

Spring 2004



FUNCTIONAL LITERACY MINISTRY OF HAITI

ESPRI D'ESPERANS

*Spirit of Hope*

## EDUCATION: Haiti's Hope and Future

In January, Rev. Leon Pamphile, Dr. Ron Peters, and Carolyn Russ traveled to Haiti to see FLM's work in progress. During their stay they visited the school that FLM helped to build. Four hundred children between the ages of 4 and 16 are enrolled. There are two "prescolaire" preschool classes that take place in the midst of many giggles. The children learn songs, draw, and learn their numbers and letters.

There are also eight elementary grades. The students have impeccable manners and a very pleasant, easy demeanor, and total seriousness about their education. Fewer than half of the children have textbooks or notebooks. There has not been enough money to replace books as they have become too tattered to use. This is something we need to attend to.

The children's commitment to education is extraordinary: some of them walk two hours each way to get to school and only eat in the evening. Through FLM, the school is going to start giving the children a snack each morning, consisting of bread, butter or paté, juice, and a daily vitamin. This will give them some nourishment, but it will also raise our costs.

Two years ago, the school added a secondary level for older students. This is quite a responsibility. Because the curriculum is more varied, the cost of books is quite high—the initial cost of a full set for one student is \$50. The older children are learning English and (again, with much laughter) happily greet our visitors in English. Learning English as well as French and Creole increases their employability.

While there are many children crammed into each classroom, there are no discipline problems at all. The teachers never have to spend class time on behavior issues. The children are very eager to learn. Our director, Leon Pamphile, who came up through a similar system, said when he was a boy, some of his classes had 100 children; students would sit in the windows just to be able to hear the teacher. Haiti has a national curriculum and national achievement tests. Our students do well on those tests.



It is notable and important that our projects are run by Haitians. The staff appreciates the funds we send, but it does not undermine the Haitians' sense of dignity and determination. The teachers know that with the help of God and FLM, they are going to make a difference in the lives of the children, and the students know that with the help of their teachers, they are going to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of their families.

- Carolyn Russ

### Inside Highlights

- Letters from the Executive Director and Editor
- Joys and Sorrows
- 2003 Medical Mission Trip
- Permanent Medical Clinic Progress
- Upcoming Events

## From the Executive Director

by Rev. Leon Pamphile, Ph.D.

Dear Friends of FLMHaiti,

It is a great opportunity to be in touch with you at this time. It is my prayer that your hearts are overflowing with joy and all heavenly blessings. Let us say like David "The Lord has done great things for us, our hearts are filled with joy." (Psalm 16:3).

It is amazing to realize that the Functional Literacy Ministry of Haiti has been serving the Haitian people for twenty years now. To God be the glory. Over this period of time, we have awarded over 2,000 literacy certificates and sponsored scores

of children to further their education and trained many more through the home economics program.

*"We have awarded over 2,000 literacy certificates, sponsored scores of children to further their education...[and] touched the lives of over 4,000 people with health care and glasses."*

For the last four years, the Lord has tremendously used the summer medical mission of FLM to touch the lives of over 4,000

people with health care and glasses. We have acquired a property on which we plan to build a Community Health Center to educate and give care to the needy.

Let me take time to thank you for letting God use you to bless the people of Haiti. Your prayers, your personal involvement, your time and financial resources have made possible FLM's achievements in Haiti.

We continue to rely on you as we look forward to pursuing our mission of making life better for others.

## Continuing the Good Work

by Carol Williams, Editor

It is my pleasure and blessing to return to the FLM Board after being away for many years. It has truly blessed my soul to witness the ministry's growth spiritually, financially, socially, educationally, and physically.

In twenty-one years, the board has increased from five people to fifteen people and added executive, medical, and educational advisory boards.

Most importantly, the vision of the organization has widened from providing reading skills to also teaching vocational skills, serving medical needs through summer mission trips, and now building a permanent medical clinic.

I thank God for the opportunity to "get a mind to work" (Nehemiah 4:6). Let us rebuild the walls of



Haiti and continue the good work that began in 1983.

## Joys and Sorrows

☞ This year we celebrate the profound contributions of Dr. Beryl Jackson, who has resigned as president of the FLM's board of directors after nearly 20 years of service.

