

## Helping Haitians Help Themselves

PO Box 1062, West Bend, WI 53095 • [www.viphaiti.org](http://www.viphaiti.org)

### A Message from the President



Every time the newsletter article is due, I struggle with what to write about. This time is extremely difficult for me.

I have never been to Haiti. Looking

at the picture of trips and hearing stories that trip participants bring home with them are amazing. So many have said that it changed their lives.

Haitians live with so little and yet they are usually smiling. Think of an average day for you. Work and then home to enjoy some family time. You aren't concerned if there is food in the refrigerator, there always is. Maybe sit with your family and play a game or watch a movie. Time to read a story and to bed for the night. Now what do you have that a Haitian family doesn't have? A job, food in the refrigerator, maybe electricity and the ability to read at bedtime.

Ventures in People can make a difference to a family. Clean water-buy a water filter. Kids can join a 4-H club-learn how to raise a goat and so much more. Education-sponsor a child to go to school. There are some children who go home and teach their

parents! One person can make a difference. Hopefully that person is YOU! Please check our website at [www.viphaiti.org](http://www.viphaiti.org) for more information. Thank you for your continued support of Ventures In People. We can't do it without you. Have a safe and healthy summer.

Julie Stauss—VIP President

### In Honor Of

Goat & 4-H Donation made in honor of **Heidi Thomas** and Water Donation made in honor of **George & Joyce Schowalter**  
~Given by Milton and Trudy Staskal

Donation made in honor of  
**Heidi Thomas**  
~Given by Diane Wernette

Donation made in honor of  
**George & Joyce Schowalter**  
~Given by Cheryl & Richard Peshek

4-H Donation made in honor of  
**George & Joyce Schowalter**  
~Given by Richard Linhart

Donation made in honor of  
**Heidi Thomas and George & Joyce Schowalter**  
~Given by Paul Ingebrigtsen

## Gearing Up for Goat Classes

Can you say, "Kabrit?"



*Raising a kabrit, the Creole word for goat, teaches a 4-H member responsibility and helps meet a family's basic need for food.*

School will soon be out for the summer, but some Haitian youth will be back in class- goat class, that is! The goat project has been a long-time Ventures in People program. Youth participants not only receive a goat; they also receive training on how to successfully raise the animal, basic medications, and follow-up visits from a vet tech. Our 4-H Coordinator selects older youth from the 4-H clubs and arranges for a local veterinarian technician to teach the classes.

Goats are a good fit for Haiti because they are hardy animals that can live off the land. A goat can supply a family with milk or meat, or be sold at the market

to meet other basic needs.

The goat project is just one more way that Ventures in People is helping Haitians help themselves. If you'd like to get involved, check out our website to donate through PayPal ([www.viphaiti.org](http://www.viphaiti.org)) or look for the address listed in this newsletter. Goat sponsorships costs \$150 per youth, but truly any amount makes a difference! Investing in the goat project means investing in the health of an entire family.

Thank you!

*Jocelyn Ritger*



*Pictured above: A girl studies during a goat training seminar & proud graduates of the goat training program.*

## Education: A Refrigerator Gallery History

My husband David and I were introduced to the Ventures in People Foundation in April 2009 when Heidi Thomas came to speak to our Washington County Retired Educators' Association about 4H-Haiti and the Student Education Program on the island. This was the same year that the island of Haiti experienced an earthquake in January when Heidi and her group were on the island. Naturally, when we retired teachers read about this seismic event in the newspapers, we were worried about Heidi and uncertain about whether her presentation was even going to take place so soon after her arrival back to the United States.

Heidi reassured us after a phone call that she was good to go! She had even more to share than her usual outline, including the earthquake and the group's earlier-than-planned return home. She did a masterful job of presenting the goals of 4-H in Haiti and the student outreach in Mirebalais under the coordination of Louis Guerrier. David and I decided at that time that we would like to sponsor a student.

Our first student was a twelve-year old girl named Brittany who unfortunately moved away and out of the program a year later. We were told that this was not unusual because of conditions on the island in general, and the ripple effect for the students specifically. Our next student, a boy of twelve named Pierre, was our student until he graduated out of the program at eighteen. His picture was on our refrigerator along with our other family snapshots and

drawings of our grandchildren. We were so proud of his determination, and we congratulated him and wished him well. We have now been sponsoring a girl named Roodjina for two years. She entered the program when she was ten years old, and her photograph has pride of place on our refrigerator!

It is so gratifying to be a part of Ventures in People in a small way. It is a tribute to the memory of Heidi Thomas. It is a one-on-one way to help the people of Haiti. The newspaper headlines so often reach into our minds and hearts, and we wish we could do more. Heidi Thomas gave us the gift of the Ventures in People opportunity. And we are grateful to the Education Co-chairs who help us maintain our connection to this worthwhile program.

*Mary and David Schleif*

## Start Your Refrigerator Gallery



Ventures In People Education Coordinator, Louis Tenior Guerrier, has a waiting list of many students who are very anxious to go to school but can't afford it. For \$175 a year, you can pay for a child's tuition, books and uniform. We invite you to add a Haitian Student to your family gallery. Haiti's children are the key to a better future for Haiti. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor in VIP's Education Program, please send \$175 to Ventures In People, P.O. Box 1062 West Bend, Wisconsin 53095



## A Ripple Effect

It takes love, courage and commitment to start an orphanage, but that's what Jean Ruben did in Mirebalais, Haiti eleven years ago. Before that Jean was in the VIP education project as he finished his last two years in high school. George and Joyce Schowalter sponsored him as he attended Sacre Coeur School. He and his family were so appreciative of the support he received that his father walked ten miles from their home in the country to Mirebalais to thank George.

Jean realized that too many children live in bad situations. In his own words "I mean inhuman conditions which represent a danger for their future and my community as well. Although we are not powerful, those (the children in the orphanage) that we are in charge of and receive training, they very soon will be useful for our country."



Jean has 20 children in the orphanage who stay all day, every day and overnight. Five years ago I first visited Jean and the children through a VIP cultural tour. In addition to the orphanage, Jean was offering classes to the neighborhood children who could not afford to go to school. The classrooms had covered roofs, three walls and lots of fresh air. As the

children in the orphanage have grown older the expenses of feeding, clothing and educating them has increased. Therefore, today the neighborhood children are no longer able to attend school at the orphanage. For the children in the orphanage they had just built new sleeping houses, one for the girls and one for the boys.

Jean is a talented musician and the children love to sing. Five years ago the children were full of smiles as they sang for us. George Schowalter had given the orphanage a set of bells the year before. A talented student music director led the bell choir sharing their talent. Two years ago when we visited again, the children were just as eager to sing for us and enjoyed it when we sang for them.

It's the ripple effect of throwing a stone in a pond of water. One act of kindness through the VIP education program created a "ripple effect" of kindness. It started with the Schowalters supporting Jean's education, then Jean spreading his kindness to many more children in Haiti. Only the future will tell us the ripples the children will make. Jean is a young man with a big heart and he used his leadership abilities and education to help many more children. How far can we throw a stone? -Kathy Hetzel

## Water

Thank you VIP supporters. We have been fairly successful at raising funds for water filters for people in Haiti. We hope to spend up to three weeks assembling and distributing them in January 2022 depending on the situation in Haiti at that time. We may need some volunteers to go and help for a week at a time. Visit our website and contact Ken.