

Foreign Exchange Student

Our granddaughter, Shea Guyer, came to Haiti for her 10th grade year. She has melted into this lifestyle like she were butter! She is so fun to have here. She thinks she has a full schedule with Biology, Bible, World History, Literature, Grammar, Algebra II, and French. Her French teacher is French-Canadian and speaks very little English. Shea told someone who asked her about that class, "I am immersed in French!" She is adding a new dimension to our lives this year, keeping the old folks young.

A Wedding!

On December 22nd, our youngest daughter, Amber, will become Mme Stev Pierre. She will walk down the aisle to be wed to the love of her life. All of our children and grandchildren plan to be in attendance to help celebrate this event. Stev is an engineering student in Port au prince, where they will be living. Amber will continue her translation work with Sonlight and be in charge of groups.

Please note: Stev is not a typo. That's the way he spells his name. That's the problem with his passport right now. They have misspelled it with an extra 'e', and they can't seem to get it changed. What a fiasco! Please pray that he does get it, so they can go to the Dominican on their honeymoon.

My Quest: Doing What God Wants Me to Do

By Claudia Lee

I was born during the Blizzard of 1978. I adore wintertime. How is it, then, that I have come to be a teacher in Haiti, where the temperature rarely drops below seventy-five? One factor may be that I did not enjoy my first teaching job; perhaps my college education prepared me for such work; or maybe the influence of my missions-heavy high school youth group piqued my interest. All of these things surely impacted my decision to be at Sonlight. However, the main reason I am basking in the sun rather than rolling in the snow is that in my quest to serve and obey God, teaching at Sonlight was what I wanted to do and what God wanted me to do.

At Sonlight, I spend my days teaching high school students things like English grammar, algebra, world geography, literature, and Bible. I lead an eleventh grade girls' Bible study, help direct plays and choirs, teach Sunday School and Junior Worship, play piano in church, serve on a worship planning committee, organize retreats and conferences for my students, grade papers, shoot hoops with the guys, and shoot the breeze with the girls. In short, I do the work that all dedicated teachers do for the good of their students.

My reward is in watching them live their lives for Christ. When I see Danina being a spiritual leader to her classmates despite the fact that her whole family devoutly practices voodoo, I am encouraged by her strength. When I see Chrissan getting baptized when though his mother is against it, I am humbled by his faith.



Claudia Lee with student, Daphne Andre.

When I hear Marc say, "Without Sonlight, I wouldn't know Jesus," I am fully affirmed in my work.

Not a single day passes that I do not thank God for letting me be a part of the work He is doing at Sonlight Academy, and not a single day passes that I do not thank God for the support that I receive from my home church. Simply put, without the prayer and financial support from churches and individuals like you, Sonlight Academy would be an impossibility. I am so blessed to have you as my partners in this ministry. When winter rolls around this year, throw a snowball for me!

The Second Time Around

by Becky West

My husband, Ben, and I came to Haiti for the first time last year. We plotted our yearlong commitment. We deliberated over what to wear and how to behave. We fervently listened to audiocassettes of Haitian Creole and wondered if we could be effective missionaries. We had our doubts about healthcare, tried to prepare ourselves mentally and physically. We were willing to GIVE UP a year of our lives to serve the Lord in Haiti. One year seemed like the right choice...one year to make a difference. Our year was up last June, but we decided to stay.

Two weeks ago we spent a day traveling from Louisville, Kentucky to Port-de-Paix, Haiti feeling excited and expectant of another tremendous year. As we flew into Port-de-Paix, I sat on the edge of my seat, wondering if I would get to see any familiar faces in our teeny Haitian airport. Once we landed, my wonder was slightly squelched as I was squelched into the rear of a blazer with our team's luggage...common form of travel. Even from my dusty crowded view, I was warmed by what I saw...need.

As we bumped along, the swirling baby powder dust enveloped the petite chocolate-eyed children that ran after our caravan of cars. (I had a good look from my location.) We dodged goats, rusty pickup trucks laden with travelers, women toting tubs on their heads, and the occasional toddler in the middle of the road! I was comforted with every jostle and convicted with every sight. I was again given the gift of purpose.

Just being present, just listening to concerns, just helping the community get organized, and just knowing how to get something fixed is what being a missionary has been so far this year. Practically every child I pass complains of hunger or asks for money. Many of the faces in the crowds here are dejected and several

bodies are sick or wounded.