☞ Congratulations to Russell Bynum who has been elected as the new board president.

☞ We celebrate the life of Rev. David M. Robinson and are deeply saddened by his death on January 7, 2004. Rev. Robinson's vision, energy and love helped bring to life FLM's medical mission trips and lay the groundwork for a permanent community health center.

☞ We also keep in our hearts FLM board member Liz Bennett, for the passing of her mother.

### Photo Credits

*Child and mother, doctor and patient, and group photo by Bill Bollendorf. Visit his Web site at [www.artshaitian.com](http://www.artshaitian.com)*

# Reflections on the 2003 Medical Trip

by Susan Robinson

Walking up the mountain this past summer to one of our clinic sites, I stopped to observe the scene in front of me. I was breathless, but the young Haitian men had nimbly climbed ahead of us with our 70-pound bags of medicines and hygiene supplies. The last leg of the path is wider and there are stairs cut into the mountain. The people have done this especially for us.

Opening up before me, through the palm leaves and banana fronds, is the church where our clinic will be held. There is a large crowd of people waiting, perhaps over a hundred. Many of them have been here for several hours. As I gaze around, I am overwhelmed by the need of the Haitian people for medical care. How many of us would even consider waiting in line for four to six hours to see a doctor in 90-degree heat? For these people there is no better day.

It is our final afternoon in Haiti. We have seen over 1,300 patients at six clinics, but all of us are



2003 mission team with Haitians

aware there were many more we were not able to see.

We are standing on the ground of the future clinic. The sun is blazing down on four Haitian men working on building a stone wall around the property. They are chipping away at the large rocks to make their own gravel. The wall is being constructed one block, one stone at a time.

Each of us is trying to envision the completed clinic, with electric, running water, private exam rooms and a pharmacy. It will be a place where the people can come when they are sick, or take their child for immunizations. They will no longer need to wait in line for six hours, or be turned away until next year.

## Third Time's a Charm!

*Perseverance, Love, Success, and Hope.* These are the words that describe the 2003 FLM Medical Mission trip to Haiti. This was my third time and believe me it was a charm!

Our two-week stay in Haiti was filled with *Love*, first for the Haitians and second for each other. We had the most outstanding team of 18 people, including three doctors, three nurses, one nurse practitioner and 11 of the most hard-working and caring individuals I have ever met. We will remain lifetime friends.

Our trip was filled with *Perseverance*. We withstood inclement weather, sickness, and large numbers of Haitians wanting care and treatment.

The Haiti medical mission trip was a huge *Success*. We treated over 1300 people from four different communities, treating both common ailments and more severe conditions.

Finally, our trip was filled with *Hope*. Hope for FLM's continued efforts in raising the necessary funds to complete the permanent medical clinic now underway.

by Nicki Jo Perfetti, RN, BSN, CCM

God willing, I hope to be a member of this year's team!

### FLM Wish List

Funding is our greatest need. Our school and adult literacy centers cost \$1,800 per month to run. Our new nutrition program will cost an additional \$1,500 per month. Our permanent community health center will cost over \$100,000 to build.

In addition, we are in need of vitamins and hygiene supplies for this year's medical mission trip. Please contact Mary Gregg at (724) 225-8351.

## FLM'S MISSION

Functional Literacy Ministry of Haiti is dedicated to empowering the people of Haiti with the resources and skills necessary for them to live to their highest potential.

## CONTACT US

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*Functional Literacy Ministry of Haiti is a charitable organization under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0900. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

## Upcoming Events

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### FLM's Spring Concert

Join us for a delightful evening featuring The Bridgeville Male Ensemble and other local musicians in honoring the art and spirit of Haiti.

**Sat., April 17, 2004, 6:00 pm**  
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary  
616 North Highland Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206  
Free will offering  
Contact: Rev. Leon Pamphile  
(412) 784-0342

### Join Us for FLM's 2004 Medical Mission Trip!

Are you a doctor, nurse, eyeglass specialist, or helpful hand interested in reaching out to the Haitians? Join us on our fifth medical mission trip, June 29 to July 9, 2004.

Contact: Rev. Leon D. Pamphile  
(412) 784-0342.



**Functional Literacy  
Ministry of Haiti**  
EDUCATIONAL & MEDICAL MISSIONS

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