

Haiti Needs You

1011 Arianna NW
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Jim and Rita Cwengros



Matt Kutsche



Mary LaPonsie

2013 Summer Newsletter

THANK YOU!

To the many of you who are aware of the mountain accident, thank you for the outpouring of well wishes and sympathy, and for those of you who do not know, here is an update. The January Holy Spirit Parish and Haiti Needs You medical and dental mission trip started with a tragic accident on January 11th near Jacmal in which the brakes gave out sending one of the cars down the mountain. Four team members died: Matt Kutsche who was on his first trip to Haiti traveling along with his dad, Dr. David Kutsche; Jim and Rita Cwengros who went on a number of trips including the 2010 Earthquake Team; and Mary LaPonsie who went on every Segiun medical mission. All four were wonderful, giving people with a passion for helping others in Haiti and in their local communities. Words cannot describe our terrible loss. The prayer services and funerals were full of heartfelt memories of four people who lived amazing lives caring for others and who were ready to meet God face to face.

HEALING HEARTS, One Mission at a Time

A benefit was held in February to cover funeral expenses and to contribute to memorial funds for our four dear friends. Once again the outpouring of support was evident for the families, the team members, and the community.



June 2013 Medical/Dental Team

MEMORIALS AND TRIBUTES

The June Holy Spirit Parish and Haiti Needs You medical and dental mission was successful and healing for the Seguin community and for the team. Father Gilbert met the team at the site where a six-foot monument was erected in honor of the four. The whole Seguin community welcomed everyone with open arms. On June 11th, the five-month anniversary, a memorial tribute was held with the release of four Chinese lanterns and the unveiling of a memorial cross set up in a prayer area near the rectory.



Cross built at the accident site by the people of Seguin



Cross made in USA and now located in Seguin

IN THEIR WORDS ...

Jim Cwengros, January, 2012: "Well, we had our last day of clinic in Seguin today. I've been on a number of trips to Haiti now – and I never cease to be amazed at how a group of "strangers" can come together to serve others. The team came together this week to share their talents and to serve in any way that was needed – a great team. I also never cease to be amazed at the beautiful people of Haiti who welcome us each year. These people have so little material possessions – but they are rich beyond our understanding. I encourage others to serve – it's an amazing experience. Thanks to all at Holy Spirit for helping to support our Brothers and Sisters."

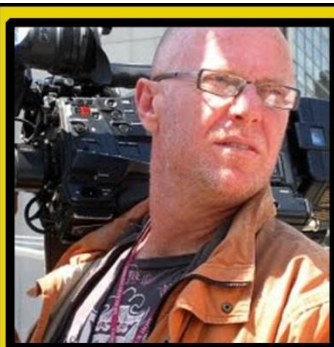
Rita Cwengros, 2010 Earthquake Team: "I have received more than I have given. I have been blessed to work with a wonderful, giving and talented team of people. I have had an unforgettable and amazing experience. I left part of my heart in Haiti."

Mary LaPonsie, January, 2012: "As always – mixed feelings as we prepare to leave. I miss my family at home, my own bed and warm showers. As I board the plane in Port au Prince, Haiti will be tugging on my heart. Once again, I feel as if I'm leaving a million of my own children behind. Gratefully several have been left in better shape than when we arrived. Amazing! Incredible trip!"

David Kutsche, Father of Matt Kutsche who was so looking forward to this trip, January, 2011: "First timer. Incredible experience. I think everyone should make a trip like this sometime in their life. It gives you a new appreciation for everything you take for granted. Fairly simple medical issues can turn into life threatening situations quickly when you don't have medical facilities available. It hit me that there were a few things we took care of that, if we were not in Seguin this past week, would likely have resulted in death since they did not usually have basic care. Can't wait to get home to see my wife and kids and tell them about my time here. Thanks to everyone on the team for making this "newbie" feel so welcome."

MIDWEST HAITI PARTNERS CONFERENCE

The Midwest Haiti Partners annual meeting was held on March 16. All the speakers spoke of the common theme of providing help with the intent of aiding the people to become self-sustaining. Dr. Sidney Coupet founded Doctors United for Haiti and spoke of best practices in addressing health care issues and forming strong volunteer corps. Valerie Mossman-Celestin is executive director of Haitian Artisans for Peace International and spoke on rethinking mission not to enable dependency but to foster empowerment among Haitians. Steve Edmondson founded Starfysh providing health and education to the people of LaGonave and spoke on how to involve Haitians in integrating education and training. Tim Ryan, founder of Haiti Needs You, shared information about the Midwest Haiti Partners website and the importance of many different organizations collaborating together.



HAITI NEEDS YOU DOCUMENTARY

Ofer Cohen is a videographer who traveled with us on the 2010 Earthquake Team. Once he heard of the accident, he put together a video as a tribute. He had footage of Mary, Jim, and Rita from 2010 and put together a powerful video which you can view at the Haiti Needs You website.

Ofer is in the process of putting together a documentary of the work of Haiti Needs You team members. We will have a premier showing this fall. Hope to see you there!

As always, thank you for your continued support for our friends in Haiti!

Tim Ryan

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