will necessitate an increase in our budget for the Platon School of approximately \$150 a month. We are looking for a donor, a group, or several individuals who are willing to provide this subsidy on a continuing basis. When we have met this goal, we will initiate an expanded food program.



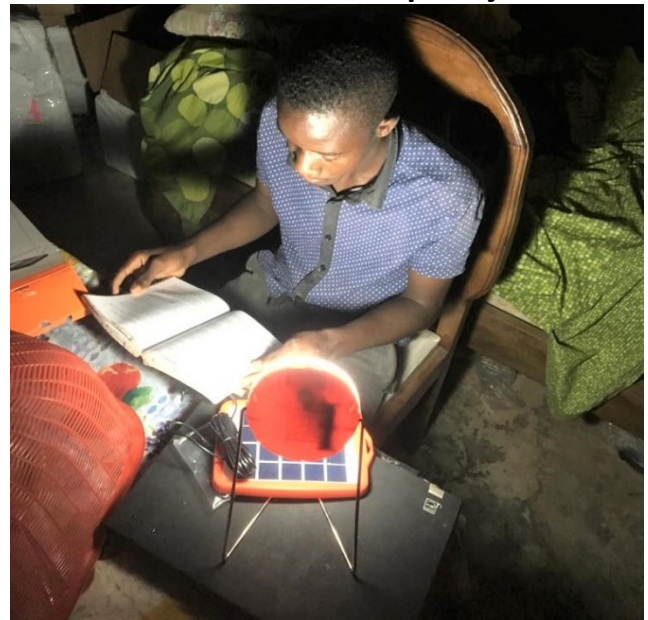
**Food at Ravine Parc School**

Ancitho Gene, a teacher at the Ravine Parc Primary School located up the mountain north of Fond Doux between Fond Doux and Delatte, is a member of the Haitian FDFC and a student at the Simple English School in Miragoâne. He recently contacted the Foundation to report on the situation at the Ravine Parc School. The school is a private community school. Because the school receives no subsidy from any organization, the teachers are underpaid (\$45 per month) and often unpaid (3 months behind). All the students in the school are quite needy -- many having no school supplies and some are "as hungry as a bear," he said. The students range from kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. After hearing about the situation, an anonymous donor to the Foundation designated an emergency grant to purchase food and school supplies for children at the school. As a result, the principal of the school, Noel Joseph, arranged a temporary three-week meal program twice a week. Several parents volunteered to cook these meals. The meals are a simple meal of rice, cornmeal and a Haitian sausage. All the ingredients were purchased locally. The principal also purchased some books, crayons and chalk for the school.

## Classroom Supplies at Ravine Parc



## Solar Powered Lamp Project



**Venelson Vitelus Studying by a Solar Lamp**

Recently seven additional solar powered lamps were delivered to Fond Doux as part of a shipment sent by the Foundation with the help of Mission to Haiti. MTH included our shipment within their larger shipment. The Foundation's portion of the shipment consisted of 7 solar lamps, 42 hygiene kits and some soccer balls. Because of the lack of community electrical power, solar lamps are a big help especially for older students. It grows dark early in the tropics.

For people that would like to help the students of Fond Doux and vicinity, but have little money, this is a project for you. The cost is \$30 per lamp. A lamp can make an enormous difference in the life of a school child for so little investment. Such donations should be marked solar lamp project. Donations of any size are welcome. We will expand the program as designated gifts make possible.

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### Meet Rosemène Merjuste



**Rosemène Merjuste**

We have been introducing you to the people that are in charge of the Fond Doux Clinic during the last few issues. This month it is Rosemène Merjuste, who has been hired as the cleaning lady for the Fond Doux Clinic. She is the mother of nine children and has needed a job for a long time. Her husband is in poor health. Her husband at first resisted the idea of her working as a cleaning lady, but apparently now finds it OK since it is for a community project. She has had a long desire to see a working clinic in Fond Doux. She was interviewed for the book *Haitian Partners*,<sup>1</sup> published in 2021 by the Foundation. Here is some of what she had to say then:

My maiden name is Estache Rosemène.<sup>2</sup>

My mother had nine children but one died. Now we are eight in the family, five boys and three girls. My father was a farmer, and my mother was a merchant, a reseller; she used to go to Port-au-Prince to buy. And my father cultivated to take care of us.

I was born in Les Palmes in a place named A Lègue and grew up there. I moved to Port-au-Prince when I was seven or eight to my aunt's house. After three years, I went to live with my godmother. Because they did not put me in school, I returned to my father's house in Petit-Goâve, in the city. My godmother is now deceased.

