



A quarterly newsletter for Friends for Health in Haiti, by founder and executive director, Catherine E. Wolf, MD MPH

Our Mission
The mission of Friends for Health in Haiti, Inc. is to improve the health status of the people of Haiti through high-quality health care provided in a caring, compassionate and respectful manner, as a means of demonstrating God’s love in this world and as a reflection of our faith in Jesus Christ.

CLINIC CONSTRUCTION IS PROGRESSING!

In our last newsletter we reported that construction had begun at our clinic site in Gatineau. During the summer, an entry road was constructed, as well as a bridge over a small creek running through the site. With the help of bulldozers from the Haitian Department of Transportation, the site was cleared and roads were created up to the area where the clinic will be built as well as the staff housing area. Next came construction of a storage depot that will be used to store construction materials and, later, clinic equipment and supplies. Below you will see photos of the construction as it has progressed.

Friends for Health in Haiti is on the web!

- Regular updates on our blog.
- Photo gallery filled with photos of clinic site, patients, and life in Haiti.
- Donate online!

FriendsForHealthInHaiti.org



Building the rock wall foundation of the storage depot (above left). The space between the foundation walls was filled in with dirt and rocks, concrete was poured in the columns and iron was laid down across the surface. The concrete floor was then poured and smoothed out (above right).

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Next the block walls went up (above left). Plywood was then used to form the frame of the roof, on which iron bars were laid. The plywood was held up by 2X4's and the whole roof was supported by wooden poles placed inside and outside the building (above right).

CLINIC CONSTRUCTION CONTINUED...

Once the framing and iron bars were in place, concrete was poured to form the roof. After the concrete had "cured", the framing was removed. Here is the completed storage depot building:



While construction of the storage depot was going on, the workmen were also digging the foundation for the clinic building (below left). Iron bars have been placed for the columns and work has begun on the rock wall foundation (below right).



We are grateful for the assistance of the Haitian Department of Transportation and we thank the Lord for keeping the construction workers safe during this time. Continue to follow our clinic construction progress on the blog on our website <http://friendsforhealthinhaiti.wordpress.com/> and pray for God's continued blessing on this project.

UNEXPECTED HELPERS

Prior to pouring a concrete roof, it is necessary to frame it with plywood which is then held up by wooden posts, either 2X4's or saplings. Obtaining the saplings means cutting down small trees, a practice which we don't like because it leads to deforestation. So, Cherlie and the carpenters came up with an alternative – using bamboo trees instead. Bamboo is a very hard wood and grows very quickly. Someone on a nearby farm had a stand of bamboo trees that they sold to us and we hired some local men to cut down the trees. There was only one problem: the trees had to be transported to the clinic site, about a mile away.

So, we enlisted the help of some local school children – the very same children who had been recipients of backpacks that had been donated to us by high school students in Wisconsin! Here are photos of the students carrying the bamboo poles to our clinic site:



Sometimes unexpected helpers come onto our site, such as this calf that's standing in the sand used to make cement blocks for construction of our walls. One has to wonder, "What is he thinking"?!!!



GIFTS AND GRATITUDE

Periodically we obtain donations of things from generous women and men in the US. These gifts have included knitted newborn caps, infant quilts and layette sets, pillowcase dresses (yes, you can make dresses out of pillowcases!), hygiene kits, toothbrushes and toothpaste, school kits, backpacks, clothing and shoes.



Naomi Rene (above) was brought to the clinic by her mother when she was 2 months old. She was tiny and wasn't feeding well. We gave her mother a quilt and some baby caps (donated by the Presbyterian Women of the New Brunswick NJ Presbytery) to keep her warm and instructed the mother about the importance of regular, exclusive breast-feeding. She brought Naomi back for several follow up visits and she began gaining weight and doing well. We're sure the love that went along with the quilt and caps had something to do with her improvement!



Widcharlin Etienne (above) had pneumonia with cough and fever when his mother brought him to the clinic. It's chilly up in the mountains this time of year, so we gave his mother a quilt and blanket and several knitted caps as well as medication for his pneumonia. He improved quickly and his mother was grateful for the wonderful gifts.

Michmana, Lovemi, Ricardi and Cheskenley live down the mountain from our clinic. They are from three families but are all neighbors and they are our patients. They stand by the side of the road every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday morning and afternoon so they can say hello to us, calling out "Doctor! Nurse!" as we pass by. Some recent visitors donated some clothing that we gave to them. Here they are showing off their new duds:



HOPE FOR HAITI 2012

As we build the bridge from hope to reality, we can now say that we are "under construction". Four years ago we began to raise funds to build a clinic. Through hurricanes, an earthquake and cholera we have remained steadfast through the grace of God and our partners—YOU! Join us as we embark on a new phase of our journey to improve the health status of the people of Haiti.

The 4th Annual Hope for Haiti banquet will be held Saturday, April 28, 2012 at the Wisconsin Club in Milwaukee, WI. Invitations have been mailed to our Wisconsin friends. If you are out of state and would like to join us, please contact us for an invitation or see our website where you can download an invitation with complete details:

[www.friendsforhealthinhaiti.org/
HopeforHaiti4.html](http://www.friendsforhealthinhaiti.org/HopeforHaiti4.html)

Sometimes when we hear patients tell their stories, it brings tears to our eyes and aching in our hearts. After the earthquake, there were many stories about lost loved ones, many of them young people with a whole life full of potential ahead of them. Then, there are the women who share their obstetric history, shrugging their shoulders as they tell how many of their children died in infancy and childhood. They shrug because there's nothing they could do about the deaths. They have a fatalistic world view and things that happen here are believed to all be a part of God's will for one's life.

Estephanie Rene lives about a three hour walk from our clinic in Gatineau. She came one day for follow up of her high blood pressure and I asked why she wasn't coming in more regularly to have her blood pressure checked and get her medication. She said she had no help in getting there – in fact she had fallen on her way to see us that day. She doesn't see well and her husband wouldn't come with her to help her on the rough path she had to walk. She usually leaves home before dawn so she'll be sure to get a number to be seen that day (we give out 35 numbers each day plus we see emergencies and follow-up patients). Because of patients like Estephanie we decided to begin doing patient consultations three days a week, instead of two. This way there will be fewer patients each day and they won't have to walk in the dark to get to the clinic early enough to get an admission number. Hopefully there won't be any more falls in the future!



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