



The Haitian Connection Newsletter

Lorraine Antieau, Editor

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Jérémie Breadfruit Flour and Nursery Continues to Grow



Jérémie Breadfruit Flour and Nursery is expanding. We have begun construction on our own bakery. Working in the community and having had several cooking school events, we became aware of how popular konparets are. When we demonstrate how they can be made using breadfruit flour people really like them and they would like to buy more than we have available. Konparets are a Jérémie specialty and are not made in other parts of the country. Attached to the email that includes this newsletter, we have also attached a brief history of konparets written by Bette Gebrian. We hope you enjoy reading it. The bakery will be a traditional bakery with a traditional oven, and should be up and running in a few weeks. We hope to also make bread and cakes in its bakery.



Haitian Connection Successfully Adapts Child to Child Methods



Child to Child recently acknowledged Haitian Connection in their newsletter for a workshop conducted earlier in the year: “Building on a course offered by Child to Child of the Americas in 2010, locally rooted organization **Haitian Connection** conducted a workshop on Child to Child methodologies for the staff and coaches of GOALS - an organization that works with children in rural Haiti to impart life skills through play.” For more information about this organization, visit their website at <http://www.childtochild.org.uk/>

Scholarship Student Prepares for Graduation

We are very proud of Haitian Connection's scholarship student, Gerald Bellefleur. Gerald has finished his 4-year coursework in agricultural sciences at the University of the Nouvelle Grand'Anse (UNOGA). All that remains is writing his thesis. His official graduation is scheduled for November 10. Thank you to Bob and Rita Boeke who have so generously underwritten Gerald's scholarship, and congratulations to Gerald for his hard work!



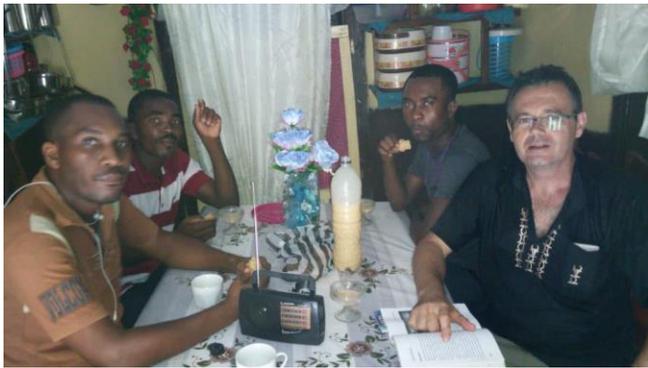
Gerald is the student in the middle

Cooking School in Deschamps

At the end of July, we conducted another cooking school in the community of Deschamps. Haitian Connection is very respected in that community, and has many involvements there: we have built several houses there; Pastor Erik Pierre and Bother Amos from the Baptist church in Deschamps, are active in our community mental health program; and one of our microcredit programs operates in Deschamps. These activities made it a natural extension of our work to add a cooking school featuring the making of breadfruit porridge, which was received with great enthusiasm. The women really liked the porridge, and ate it right on the spot. We will also encourage the women in our micro credit group to sell konparets at their stand.



Summer Visitors



In July we received a visitor from Guadeloupe. Mr. Federic Schneider (no relation to Renate) brought several young people from Haiti that he works with and supports. They were very excited to visit our operation and quite impressed. They are considering establishing a breadfruit flour factory in their area. Madame Charles (Pierre-Moise's mother) welcomed them with a typical Grand'Anse specialty, tomtom and crab sauce with okra.

Tree Seedlings Travel to Port-au-Prince

In July, Jérémie Breadfruit Flour and Nursery undertook the delicate task of transporting 700 tree seedlings (breadfruit and other fruit trees) to Port au Prince. It is quite a sensitive process to get the trees safely and in good condition to Port au Prince. We avoided driving during the day in order to avoid sun damage. All of our seedlings arrived survived the journey. The trees will be distributed to organizations with reforestation projects in and around the completely deforested city of Port au Prince.



Learning More About Haiti



Misconceptions about life in Haiti reach all around the world. After the devastation of the island in 2010 due to a magnitude seven earthquake, many citizens were killed or left homeless and scared. The image of Haiti in the eyes of the world has become that of a poor country stuck in a cycle of poverty. But, what are the living conditions in Haiti actually like? Here are the top 10 facts about living conditions in Haiti:

<https://borgenproject.org/top-10-facts-about-living-conditions-in-haiti/>

Technology Put to Good Use



Thanks to the support of Trees That Feed Foundation, Jérémie Breadfruit Flour and Nursery (JBFN) has been able to distribute breadfruit trees and other fruit trees to members of the community. In order to have a better idea of how these trees are faring once we distribute them, Trees That Feed will follow up with a GPS device and map out their geographic location. It is important to not only to distribute seedlings, but then also check on the viability of the young trees and make sure they are thriving.

With the GPS in our phone we are able to determine the exact location of all trees distributed by Jérémie Breadfruit Flour and Nursery. The trees shown below were planted in 2017; the varied sizes of the trees are due to different dates of distribution. The use of this technology will enable us to create a map of all the trees that were planted.

To illustrate, the coordinates from GPS for the photo on the left below are: 18 3153.3"N 74 09'14.6"W



Jérémie Breadfruit and Flour Marketing

Breadfruit flour is for sale through Jérémie Breadfruit Flour and Nursery (JBFN). We are now producing year around, and our flour is available in markets in Port au Prince, Les Cayes and Jérémie. We are in search of a strong marketing person so we can sell more of this wonderful gluten free product. Also, if you know of a good way to export and bring this flour to the US, do let us know. A shout out to Trees That Feed Foundation, which is sponsoring us in distributing the flour to schools and orphanages.



