

## Dancing His Way into Their Hearts

by April Houk, Sonlight Missionary

Our God is a God who deals in the realm of “immeasurably more.” Our imaginations are only the surface of His desires to use and delight us.

Four and a half years ago, the Lord brought me to Haiti to be a field worker. That field included my second-grade class, high school choir and drama, Sunday school classes and junior worship. In 2002, the Lord expanded my field all the way to downtown Port-de-Paix.

Last February, I enrolled in a ballroom dancing school run by a community organization. Each week, I took four hours of lessons and joined the whole school in a three-hour practice session. Honestly, I started attending the classes for selfish reasons, to fulfill my childhood dream of learning to dance. But the Lord’s dreams were greater than mine were.

Those seven hours a week of salsa, waltz, cha-cha, tango and rumba turned into several more hours of developing friendships. The more love the Lord gave me for these Haitian friends, the more I could see their burdened hearts and the Lord’s desire to free them. Through His word, God showed me the depth of His passion for these people.

My prayer was that they would see and hear Jesus in me every time we were together. I knew

they were watching me, and I wanted to be sure they knew exactly why I live my life the way I do. I have been praying for boldness in all of my conversations and righteousness in all my actions. God has been faithful!

In September, I began an English course for my fellow dance students. This has given

me more opportunities to be His light.

The Lord has allowed me to build real friendships within the dancing school’s staff as well. For the last few months, I have been praying for another Christian to join the school and encourage the work the Lord has started. The Lord answered my prayer in an unexpected

way. The head dance instructor recently re-dedicated his life to Christ. Around the same time, the director of the school started attending our church.

Yes, it is incredibly more than I imagined! And I’m so thankful that the Lord doesn’t confine Himself to my small dreams.

Please pray that the Holy Spirit will lead me in great boldness and love. Pray that, as my friends come to the Lord, they too will be witnesses to the grace and freedom the Lord has to give.

I’ve learned not to be too surprised when God opens my eyes to new fields of ministry. For me, this field arrived through dancing. For others, perhaps it will be another hobby like golf or bowling. If we are willing, God can use us in every aspect of our lives.

The harvest is plentiful, and the Lord is waiting. Who knows what the Lord is dreaming; I’m sure it is immeasurably more than what we can imagine.



**Sonlight missionary April Houk with friends from her ballroom dancing class**

me a very direct voice in sharing the gospel. We study the Bible together, and we’ve even memorized and discussed in depth a portion of 1Corinthians 13.

In November, I was asked to be an assistant dance instructor and substitute teacher. I am confident that this is proof of God’s “incredibly more” characteristic, since I have been dancing for less than a year. I know that the Lord provided this position of authority to

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

by Farley Smith, Director of Development

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6: 19-21)

This very simple, yet life-changing teaching is just one of the biblical truths entrusted to me by Sonlight Ministries in my new position as Director of Development. Our Board has created this position in order to help Sonlight Ministries inform and educate all the loving, Christian people who contribute to God’s work in Haiti. We hope to keep you better informed about our present and future needs as they pertain to both our on-going operations and future projects needed in the evangelism of the people in Port-de-Paix. This position was likewise created due to the tremendous growth of our ministry and the financial needs that go with this growth.

In addition, I will be identifying foundations and organizations through which we can apply for funding and special grants. I will also coordinate various fund-raising events such as golf outings and concerts. Hopefully, there will be some of you that will help us coordinate these fund-raisers. I will also solicit corporate donations for our missionary work in Haiti, as we identify those companies which are able and willing to help us.

Besides fund-raising functions, I hope to help in the recruiting of teachers and other personnel vital to our ministry

in Haiti. Did you know we are currently operating five teachers short of what is needed?

Thinking back on Matthew 6, I remember that Americans today are more affluent than ever. This still rings true even with the bear market and stumbling economy of the past two years. There are many ways in which we can use our “treasures” for heaven’s purposes. These ways include planned giving vehicles such as wills, life insurance, living trusts and annuities. By the proper use of these instruments, you may actually be able to give to Sonlight and other ministries money that would otherwise be paid in taxes.

