

We Need Building Materials

We are building walls! I've always thought that building bridges was more important than building walls, but when these walls are finished they will house special events for Sonlight students and the Sonlight church when it meets. These walls are to protect and shelter those inside from the noise, confusion, and distractions of the outside. They will give those inside the opportunity to refresh and refuel. These walls are being built to do just that.

We need help to build walls. Nehemiah was able to build city walls quickly because he had the backing of the King. He had the support of many workers. We pray for the same.

NEWS FLASH!

Warren French, our seventh grade teacher, asked Claudia Lee, our high school teacher, to marry him. They are both from Russell, Kentucky, and are getting married this August in Kentucky.

Please join us in congratulating them and wishing them many blessings on their future together!

It Takes a Team

By Carmen Alexander

Sonlight Academy is open! The yard is full. The halls are full. The desks are full.

I love seeing students streaming into the building, toting backpacks, turning in homework, to hear them singing, reciting, repeating, reading. I realize it takes a huge team to make it all happen.

The teachers are the most amazing people on the team. I am blessed to be working with this group of Christians, who have dedicated their lives to God. They live in Haiti for the express purpose of spending eternity with their students. They work daily with over 300 students, teaching them and learning from them, getting to know them and sharing their lives, visiting their homes and having students over, praying with them and for them, worshipping with them, coaching them, and loving them. That love is leading students to Christ.

This Haiti team also consists of three American men working non-stop doing construction and maintenance. Joining them are 4 Haitian men working along side of them, learning invaluable skills, all the while, allowing teachers to make ministry the top priority in their lives. This maintenance team is crucial to the work and our lives.

There are 16 Haitian assistants working in our classes. They help students learn, line up and share. They grade papers, help students 'play nice,' 'talk nice.'



The staff at Sonlight Ministries

They too are 'parents' for the day to all of our students.

We have four French teachers who insist that our students are fluent in French – our high school students are doing American university level French grammar and literature.

Then there is our U.S. team. We couldn't do it without the help of Farley Smith, Mark and Cathy Abney, and Tim Severance. And we owe a huge thank you to Amy Jensen who left our staff to join a mission team working in Honduras. We want to wish her and Eldon godspeed as they minister there. Though they are greatly missed by Sonlight, they are a huge blessing to the people of Honduras.

Sonlight's board members also provide a depth of wisdom and advice that is invaluable to the work.

But there are still many, many more of YOU. You, who give financially, who pray daily, who visit with work teams, to ensure that we spend eternity with this people group; you inspire us. We couldn't do it without you. Your huge part of our ministry is a daily blessing to us.

Weddings, Weddings, Weddings!

by Norma Alexander

It was a delightful day in December when Amber Alexander and Stev Pierre stood before brother and preacher Scott Alexander and professed their love and promises to each other. Amber was a beautiful bride and Stev a most handsome groom! We had showers, showers of blessings we were told, which we truly believe. Our whole family was here for the event. We were able to see and hold grandbabies...but not nearly enough! We ate (way too much!), talked, visited, played games, and thoroughly enjoyed this family event.



the church and classrooms was much more delightful than it would have been during one of the 'showers'. The pictures are humorous. But on Saturday night, one day before the wedding when, during a storm, the tent came down. It seemed rather daunting! And where was Dumbo when they were trying to pull those tarps into place anyway? Sunday after church everyone pitched in and helped to 'reconstruct' a place for the reception. It was beautiful. Candi and Becky decorated the church building for the wedding. We do have

All of our staff stayed until the wedding was over before going home for Christmas. We were thrilled!



They were the mainstay in ALL the work! They helped build the tent which at the 9th hour came tumbling down! Again we were blessed; the reception in

the most incredible crew! They can do anything!

Amber and Stev are making their home in Port au Prince. Stev is in engineering school, and Amber is doing translation for Sonlight and meeting our groups as they enter Haiti. She loves being there and not making a 'sometimes weekly' trip to Port au Prince.

AND THE BIG NEWS!

Carmen and Cara are both getting married July 31st in Evansville, Indiana! Both announced their engagements at Christmas time. WOW! How exciting!

Carmen said yes to John Niehaus. They met when he came to Haiti with a group and later came here to work. They will continue to work at Sonlight. I'm not sure how Port de Paix will handle 'Miss Carmen' becoming 'Mme John'!!

Thom Wimpelberg asked Cara to marry him, and he will be returning to Haiti to teach next year after completing a graduate program in experiential education at the University of Minnesota.

