



# Share Care RAYJON

## RAYJON'S 20th anniversary Gala

June 10th, 2006 was the night of the Gala Dinner and celebration of RAYJON's 20th Anniversary. It was an evening only six hours long, a year in the planning. It was an incredible evening, recasting the word "celebration" into a whole new meaning. Ask anyone who was there. Nearly everyone who has been instrumental in bringing RAYJON into its 20th year took part in the event. Special mention was given in many heartfelt ways to Ray Wryzykowski and many "Ray" stories from all those who knew him well delighted everyone. Trip participants from the first Awareness Trip way back in 1986 were there and trip participants from 2006 attended as well. Our first Field Directors from the Haiti Community Development Project were there; Elaine Laengert and Louise Griep, along with Louise's husband Johannes and their toddler son, Theo. Dieudonne, our present Project Director was there, along with Roseline, who has been with RAYJON for many years. Sr. Rosemary Fry, of the Cap Haitien Urban Development Project was there. John Popiel, our Dominican Republic contact/advisor for many years was there with his wife Sadhanna & two children. Local dignitaries included Mayor Mike Bradley, who said in his remarks that he has never known an organization like RAYJON before, as well as our new local MP, Pat Davidson. Every RAYJON Program Director was there along with people who have been working tirelessly behind the scenes for these past 20 years. How RAYJON has grown! It was apparent as one looked around the room, that, except for its initial vision and objectives, RAYJON has changed in many ways.

The theme of the evening came from the story of the starfish thrower; the small child who threw the dying starfish one by one back into the sea. He couldn't save them all, but he could make a difference to that "one". So starfish decorated every place setting as a reminder of what one person can do. Displays from each RAYJON Program were set up in a separate room to show through their individual display boards how they were making a difference. The room was full, full of not just picture displays, but of years of memories. Everyone had stories to tell; everyone had a more-than-willing audience. We all belonged. So many people, so many age groups, so many different experiences shared over the past 20 years - RAYJON was the connective tissue that bound us all together. We were the past & the present of RAYJON Share Care. But in John's speech near the end of the evening, he asked everyone to stand as he called out age groups. Over 60, 40 to 60, 30 to 40. We all stood as the numbers representing our age were called out. The last group to be called were the "under 30's", at which point John said "You, you are the future of RAYJON."

It went by all too quickly. It was everything that it was planned to be, but so much more. It was reunion, it was celebration, it was life - it was all of us who are "RAYJON Share Care."

*See photos on pages 4 & 5*

*Dianne McKillican*



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# Coming Events

## RAYJON SHARE CARE

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An ecumenical Canadian Charity  
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### Our Vision

*Caring communities building  
partnerships through education,  
development and aid.*

### Board of Directors

#### Executive Committee

Chairperson	John Barnfield
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Financial Dir. - Treasurer	Armando Notte
Legal Advisor	Peter Westfall
Secretary	Maureen Morkin

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Work Groups	Jim Leliveld
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Urban Dev't Project	Jennifer Vansteenkiste
Education	Elizabeth Soltis
Member & Public Engagement	Dianne McKillican Maggy Barnfield
Medical	Dr. Glen Maddison
Spiritual	Fr. Tom Lever Br. Anthony

#### Members at Large

Ryan Devries, Kathy Smith, Bob Topliffe  
Colleen Rapaich & Mike Voisey, Debbie Austin

### Newsletter Editorial Board

Maggy Barnfield  
Dianne McKillican  
Jim Newton

### CIDA Support

RAYJON is pleased to acknowledge the role that the **Canadian International Development Agency** (CIDA) has played in support of the St. Marc Community Development Project, HAITI. CIDA has matched funds for the project since 1989.