Sonlight Ministries now has a certified Elder Law Attorney, Randy Craig, who specializes in wills, estate planning and tax law. Randy is on our Board and is willing to help us as these issues come up.

Seventy percent of Americans don’t have a legal will. Have you thought about what God would want you to do with your stored-up treasures?

As you can see, this new position is quite comprehensive. Even though I am a degreed accountant and have worked as a stock broker and issuance agent, I have so much to learn. However, I’m excited about his opportunity to help. I love Sonlight, the Alexanders and the missionaries who give their lives to continue the “Great Commission.” I know you do, too! I look forward to meeting you.

As always, please feel free to contact me at 812-401-6531, agapefda@aol.com, or Sonlight Ministries, P.O. Box 8031, Evansville, IN 47716.

# Christmas Doll



## A Message from Norma Alexander

A long time ago, I asked Santa for a doll for Christmas. I have even prayed for this doll. She was delivered on this December 6, at 6:00 p.m, to the home of Lori and Mark Angel, our daughter and son-in-law. She weighed 6 lbs. and 8 oz., and her name is Riley Grace. She is our baby Angel. Her Mama and Daddy are very happy.

In June 1983, we moved to Haiti and have spent every Christmas since then in this tropical setting for the holidays - palm trees, sandy beaches and beautiful sunny weather. For many years I could not get used to the idea of warm weather for Christmas. This past June, when we learned there was gonna be a new baby in our family, my first thought was “my Christmas doll.” My second thought was “home for Christmas,” our first white Christmas in twenty years – assuming there is snow of course!

It is such fun to plan to see family at this holiday season. We are all converging on Lori and Mark for Christmas dinner. The drawing point is not dinner but baby! Scott and Lindsay, Carmen, Cara, Amber, Christiano, and hopefully, Crista

and Mike and their family will spend this time of celebration together.

The very first Christmas was all about a new baby, too; angels even announced it! I know Mary wished her mother could have been there with her to help care for her and her baby. I feel so blessed that I will get to see this tiny bundle so soon. God is good.

As I write, we are cooking and baking cookies, cakes and all the goodies to celebrate Christmas with our Haitian families and children. We have made hundreds of gingerbread men, sugar cookies, cakes and pies.

People in the states have so generously sent gifts that are ready to be given to our students and workers. Anticipation is running at about one hundred decibels in most classrooms. One delightful preschooler asked me this morning when she would get her new doll. They are just as excited about their stockings hanging around our white board, with visible candy and toothbrushes in them.

Our family wishes you the happiest New Year. And should you see me in the next few months, I have some pictures to show you!



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: HOLDING FENELUS

BY CARA ALEXANDER

It's a Tuesday afternoon in literature class, and the seniors are bent over a poetry quiz. As they work, my mind wanders. I indulge in what is perhaps every Christian teacher's daydream. I envision these soon-to-be graduates doing spectacular, world-changing things for their country and for God. I picture one rising up from among them to be president in this country so desperate for a strong leader. I imagine one of them preaching in Creole to thousands of their fellow Haitians, thereby sparking a nation-wide spiritual revival.

Lost in big dreams, I hear as if from a distance a quiet question. It is Holding Fenelus, one of our three senior boys. I look at him, confused; my mind had been far away. He smiles and patiently asks his question again. As he settles in to finish the quiz, I feel a pang. I realize afresh how much I will miss Holding next year and think back to all the years I've known this young boy.

Holding has always had that studious look. He's worn glasses and neatly ironed, button-down shirts ever since I can remember. He likes to read mystery novels, and you rarely see him without one tucked under an arm. Holding not only looks studious, but he lives up to his appearance. He's the kind of student beloved by teachers everywhere. He's the one in class who takes more than the required notes, reads beyond the assigned reading, and never *ever* turns in a paper late. His voice isn't heard often in class discussions, but when it is, everyone listens as if heeding the prophetic hand on



the wall. All this, and the other students still love him!