I was born in a non-Christian family; my family did not know Christ. Thanks to Pastor Brucely, who used to come to Les Palmes and evangelize, I heard the Word of God. I attended a high school where the Catholic

religion was first and foremost. After my 6th grade certificate, I took my first communion in a Catholic church and knew my catechism; but I didn't like this religion because of all the images and signs. I told that to my father. However, my father loves this religion; he is (now) a member.

You know, in Haiti jobs are extremely difficult to find. . . My husband is unable to work. He cannot work as hard as before, because he becomes weaker day by day. Sometimes I think I will lose him because he becomes weak and sickly. I sometimes want to find something to do in order to balance the tasks; but as a man he said, "No!" He will not accept my working as a maid, as a cleaning woman in someone's house, because people disrespect cleaning people. Even the kids in the house disrespect them. He said, he'd rather die working than let me work as a cleaning woman. . .

I do the washing at home; we bring water home in order to wash. I find water at a (village) water pump. It's difficult. When there is water in the pump, we have to cross the street and the children have to wait a while, because there are a lot of people at the pump. It's very difficult for us!

We use coal, charcoal to cook; my husband goes and buys it for me. It's very difficult to find food in December and in May. To survive, we plant corn and sweet potatoes. What we produce we eat, if we don't have money to buy food in the market. When my husband harvests, we sell some of it. We cook rice, cornmeal, plantain, and yam. . .

But we don't have enough food because we depend on our farm to live. The problem is we do not have enough water and there is no rain to irrigate our farm. . . And also, we are unable to go out because of COVID-19. Things are getting worse day by day. We are quite stressed.

I would like my life to change. If I had something to do, a business or a job, that would help my life. Because I live in a miserable situation where I have only Jesus as support, I need support. . .

For me, I have suffered a lot in my life. I got married at 19 years of age, and now I am 23 years into my marriage. What I have encountered in my life, I don't want my children to suffer! May 31st (year 2020) will be my 23rd anniversary of marriage. My first kid

<sup>1</sup> *Haitian Partners* can be obtained from the Foundation. See how to contact the Foundation on page 4.

<sup>2</sup> According to Haitian practice the family name is first. We would call her Rosemène Estache.

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Junior is finished with his classical studies, but he cannot attend a university because of lack of money. And then, Jameson<sup>3</sup> is in his last year. Thanks to the Fond-Doux Foundation, he also goes to an English school to learn English. Society wants you to be educated, go to school, respect people, go to Church. That's what society needs; that's what creates a society.



### Merjuste Family w/o the Oldest and Youngest<sup>4</sup>

We go to church. We have a rule that men stay with men, women with women, and kids with kids. In our church on Sunday, first we have a bible lesson, called dominical lesson, where we learn biblical verses. After that, we have a worship service; and then, we have like a competition to see if we have learned the verses. Afterward, we pray; and then have adoration, a musical party, testimony, and then they preach. Sometimes, we then visit people and pray with them.<sup>5</sup>

The (FDF) missionaries have been coming to Haiti, at Fond-Doux for 8 to 10 years. I used to participate in some activities and classes; but I sometimes didn't have a chance to participate, because I was in the kitchen preparing meals for the missionaries. However, I did participate in a class on natural family planning and sexuality; and I learned a lot of things, I can say. It was specifically for the youth.

We sometimes go to Christela's, Madam Toto's house when we have some problems like an injury or a wound.<sup>6</sup> I have received kits from the missionaries. They gave me a humanitarian assistance kit, a health kit and a sanitary kit at the time I was pregnant. So, those kits helped me a lot.

I have nine kids. . . If you have money to take care of the children and to put them in school, that is good; but. . . I will not be able to help them attend a university, if God does not send someone to help me with them. Even with their classical studies I am unable to help them. I am not working anywhere. My hope is only in God, because he is the only one who can do everything.

I can only say, if it was now, I would not give birth to all these kids, because each time you give birth in Haiti -- the more kids you have, the more your poverty is! Now, thanks to the information that I received and follow from the American missionaries, I know more about this. When it comes to natural family planning, my husband and I now practice this

The children have participated many times in biblical studies when the missionaries come. They received a bible story book from the missionaries. They read from it, the story of the creation. They also participated in the English club.

I would like to share something with the Americans. Due to the fact that the world is facing a virus, we in Fond-Doux need a good clinic to face this virus. We have a clinic nearby, but they closed it. They only open it when they have their personal activities. We do not have access to it. We would like to have a clinic in Fond-Doux. [Now she is helping it come to pass.]

### You may contact the foundation in a number of ways:

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**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, USA, whose Christian community outreach began in 2011.

<sup>3</sup> AKA Handy.

<sup>4</sup> Ed Cerne was instrumental in building them a home.

<sup>5</sup> Editor's note. The entire service may last three hours.

<sup>6</sup> She is our community health worker.