



Share Care RAYJON

RAYJON's New Youth Committee

This summer of 2009, a young group of people have collaborated with the heart and desire to create a branch of the RAYJON organization focused on the young people who attend RAYJON awareness trips and the young people of our own community that want to make a difference. The RAYJON Youth Committee has been founded.

The committee is made up of eight main positions, including members involved locally in Sarnia, as well as members involved while away studying at University or College. The enthusiastic individuals have come together to focus on not only supporting projects in developing countries, but also to provide support for young people locally who want to get involved with RAYJON.

Already, the RAYJON Youth Committee has organized a successful information BBQ, as well as a Carwash and BBQ to fundraise scholarships for the first graduating class at St Patrick's High School in Haiti that RAYJON has direct involvement with. As positions were created and stepped into, more and more ideas have been developed in order to get young people involved with RAYJON in a more direct way.



Fun events to attend and new ideas to fundraise for what is needed are among the many things the Youth Committee hopes to offer to our community. Current and future ideas include: the collection of empty salad dressing and Tabasco sauce bottles to be cleaned and sent over to Haiti, in order to provide containers for their homemade products; annual social events to gather young people together, providing not only food, but more information and awareness of RAYJON; various plans to raise money for graduating students of the RAYJON-funded St. Patrick's High School in Haiti; and implemented plans to connect young people of Sarnia, studying in various places through North America, branching awareness of RAYJON across the map.

The RAYJON Youth Committee would not only like to take this opportunity to introduce their new branch to the organization; but also, we extend a genuine welcome to get involved as well. Young people and those young at heart are more than appreciated to attend meetings, offer ideas, or simply stay in touch for more information along the way. For any questions on how to get involved, to check-off volunteer hours for high school, and/or to meet other people with the same desire for the greater good, please contact our Committee Chairperson, Mary Daly at rayjonyouth@hotmail.com.

Volunteers can attend meetings and events and simply get involved in anyway best suited for them. The Youth Committee of Rayjon extends the belief, 'quality of life is justice not charity', as well as includes support for young people locally and offers new events, with food, of course!

Join our email list for more information. Contact RAYJON Youth Committee at rayjonyouth@hotmail.com.

Laura Persichetti

Youth Committee Inner-Campus Coordinator

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RAYJON SHARE CARE

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Our Vision

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

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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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Coming Events

Coming Events

Member & Public Engagement (M&PE) meeting
Tuesday, September 15th at 7pm
at the 'Big Brothers' office on George St., Sarnia

RAYJON's Annual Fall Fair
Saturday, September 19th from 9am – 2pm
Sacred Heart School gym.
A 'Not To Be Missed' event!
See page 3

RAYJON Annual General meeting
Friday, September 25th at 7.30pm
at Sacred Heart Church meeting room.
Elections and Guest Speaker.

RAYJON Awareness Trip Information meeting
Sunday, October 4th from 2pm – 4pm
at Sacred Heart Church meeting room, Lecaron Ave., Sarnia
This meeting is for *anyone* interested in finding out more
about the Awareness trips to Haiti & the Dominican Republic
during March Break of 2010.
Sufficient information will be given to enable potential
participants to make the decision to participate or not.
Come prepared with all your questions!
No commitment has to be made at this time.
Everyone is welcome!

Sarnia Justice Film Festival
Saturday, September 26th at 7pm
Saturday, November 14th at 7pm
See page 8 for details.

Mark Your Calendars!
RAYJON Annual Christmas Party
Friday, November 27th at 7.30pm
at Sacred Heart Church meeting room.

*“What is travelling?
Changing your place?
By no means!
Travelling is changing your opinions and your prejudices.”
Anatole France*

RAYJON Fall Fair

Saturday, September 19, 2009
Sacred Heart School

Lecaron off Cathcart
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

RAFFLE - THREE EXCELLENT PRIZES

Bigger & best ever Bake Table

butter tarts - cookies - muffins - squares - pies - crackers
& more

Come early for the best selection!