I smile as I think of how they've lovingly dubbed him "pastor". It's a nickname that's well earned. I try to remember the countless times I've seen students confiding in 18-year-old Holding or asking him for homework help. At a tender age, he has proven to be a mentor and

humble help in a capacity that exceeds that of people far older than he. He is faithful to God and his church and has not let his youth stop him from being an example to all of us at Sonlight.

It's time for quizzes to be turned in and reminiscing to end. As I collect papers, I excitedly wonder what big plans God must have in store for one with as much promise as Holding. I dismiss my class and with the noise of their leaving am jolted with the idea that perhaps I'm missing the forest for the trees. Is it possible that God's dream for this young man is already unfolding? Does God require only presidents or revivalists to do His work in this country? Perhaps it just so happens that God is already completing the good work begun in this quiet, unassuming and holy young man.

God dreams big too, and I'm reminded that God's tremendous dream for each of these precious students is that they belong to Him. My dreams for Holding's future pale in comparison to God's! It won't matter what profession Holding chooses or how outwardly successful he appears in a few years. This excellent young man is someone that God can call His own. Is there anything greater I could possibly dream for a student?



## News and Notes



### Missionary Applications

Have you ever considered giving your life in the hope of leading others to Christ?

We are blessed to have that opportunity everyday at Sonlight. By living and working in Port-de-Paix, God uses the relationships we build to shine the light of his Son. It is an honor to be called and used in this way. Yet our hearts are burdened because there are still so many people who need to know Christ's love, and we pray that other Christians will join in the work here.

Whatever your talents and experiences, God can use you to reach the lost. Please prayerfully consider joining Sonlight's staff and becoming a light for the people of Haiti.

Applications for field service are available on our website, [www.sonlightministries.org](http://www.sonlightministries.org). If you have questions about service opportunities at Sonlight, please e-mail Carmen Alexander at [carmen@sonlightministries.org](mailto:carmen@sonlightministries.org).

### New Internet Access

It's amazing how God provides everything we need in His time. Last winter, a church group from Blue Springs, Missouri, visited us in Port-de-Paix on a short-term mission trip. Before they returned home, they gave us terrific news. Blue Springs Christian Church raised funds to provide internet access for our staff in Haiti; this was something we'd wanted for a long time.

This fall, the proper software was installed, and we've been surfing ever since. Being able to access the internet has opened many doors for us. We can now research information for lesson plans, order supplies and better communicate with family and supporters. In addition, each staff member now has a new, personal e-mail account via the Sonlight Ministries' website. Please go to [www.sonlightministries.org](http://www.sonlightministries.org) for these new addresses.

Many heartfelt thanks to Blue Springs Christian Church and all of our supporters who provide all that we need in His time!

# A Joyous Holiday

By Claudia Lee

Holiday traditions always make the Christmas season brighter. In Port-de-Paix, we do not curl up by the fire to sip hot chocolate, drive around neighborhoods looking at Christmas lights, or take our students to the mall to have their photographs taken on Santa's knee. Instead, we look forward to traditions that don't require wintry weather, strings of lights nor malls.

Our weeklong Christmas celebration kicks off with the staff Christmas party. Every person involved in making Sonlight's gates open each morning is included: the American teachers, school custodians, maintenance workers and classroom aides. This year, more than fifty of us gathered to enjoy supper, presents, carols and even a sidesplitting Christmas skit.

The next big Sonlight tradition is the Christmas program. Each class performs a song, dance or drama for an audience of Sonlight students and their families. Everyone is giddy with excitement to be on stage, but the older students also

recognize that God might use what they do on that stage to affect the heart of someone in the audience. The students achieved excellence in their performances this year, but more touching was how God was magnified through their words and actions.



Class Christmas parties put a finishing touch on the Sonlight holiday traditions. Snacks are eaten, and games are played. The climax of the whole morning is Sonlight's version of Santa Claus.

Each student receives a Christmas gift that has been sent from the states. Whether from a personal sponsor or some other generous party, every child takes home a present. Our gratitude goes out to those of you who helped make this Christmas a merrier one for our students by sending gifts. Thank you.

We were definitely blessed through these special traditions at Sonlight this year. I hope through your own traditions you also felt the love of Christ during the holidays!

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