Haitian Connection Receives Mobile Library Grant



The Illinois Reading Council has awarded Haitian Connection a grant to establish a mobile library in the remote community of Jean Bellune, Jérémie, Haiti. Reading is foundational for future intellectual development, and we are thrilled to be able to offer this new resource in such an isolated. The mobile library will primarily target preschoolers to foster a habit and love of reading. Thank you, IRC.

Reading Intervention Project Report

In a previous newsletter we reported on the University of Virginia's Reading Intervention Project in collaboration with Haitian Connection. The goal of this project was to implement a group peer-tutoring model for marginalized children and youth in Haiti to determine if (A) the tutoring resulted in literacy gains, and (B) how the tutors and learners collaborated during their peer-tutoring sessions, with the aim of describing and characterizing the learning strategies, processes, behaviors, and innovations that developed within the small tutoring groups.

Fifteen students with very low reading levels who attend St. Jean Bosco Center, a special primary school for disadvantaged children (often living with non-parental caretakers and involved in domestic service) were selected by the school principal, Maitre Meyard, to participate in the tutoring program.



All of the program participants showed gains in their regular classroom performance in reading. Their final grades increased by several percentage points. The director of the school was very pleased with these outcomes, stating that the enrolled students experienced very good gains and that "It was a really good idea to have students help each other." He would be very interested in a continuation of the program next year.

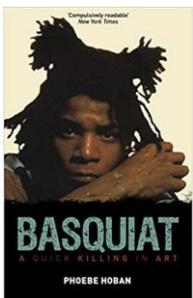
Prof. Diane Hoffman from the University of Virginia is in the process of providing a more detailed analysis of the project. What these initial findings do demonstrate is that with special attention, extra reading opportunities and peer tutoring, gains can be made in poorly resourced communities.

Reading Corner

Basquiat: A Quick Killing in Art by Phoebe Hoban, Quartet Books, Ltd., 2015

The tragic story of the Haitian-American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, detailing his turbulent childhood, explosive dealings with the art world and rise to fame, which led to his death from a drug overdose at the age of twenty-seven.

Phoebe Hoban brings some order to the chaos of Basquiat's life and the arcane dealings of the international art market, placing him in a context alongside his contemporaries, Julian Schnabel and Keith Haring, as well as his mentor, Andy Warhol.



This, the definitive biography of the artist, chronicles the meteoric success and overnight burnout that made Basquiat an instant artworld myth. As much the portrait of an era as the portrait of the artist as a young man, the book is an incisive expose of the Eighties art market, a vivid picture of the rise and fall of the graffiti movement, the East Village art scene and the out-of-control auction houses, and resurrects both the painter and his epoch.

Haitian Connection

Haitian Connection is a 501(c) (3) tax exempt organization founded in 2005, which focuses on the needs of women, children and young adults in the Jérémie region of southwest Haiti. A variety of projects have already touched thousands of lives: houses have been built for more than 97 women and their children; a small microcredit program is providing economic opportunity for women in 2 communities; a potable water initiative is giving healthy water to one thousand families; and local school teachers have received training in the Child-to-Child method. In 2016 Haitian Connection trained four facilitators in Divergent Thinking, and now Haitian Connection through its Divergent Thinking Institute is providing Divergent Thinking seminars all over Haiti.

Several new initiatives have been launched in 2017 such as a Language Institute to teach foreign languages to children and adults as well as provide training in pedagogy and methodology in the teaching of foreign languages.

An additional Continuing Education Institute has also been developed to provide continuing education in a variety of fields through seminars and conferences.

As a response to the earthquake in January 2010, and its psychological aftermath, Haitian Connection has established a mental health program in Jérémie to provide counseling as people resettle, tally their losses and adjust to a new reality. 27 members of the community have been trained in psychological first aid. This served the greater Jérémie area well after Hurricane Matthew in October of 2016. Our mental health agents were able to hold community meetings to give people an opportunity to debrief and receive some training in stress reduction techniques. For 7 years Haitian Connection has also worked to strengthen the University of the Nouvelle Grand'Anse by partnering with professionals in the US and other countries.

Support Us

Haitian Connection is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit corporation registered in Illinois and your gifts are tax deductible. Our projects depend on volunteers and the financial support of people who desire to help.

The cost of building a home for a woman and her family in Jérémie is \$2,000. The houses have three rooms and a latrine. You could contribute to a house, or even get your church/organization to sponsor a whole house. After Hurricane Matthew, this has become a priority for people in the region.

Scholarships for needy students from elementary to secondary schools.

Microcredit group: contributions accepted.

Mental Health Program: contributions to mental health center accepted (total cost for one year \$10,000)

Support for training programs in Divergent Thinking, mental health, Child-to-Child, and continuing education. For every program for 25 people we provide a meal for all participants and give the facilitators a stipend (about \$500 per training).

To support our projects financially, donate online by visiting our website at: www.HaitianConnection.org

If you would prefer to send a donation by mail, please address checks to: **Haitian Connection**

5300 South Shore Drive # 27

Chicago, IL 60615

When you order from Amazon.com, giving to Haitian Connection is easy! Simply go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> to get started!

Get Involved

We are looking for volunteers: English teachers, educators, specialists in various fields to give short conferences or seminars.

To volunteer, contact **Renate Schneider** at haitianconnection@gmail.com or by phone at **312/493-3719**; in Haiti: **011/509/3463-7532**