Canadian International  
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de  
développement international

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## Board meeting

Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm  
Community Living offices, Exmouth St., Sarnia

## Annual Fall Fair!

Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 9am – 2pm  
Sacred Heart School gym, Lecaron Ave., Sarnia  
*See enclosed flyer!*

## Membership meeting

Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 7:30pm  
Sacred Heart Church meeting room,  
Lecaron at Charlesworth, Sarnia  
Election of officers for the RAYJON Board  
*Participants in the recent AIDS Conference in Toronto  
will share their highlights & insights of the event.*  
***Everyone welcome!***

### *Mark your calendars!*

RAYJON Christmas meeting & social  
Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 7:30pm  
Sacred Heart Church meeting room

## Information meeting

for **Awareness trips to Haiti & Dominican Republic**  
Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup> 2pm – 4pm  
Sacred Heart Church meeting room.

Anyone interested in finding out more about  
the RAYJON Awareness trips is welcome.

**Come & find out more about what could be  
the trip of your lifetime!**

***No commitment has to be made at this meeting.***

## Rayjoner Pam Walker (Haiti 1989)

has organized a ....

### ***5km Walkathon / 25km Bikeathon for AIDS Research***

Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup> at 2pm

From Trinity Anglican Church, Murphy/Michigan Rds., Sarnia

If you would like to walk, ride or sponsor a participant,  
call Pam at 519-337-2896 or

Trinity Anglican Church at 519-542-9261

*PEACE – it does not mean to be in a place where there is  
no noise, trouble or hard work – it means to be in the  
midst of those things and still be calm in your heart.*

*Unknown*

## Tree Planting in St. Marc, Haiti

This year marks RAYJON's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – and to celebrate this special milestone, a group of 9 of us traveled to Haiti on a commemorative tree planting trip. RAYJON's Project Director in Haiti, Dieudonne, had organized the planting of 5,000 seedlings in January (11 different varieties requested by the people) – and when we arrived in April with our gardening gloves ready for work, the 5,000 seedlings were ready to plant.

We fully expected the next few days would be physically challenging as we strived to plant the 5,000 trees alongside local community members under the hot sun. In fact, we had visions that this initiative would pave the way for future tree planting groups – perhaps we could be a catalyst in helping the region to plant 1 million trees over the next 5 years. That would certainly help to address the severe deforestation problem in the area.

Well, our expectations were soon turned up-side-down. That first day I planted one solitary tree – others in the group planted perhaps two or three – a small fraction of the 5,000 . . . a drop in the ocean towards our long term goal of 1 million over 5 years. But the one I planted was a very special one.

The first morning of our visit, Dieudonne had arranged a dedication ceremony to celebrate the opening of RAYJON's first tree nursery. She had invited all the students from the St. Patrick's highschool and several local dignitaries. She explained in Creole to the excited and expectant crowd some of the highlights of the 20-year history of RAYJON in Haiti. She then invited me to come forward as the "Jon" of RAYJON to plant a tree commemorating RAYJON's 20 years in Haiti. What I didn't know (it was kept as a deliberate surprise) was that the previous month, Marg Irwin, Ray Wyrzykowski's daughter, who was on the Awareness trip to Haiti in March, had planted a tree on behalf of the "Ray" of RAYJON. Seeing these two trees side-by-side was a very moving occasion.

After this highly emotional ceremony, we were invited to personally hand each student a tree of their choice to take home and plant. (They had already been instructed on how to plant and look after them). We then helped the RAYJON staff load the trucks with hundreds of trees – and off we went. We visited schools where students were invited to plant trees around the school yard. As they did so, the agronomist explained to the students with great pride how to plant and look after their trees. We visited numerous homes where excited volunteers came forward to accept their chosen tree. They, too, were given a thorough explanation of where and how to plant their tree and how to look after them. Every recipient was recorded in a register, so members of the project staff could follow-up in a week or two's time.

That first day, we witnessed the distribution of all the hundreds of trees we had loaded in the trucks. The next two days was the same. We toured much of the accessible project area distributing trees to volunteer recipients as we went. Everywhere we went we were greeted with great excitement – and after their mini-training sessions, the recipients would return home full of pride with their tree of choice. At the end of three days, we had witnessed the distribution of trees to perhaps 1,000 community members – young and old - and every recipient was recorded in the register for follow-up. It was awesome to witness.

Just before we left, I asked Dieudonne what she planned to do next. She explained that the remainder of the 5,000 trees were spoken for and would be distributed within the next few weeks. She had plans to expand the number of tree nurseries and recipients next planting season.