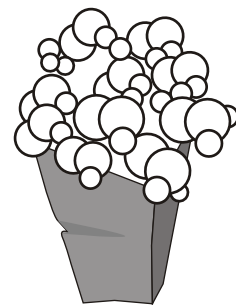


Third World crafts- Home Accents
Books - Card Shop - RAYJON Gift Cards
Preserves - Frozen Soups
"Gift Baskets" - "Tombola"

Stuff for Kids!

Toys & Games - Fish Pond - Popcorn

Something for all ages!
Fair Trade Coffee & Barbecue



This letter from Dieudonne was in response to the great outpouring of concern and financial support after the devastating effects of hurricanes Hanna and Ike in September of 2008.

Heartfelt Gratitude

“This is a time of evaluation of the damages, of sufferings during and after Hanna-Ike. Also a happy moment, an homage and gratitude to “Goodness” ... your Goodness.

It has been 6 months since Hanna-Ike hit Haiti. 16 days of rain, high wind, torrential flood. Some said that St. Marc was not badly hit, wait, think and do not wish a hint of what we have experienced to your worst enemies, as I know you are a good person. On structural aspects our area is not water wise, nor disaster awareness educated, neither disasters prevention mind framed. It was the scariest moments in our lives. Roads turned into torrential riverbeds, rivers in mud slush, mountains into falling rocks and sand rolling down on us, gardens into lakes. Broken bridges, broken trees, dead animals, dead people. 11 homes disappeared in Gilbert and Gardere, 4 dead in Gilbert, devastation.

Four years ago we accepted Elvena in the community. She was 16, had lost her mother and aunt during Hurricane Jane. Now Hanna has claimed her father’s life – double pain, doubly orphaned, doubly our responsibility to care for her. Alone she has taken total refuge in our St. Patrick’s. Our High School has become her permanent home with many others from Gonaives, and they are still in our care in St. Marc.

Until 2 weeks ago we were still carrying medicines and food on our head and donkey to Gilbert. The bridges are not solidly repaired. The avalanches are present at every show of rain.

Today, we are simply taking the opportunity to thank you, people of Canada & Germany.

Thank you for helping us in saving a few lives.

Thank you for helping feed the hungry, 150 people for 13 days.

Thank you for helping us shelter 320 homeless adults and youth.

Thank you for helping us distribute 750 hygiene & food kits to breast feeding & pregnant women.

Thank you or helping us in distributing 1,500 school kits.

Thank you for helping in distributing 1,500 hygiene kits to kids.

Alas, Patrick’s life was not spared. He was a young man, 31 years old. He was an orphan, he survived the atrocities of poverty. He was freshly graduated in Business Administration, got a job in Gonaives, started to help his brothers by paying their tuition & feeding them. He had just rented a decent 2 bedroom house, started to call it home, his sanctuary ... and Bang! Hanna-Ike came. Patrick swam into the mud and took shelter on the roof of his home. Four days later he got down from the roof and swam his way out of the liquid path. He was sick for weeks – he had got yellow fever. We thought he was going to make it, this self made young man, He relapsed and died and was buried on December 28th, on the Innocents feast day. Roads are still to be repaired, gardens can be tilled, but Patrick is gone – but thank you for helping us save the other lives.

With your support we were able to work with people to recovery, nothing is perfect, whenever there is breath there is hope. Thank you for being with us in this time of sorrow and growth, Heartfelt thanks to all of you.

If our kids are smiling today, you are part of their new joy.

If they are returning to school, you are part of the joy of learning.

If they are clothed, fed, you provided for them.

Thank you are 2 small words, but today that is all we have left.

Please catch these 2 words with the smiles of 320 children and 2000 adults who are praying for you.”

Dieudonne.

On behalf of the rescued people in the 4th & 5th sections of St. Marc & areas of intervention of RAYJON Haiti.

During hurricane season 2009, please keep the people of Haiti in your prayers.

Look Out the Window

Look out the window and tell me what you see. A world of suffering living in poverty.

Look out the window and tell me what you hear. People struggling for food, crying in fear.

Look out the window and tell me what you taste. Fumes of smoke and dirt filling my face.

Look out the window and tell me what you smell. A bond broken between race, turning into hell.