We have prayed that our children would meet just the right person, and it seems our prayers have indeed been answered.



...and the government will be on his shoulders...

by Amber Pierre

A few weeks ago, one of my husband's friends stopped by the house and the conversation, as all conversations tend to do these days, turned to Haiti's political situation. As we were talking, he said, "After Haitians won their independence, they just sat down, like all their work was done."

Haiti is currently one of the top three poorest nations in the world. While a combination of factors have pushed Haiti to this level of privation: poor leadership, voodoo, illiteracy, absence of social services, dependence on first-world nations, most Haitians prefer to believe that the whole of the blame rests on their government. To be sure, Haiti has had more than its share of despots, and in the minds of many here, until one comes along who can pave the road for improvement, this people will remain the *bête noir* of the Western Hemisphere.

The massacre of the nation Haiti

has been neither quick nor systematic. It began in 1804 when they claimed their independence, dedicated the infant republic to voodoo, and proceeded to put a series of corrupt and incompetent leaders in place. It continued through Henri Christophe, building his Citadelle to ward off the French, straight to Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier, founding the *Léopards* to ward off his political adversaries. It has not ended.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide, elected by popular vote in 1990, is a priest come president. And but for a brief period since 1990, he has been the ruler of Haiti. Founder of the Fanmi Lavalas political party, his platform is Socialist, and upon entering Haiti's National Palace, made grandiose promises of better roads, electricity, potable water and stability to Haiti's impoverished people.

Aristide's current term, which was due to end February 2005, ended

Sunday, February 29, 2004. The vast majority of Haiti's population wanted him to resign. Public schools and universities closed while demonstrations in the streets called for him to step down. Voices called for Pétion, Duvalier, Cédras and a score of others to relinquish power, the voices of those slaves since time immemorial, the voices of victims under a stream of brother tyrants. These voices grew louder, not softer, with passing generations.

And yet as they called out, they cried not only for an autocrat's departure, but for a better way, a solution, a leader, they call for a Savior. God is answering that call as our students are even now becoming the responsible citizens and ingenious leaders who guide this nation.

They will be the ones to return this country to its rightful owner, Jesus Christ. Pray for Haiti. Pray for our students. Pray for us.



WANTED: Bible College Professors

We have located a house to rent that is temporarily very suitable for our new Bible college. We have students wanting to learn, but how can they learn without a teacher? (That's a Norma paraphrase of Romans 10:14.) We need professors, teachers, and library books. We invite YOU to share your talents. If God has given you the gifts, come and teach!

Sonlight Needs a Copier

We would like a copy machine that requires no maintenance, no cartridges, and one that sorts, staples, and takes the copies to the classrooms :) However, we haven't found any catalogs that advertise such a machine. Our last copier died early in the year. A memorial service seemed in order for such a faithful one, but now we need a replacement! A new

copier like the one we had is \$5400, plus shipping. If you would like to see some teachers smile, tag a check 'copier'.

Scholarship Fund Lagging Behind

Our goal is to raise up Haitian leaders by training our students to be teachers and preachers here at home. We would like some Sonlight graduates to finish their training in U.S. colleges and universities. People may know that previously many students were not given visas by the U.S. Embassy for fear they would not return to Haiti. Nevertheless, we are trying again to send out students, hoping to get visas and praying the scholarship fund will be ready to support our new students and those presently in U.S. colleges and universities. Please help us raise up future Haitian leaders by supporting our scholarship fund.

God has immeasurably blessed us financially through friends and supports. Some are able to go and some are able to give. Some do both. If you are in a position to do either, you will be greatly appreciated and blessed at the same time.

Contact Information

Letter Address:

Sonlight Ministries PdP
Name of Missionary or Student
P.O. Box 407140
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33340

Package Address:

Lady Lotmore
Carmen Alexander/Sonlight Ministries
3611 N.W. South River Drive
Miami, FL 33142

Website: www.sonlightministries.org

Phone in Haiti: 011-509-268-5171

E-mail: (see website for more information)
alexanders@sonlightministries.org
carmen@sonlightministries.org

Financial Contributions:

Farley Smith, Director of Development
Sonlight Ministries
P.O. Box 8031
Evansville, IN 47716
agapefda@aol.com, 812-401-6531

Short-term Trips: Contact Amber at
amber@sonlightministries.org

Stateside Communications:

Contact Farley Smith at agapefda@aol.com