I apologized to her for my naive North American view that the problem of reforestation could be solved by simply planting a million trees in 5 years. She said we may well do so – but this way we involve the people and empower them to plant and look after their own chosen trees. Was I humbled !!!! yet inspired by the prospect of thousands of people excited about planting trees. Isn't that what development's all about???



*St Patrick's students with their chosen trees to take home, plant & nurture.*

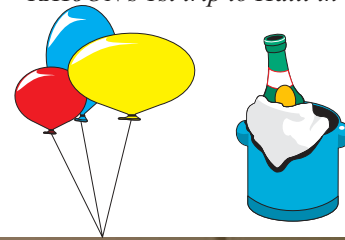
The RAYJON 20th Anniversary Gala Dinner, June 10th 2006



*John Barnfield & Hildy Wyrzykowski*



*Dante Lenardon, a participant in RAYJON's 1st trip to Haiti in 1986*



*Roseline from Haiti, Peter Westfall & Dieudonne*



*Sr. Rosemary Fry & Jennifer Vansteenkiste*



*Storyteller Brad Gray*

**RAYJON's ceremonial tree planting in Canatara Park, Sarnia, on June 11th 2006**

**Tree of Memory**

And forever this will be a tree of memory growing tall, growing strong with a promise that all we shared still belongs to the flow of life, a legacy, a living sign that we are part of history, forever.

Branches reaching upward, reaching the sky; knowing that there's more to see than meets the eye. The lessons learned, the paths we turned are forever etched upon my soul and upon my mind.

I will not forget you, our Haitian friends, though the tides of life will change and a thousand dreams and thousand nights will take us from this day. But through it all we're rooted deep in a love that's ours to keep, nurtured for all time.

*Paul Alexander*



*Bro. Anthony reading "Tree of Memory".*



*Elaine Laengert, Roseline & Louise Griep.*



*A great turnout for the event.*

**Very many thanks to John Degroot of Degroot's Nurseries, Sarnia, for the donation of the tree for the ceremonial planting.**



*Fr. Tom Lever blessing the tree.*



*Dieudonne Batrville, Hildy Wyrzykowski, Maggy Barnfield, Fr. Tom Lever, Mayor Mike Bradley, John Barnfield.*



*Dieudonne talking about the importance of trees especially in Haiti*

## Trip to Nicaragua, June 2006

Another amazing experience for Lorna & Ron McLeon from Niagara Falls, & Marjorie Paisley & Marilyn Couture from Sarnia was a visit to Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua. This city has many different cultures living together – Creoles who speak English, indigenous Miskito who speak their own language and the Miskito who speak Spanish. There are also 17 different religions.

We stayed with Reverend Peter Hoyle who is the Movarian United Church minister, and his wife, Cathyann who is an RN. We worked at the clinic which Cathyann operates. It was nice to be able to perform thorough assessments and know there would be follow-up. The hospital in the city was very debilitated and had scarce supplies. We asked the medical staff what one thing we could help supply them with and their answer was, “screens for the windows”. Rainy season was about to begin and with it come the mosquitos!

We participated in a soup luncheon at a jail which was disheartening. And we had a unique opportunity to visit an isolated Miskito village where people live completely off the land.

This experience may open up a whole new opportunity for RAYJON health care trips in the future.

*Marilyn Couture*



*Angela Zantingh at the conference.*

### **Registered Practical Nurse's Assoc. Conference**

Angela Zantingh, a RPN student who participated in the Lambton College's student nurse's trip to the Dominican Republic in March 2006, displayed a poster illustrating highlights of her experience at the RPNAO conference on April 27<sup>th</sup> 2006 in Mississauga. The RPNAO sponsored Angela's trip to the D.R.

### **Taken from 'The President's Report' of Georgian College, Barrie, Ontario.**

I want to highlight a highly successful international trip to the Dominican Republic last April by 28 nursing students, including 15 BScN from the Barrie Campus and 13 Practical Nursing students from Barrie & Owen Sound campuses. The purpose of the project was to provide our students with international healthcare experience. The students spent 8 days working in a variety of settings including helping local people at nursing clinics held in sugar cane plantations and remote mountain villages; home & school visits in impoverished barrios; visits to hospitals and other healthcare institutions. This international opportunity allows students to embrace diversity, acknowledge the restrictions of ethnocentricity, and to truly value a culture different from their own.