On Tuesday, I get to make a bigger difference... I get to teach. Thirty students will enter my classroom with the above-mentioned backgrounds and worse. There will be motherless kids, fatherless sons, and children who never had a chance. They will spend the first few weeks wanting to hug me back, but not knowing how. I get to be one of the people who could assist in changing their lives. I will get to introduce God to them and help them understand that He can be a father to the fatherless... that He is their personal savior. I get to see their happiness. I get to receive raw love, real heart-rendering love, and I get the responsibility of loving them back. I get to hold a four-year-

old preschooler in church and watch her bow her little head to pray. I get to be the first one to enjoy that moment when something 'clicks' and one of my students learns to read. I get to dream about my students being the future leaders... the church, the teachers, and the government of Haiti. Being a missionary in Haiti, especially

during the first few weeks upon arrival, is physically hard. However, God has blessed me beyond measure. I could tell you about limited electricity, lack of water pressure, a sheet for a bathroom door...but those things don't really matter once you have tasted this kind of vision, once you have touched lives that didn't expect or want to be touched and have seen the results.

All in all, Ben and I may have GIVEN UP a year of our lives last year, but it turned into God giving us more life in that year than we could have ever imagined. Not only was I willing to return, but I was eager to return to what God began. He took my willingness to serve and it served me in return.



Becky West in her classroom.

A Building Process

by April Houk



Sitting in my apartment, I see faces everywhere. I see Teri helping lay tile. I see Wayne spraying the ceiling. I can even see the college group mixing cement to pour the footers. Of course, I also see the Rogers (Alexander and Durbin) who are literally standing in my bathroom wiring lights. The Haitian maintenance team is right now painting the outside of the building. I

can count over fifty people (yes, I have actually done it) who have given time and sweat to build my home.

It is a perfect picture of how the Kingdom of God works. Over the past four years many servants have come to help Sonlight build its maintenance building and three apartments above it. Most of these workers came for a short time and added just one small layer to the progress. And though many of the people have never met each other, their team effort has added up.

The process mirrors what is going on in my Second Grade classroom. I am adding one more layer of love, truth, and wisdom to the three years before me. There will be ten more years in which God will build the lives of my students into something amazing...ten more teachers who will layer patience, reasoning skills and servanthood. I'm amazed that God will use my time and sweat to build homes for His power and grace in our students.

If you're ever in the neighborhood, I'm in the third apartment just past the playground. I'd love to have you stop in and see what god's people have accomplished together. And, if you're ever waling through the school's hall, I'm in the second classroom on the left. Stop in and see what God is accomplishing in the lives of some important people.

To those of you who built my new home...thank you. You have painted, carried, installed, drilled, and nailed. You have used your skills to create a beautiful home for me. I enjoyed peeking in and seeing you work – and seeing your servant attitudes. You not only created a place for me to live, you've created a place fro me to minister, to be refreshed, and to be nourished. I feel honored that I've received the direct blessings of your labor. I pray my home will be a place of hospitality, joy, comfort, and peace to all who visit.

BABIES BABIES BABIES!

God has blest us again!

We are happy to announce the arrival of a grandson, born to Scott and Lindsay Alexander on August 6th, weighing in at 7lbs 3 oz., and 21 inches long! Don't you know I was delighted! They named him Cameron Scott. I returned to Haiti, via Chicago (imagine that!) and had a four day lay-over. I was so happy I got to cuddle him before coming back. He has the most beautiful skin and the silkiest hair, and is a beautiful baby. Am I sounding like a grandma? He was born with a cleft palate and lip so will be having surgery—the first scheduled for November 11th, and will have another at about 9 months. When Lindsay's little nephew asked her 'what happened to his mouth?' Lindsay's reply was that was where God kissed him. He was indeed kissed by God when he landed in Scott and Lindsay's lap!

Since all of our family will be coming for Christmas for Amber and Stev's wedding, we will get to have 'all of our grandchildren' here! Lori and Mark's baby girl will be a year old December 6th, and it will be so fun to see what she thinks of her little cousin. He probably won't be very impressed with her yet at Christmas time!

Stay tuned for baby and wedding pictures!



Bible College in the Planning



Ben West, Science and High School Bible Teacher

A new dimension for higher education at Sonlight Academy is in the planning stages. Ben West, our science and high school Bible teacher, has agreed to be the college adminis-

trator. Our Haitian preacher, Franck Estaulus and Ben went to look at a very large house in our area, which would be adequate to accommodate this endeavor for a period of time. The owner is someone we know. It is priced at \$120,000. U.S.

We want to make it possible for our graduates who desire to preach to be able to further their education. We have some exciting news of the possibility of the help of an online class from a state-side Bible college. Excitement is running high with all the possibilities; of course the logistics of money, people and time are yet to be worked out. If you know someone who has or is any of these, we would be more than happy for volunteers.

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