

Merger Sponsorship Newsletter

November 2014

A Day in Merger

by Christa Abraham

We woke up in excitement! Knowing that we would get to visit with the children in Merger had us all up early in anticipation. As is customary in Haiti, the women of the group got dressed in skirts to honor the people we would be visiting. We quickly ate breakfast and headed down with Mason to meet Johny and Rosadite. As we drove down the hill from STEP, we leave the urban slums we have been working in, head past downtown and the airport and on to the direction of the coast. Merger is a rural community. The scenery changes from cement and block to open fields with cows, goats, corn, and grain. The lush greenery takes over the landscape, broken up by tin and mud shacks. The communities out here look much smaller than the neighborhoods we have seen so far.

We turn off at Merger, into a neighborhood and park. As we clamber out of our trucks, we are greeted by a group of young kids pushing a stroller. They are hesitant, but excited to see what the 'Blan' are doing. We quickly introduce ourselves in broken Creole and are greeted with big smiles. Our group heads toward the church across the street. As we near the door we hear voices of women praying. Inside, we find four women - these women wanted to make an impact in their community, so they get together and pray. We listened to their voices pleading for God to move in the people, to move in this community. Then they started to sing "Wonderful, Merciful, Savior" in Creole. The faith of these women is beautiful.

As we continue through the community, we weave through the houses made of cinder blocks and tin. 'Bonjou's' come from every doorway as we follow Johny. He's taking us to the first house a Glenwood team worked on in Merger. Johny knocks on a door and we are invited into the courtyard. We are introduced to the family that lives here. It's the same family that Floyd met when he came down with the first team in 2010. Big smiles spread across the faces as recognition blooms. After catching up, we move on to some of the houses that were built for the teachers in Merger. Out here, the houses are painted in happy pinks, blues, and greens. It is exciting to see how Glenwood has helped this community.



We climbed into the back of the trucks and started down the road toward the school. We pass some children in school uniforms and wave and yell 'bonjou' as we go by. The plan is to arrive at school near the first recess so we have time to meet the children. As we pull up you can see the First-Fifth graders working diligently in their classrooms. Some of them start to turn around and shout "Hey You!" this seems to be a common greeting! When our trucks stop, the children are released. We climb down from the trucks and are greeted by swarms of children hugging and yelling! Looking around, each team member is surrounded by children. We are all trying to figure out their names, and asking the questions we have learned in Creole. The children start talking even faster and posing when they see our cameras. We are all laughing in delight at the fun we are having. Some of the kids are wrestling to see who can hug the tightest.

Some girls pulled me into a game similar to “Ring Around the Rosie” - we all held hands and skipped in a circle while they sang a song. It was too cute! After a while the teacher called them back to their classrooms. Everyone on the team had a chance to meet the children they sponsor. It was so much fun to put a personality to the faces and names we have been praying for!

Johny took us on a tour of the kitchen building and the site for the new classrooms that will be built. The finished building looks beautiful. Johny says they are waiting for the plumbing to get finished before they put the kitchen into full use. The next team from Glenwood will be starting the new classrooms. This will allow the classes that are currently meeting in the cafeteria to have a more permanent space for learning.



Next, we get to visit the pre-school classroom. The ‘Hey You’s’ start as soon as we round the corner and the children can see us through the wall. Those big brown eyes and grins are too much! We quickly make our way to the entrance and so commences the hugging-round two! We visit with the little ones until the teachers start to call them back to their classrooms. We head back to the trucks so the children can resume their studies. The children in the classrooms turn and wave as we pull away. What a fun day! Mason and Johny tell us that the children are so outgoing with us because they have seen what the teams from Glenwood have done in the community. Glenwood has a reputation of sharing the love of Jesus in Merger, through the building projects and the school sponsorships. It was exciting to see first-hand the effect that Glenwood is having in Merger. Thank you for your faithfulness to share Jesus with those in your community and those across the oceans.