Students consistently report that the experience is life altering, both personally and professionally. Exceptional learning opportunities like these are never possible without the drive & dedication of our faculty, and I want to congratulate Jane Barnes, Lynn Hoath, Sylvia van der Weg, Sheila Wojcik, Diane Kilpatrick as well as Diane Duff of York University, for allowing people in other countries to experience the extraordinary quality & care of our nursing students. I would also like to thank our partner in the project, RAYJON Share Care of Sarnia Inc., a non profit organization dedicated to development projects in the Dominican Republic.

*Brian G. Tamblyn – President*

*Lynn Hoath & student Janine Dalzel doing an assessment at a clinic near Bani, D.R.*



**Congratulations** to Marianne (Haiti 1993) & Tim Bailly (Haiti 1993) on the birth of their son, Brian Timothy on May 24<sup>th</sup> 2006, a brother for Scott.

**Condolences** to Marilyn & Al Couture on the death of Marilyn's mother, Edith Merritt, on June 16<sup>th</sup> 2006. Marilyn is a Nursing Professor at Lambton College and Director of the RAYJON Nurse's Trips to the Dominican Republic. Marilyn was in Nicaragua, scouting out alternative destinations for Nurse's Trips at the time of her mother's death. (See page 6)

**Condolences** to the Barnfield family on the death of John's mother, Anita, in England on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Condolences** to Ora Walz and family on the death of Glen Walz on July 12<sup>th</sup> 2006. Glen was a supporter of the Hope for Haiti group in St. Mary's, Ontario.

**Best wishes** and speedy recovery to Anasilia, cook at the Urban Development Nutrition Centre in Cap Haitien, who was badly burned in a flash fire at the Centre in July.

**Condolences** to Janice Baker on the death of her mother, aged 95, in Edmonton.

**Best wishes** and speedy recovery to Marie van Werde following major surgery in August

**Condolences** to all who knew him, on the death of Fr. Bill Wasson, founder of 'Nos Pequenos Hermanos', otherwise known as 'Nos Petits Frères et Sœurs' or 'Our Little Brother and Sisters'. Awareness trip participants always visit his organization's orphanage at the top of the mountain above Port-au-Prince. Our visit is always a highlight of the week long stay in Haiti.

**Congratulations** to Joanne & Tom Atkinson on their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in September, 2006. Joanne is the Director of the RAYJON Eyeglass Program & Tom has joined many RAYJON work groups to various parts of the world.

**Condolences** to Celia Heathcote & family on the sudden death of Cyril in England, on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Celia & Cyril have been avid supporters of RAYJON, sharing the plight of Haitians & the work of RAYJON, with their friends & church community in Biddulph, England.

**Congratulations** to the Morkin family on the engagements of sons Darryl (D.R. 1996 & Haiti) and Scott within 4 days of each other. Maureen Morkin is secretary to the RAYJON Board.

Lynne Shannon is looking for someone to take over the storing & inventory keeping of the RAYJON 3rd world crafts. If you are interested, call Lynne at 519-542-7270

## Arts and Crafts 2000

This annual event took place on Sunday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006 at the Athletic Park in Corunna. It is a fundraiser for St. Joseph's Church in Corunna. Over 140 commercial vendors sell their goods at this event. The usual vendor's fee is waived for the RAYJON table. We sell 3<sup>rd</sup> World Crafts, set up good displays and raise awareness about RAYJON. We usually make about \$600 – this year we made \$434 – not too bad considering the small amount we had to sell. Kathy Smith, Clara Blake, Susan Olivier and her daughter, Melissa, all helped throughout the day. And of course, I couldn't do it without Ben's help or Trevor Jordan's loan of his tent/shelter. This little event costs us nothing and all is profit – all of the profits, of course, not being monetary.