A Family Gets a New Home

The November GO Team (Christa Abraham, Joe & Shannon Emery, Kandra Kulla, Nathan Nymeyer, Floyd Siepmann, Joe & Eion Stuart) spent most of their week building a home for family in Port au Prince. Although the work was hard and the weather was hot and humid, every team member says the trip was well worth it. Sharing the love of Jesus by blessing this family was a gift to everyone involved.



The Zizi-Sanon family pose with Glenwood’s GO Team (left) and receive the keys to their new home from Jean Robert, construction supervisor (above).



Field Trip Time!

Every year Johny plans a special outing for those students who excel in their school work and reach a designated grade percentage. This past summer the students went to visit the Peligre' Hydroelectric Dam, located on the Artibonite River

Please Remember...

- To include your student's MSP number on all correspondence, including contributions.
- To write a separate check for your Merger contributions. (Do not include your Merger contributions with your tithe check).
- If you are contributing to a Merger fund other than sponsorship (building project, Christmas party, teacher appreciation), please indicate which fund on your check (Merger building project, etc.) – please do not just write "Haiti" as this makes it difficult to determine where the contribution should go.
- It's not too late to sign up for EFT (electronic funds transfer). EFT is a safe, simple way to have your contributions withdrawn from your checking or savings account. For more information, contact the church office.

Pikliz (Haitian spicy pickled vegetables)

Every Haitian home has a jar of *pikliz* on hand. Cabbage, carrots, chiles and other vegetables are soaked in vinegar to make a relish similar to American chow-chow or Italian *giardiniera*. The crunchy salad is served as a side dish at meals. Flavored vinegar from pikliz is often used in marinades or to give dishes a spicy-sour punch.

Ingredients

- Cabbage, shredded -- 1/2 head
- Carrots, peeled and chopped into small pieces or grated -- 2
- Onion, thinly sliced -- 1
- Scotch bonnet peppers -- 2 to 6
- Garlic cloves -- 4 to 6
- Salt -- 2 teaspoons
- Peppercorns -- 8 to 10
- White or cane vinegar -- 3 cups

Method

1. Add all of the ingredients to a large bowl and toss well to mix. Place all of the vegetables into a clean 2-quart glass jar. Pour in enough vinegar to cover the vegetables, tamping them down to remove any air bubbles.
2. Store the pikliz in the refrigerator for at least 24 hours before serving. It will keep in the refrigerator for a month or two.

Pikliz Variations

- Other Possible Additions: Sliced bell peppers, Serrano or jalapeño peppers, chopped green tomatoes, chopped cauliflower, peas.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!

Now is the time to send those cards and letters to your students! It takes 2-3 weeks for mail to reach Merger so the sooner you send your greetings, the better. Remember to NOT send any gifts, but you can include photos-which the students love! All correspondence should be sent to the following address with your students name and MSP # in the bottom left corner of the envelope:

Johny Philippe
Unit 2109 UEBH
3170 Airmans Drive
Ft. Pierce, FL 34946



Thank you!

Thank you to all who contributed to the 2014 Merger Christmas Party! Your generosity brought in over \$6000.00 that was sent to provide the students and their families a party complete with a meal and a gift for every student!



Praises For...

- A safe and successful GO Team trip! A home was built and a family blessed.
- The beginning of another school year at CENV.
- The continued health and safety of Mason & Lauren Young (and family), Johny & Rosdaite and all the staff and students at CENV.
- The blessings of having Wawa (Josette) and Johny (Rosadite) with us in September.

Please Pray for...

- Continued safety for all the staff and students at CENV.
- A successful school year for all the CENV students.
- Open hearts for the students and parents who do not yet know Jesus.
- The students and the church in Merger to continue to grow spiritually.
- Bruce and Cindy McMartin as they make new friends and grow their ministry in Senegal.
- New sponsors for the students we have waiting.