*Dianne McKillican*



*Melissa, Kathy, Susan & Clara at the RAYJON table.*

## New & Exciting

*The new RAYJON Gift Card is now available!*

Don't know what to buy for that certain family member, friend, teacher, work associate?

Why not choose a specific gift for someone in Haiti in their name!

You can select a gift from a list of 9. eg: *the gift of trees, the gift of water, the gift of adult literacy, the gift of sight, sound or mobility.*

You receive a colored photograph card with the gifts listed inside and information about RAYJON on the back. You check off the gift you select and send the card to your family member, friend, teacher, etc.

*The minimum donation for a gift card is \$20 for which you will receive a tax receipt.*

Suitable for birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, engagements, Christmas, graduations, births, Easter, baptisms, teachers gifts, etc. etc. etc.

**Memorial cards** are also available – buy a gift in memory of someone who has died and send a RAYJON Gift Card to the bereaved.

RAYJON Gift Cards will be available at all RAYJON meeting and events.

**Pick some up at the Fall Fair!**

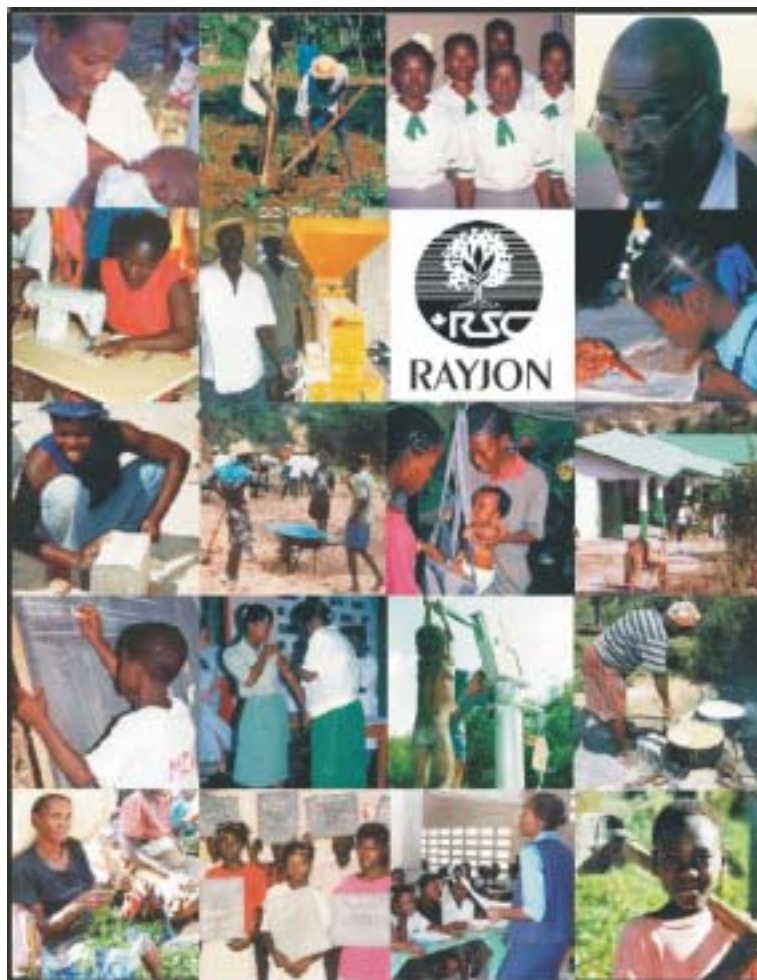
They are also available any time from:

Maggy Barnfield 519-337-0338

[jbarnfield@sympatico.ca](mailto:jbarnfield@sympatico.ca)

Or Dianne McKillican 519-862-1963

[dmckillican@cogeco.ca](mailto:dmckillican@cogeco.ca).



### The Cancer 'Relay for Life' Overnight Event – 2006

Canatara Park, Sarnia

This years RAYJON team:

(L to R) Art Westerlaken, Tom Atkinson, Dave Robertson, Joanna Giresi, Ryan Devries, Clara Blake, Deb Austin, Bob Topcliffe, John Barnfield & Sue Ashton.

*Well done team!!*