Look out the window and tell me what you feel. A child’s hand in need of help, hoping dreams will become real.

Look out the window and tell me what you see. A world needing to come together, ending poverty.

Emily Wighton.

Written on the bus during her Awareness trip to the Dominican Republic.

Marilyn Couture

Marilyn Couture has led the annual "Nursing Cultural Experience" trips to the Dominican Republic every year since 1998. She has just retired from her career as a Nursing Professor at Lambton College this year and is moving with her husband Al to Guelph in October to be closer to her daughter and 3 young granddaughters. The Nursing Trips will no longer be available here in Sarnia - we need to acknowledge Marilyn's incredible initiative in organizing these trips and to let you know how they started, how they grew and the effect they had on both our own community and the communities she served in the Dominican Republic.

Marilyn is a BScN nurse with experience in Critical Care, Burn unit, Pediatrics & Nursing Management both in Ontario & Michigan. She has been a Nursing Professor at Lambton College since 1990. In 1994 she made her first RAYJON Awareness Trip to the Dominican Republic and she says this trip changed her life forever. The Bateyes affected her most - the slum communities where both Haitians and Dominicans cut sugar cane, working in close to slavery-like conditions. She wanted to return with a Nursing focus and in 1998, she organized the first Nursing trip with 15 Lambton College nursing students. Unlike the annual RAYJON Awareness Trips, these trips are definitely "hands on". All participants - BScN nursing students, RPN students and lately ECE and Pharmacy students work in makeshift clinics the whole week. They fundraise heavily beforehand, not just for their own trip expenses, but to buy all necessary medications they need to treat the hundreds of people they see.



Two American nuns working in the DR were Marilyn's first contacts, helping her organize the in-country clinics, then Sisters Catherine, Roberta and Peggy in Bani were her main supports. A fellow nurse-friend at the College, Sylvia VanderWeg, joined Marilyn in organizing the trips, and then she moved close to Barrie, ON. She worked at Georgian College/York University, working collaboratively with Marilyn, taking groups of nursing students several times a year to different areas of the Dominican Republic. These trips are now an integral part of Georgian College curriculum, an elective course, as it was in Sarnia. They have given the many trip participants unparalleled experience treating everything from burns, parasites, malnutrition, fractures, skin ulcers, respiratory diseases and more.

Marilyn is supremely organized, medically skilled and VERY modest. Her efforts did not go unrecognized - she was nominated for the Toronto Star Nightingale Award in 2005, selected to the Sarnia Mayor's Honor list in 2005, nominated for the Lambton College President's Award of Excellence in 2006 and the RPNAO Award recently.

Her retirement ends a chapter in RAYJON history, a chapter that focused on justice for some of the most marginalized people in the Dominican Republic.

All of us who either know Marilyn or know of her work have been deeply blessed by her efforts. Typically Marilyn, these were her last words when I spoke to her about writing this article - "Thank you to all the trip participants over the last eleven years - you were the ones who made the trips so special and your commitment was amazing. Dios te bendiga. [God bless you all.]

Dianne McKillican

College Summit Initiatives

As the schools reached grade 13 in RAYJON's education history, it had become important to offer the graduates the opportunity to aspire to higher education ensuring potential social and economic changes in their community and improving their personal lives. Considering that these rural, underprivileged students with good grades and enthusiasm would never be offered an opportunity to have a college degree, considering that these kids are the first in their family to achieve a grade 13, considering that these rural, underprivileged kids did not grow up in a college-going culture, RAYJON's staff have taken upon themselves to continue playing the social role of advocating for the students to achieve higher education.

Continued on page 7

Some of the RAYJONNERS at the Annual Summer Barbecue.



Dieudonne Batrville - *Director in Haiti of the Integrated Rural Community Development Project (IRCDP) in St. Marc*, John Barnfield - *RAYJON President*, Peter Westfall - *Chair of the RAYJON Board, (in front)* Megan MacDonald of the barbecue host family, Andrea Weerdenburg - *2009 RAYJON summer intern*, John Popiel – *RAYJON project co-ordinator*, Deborah Austin – *RAYJON Vice Chair*, Jennifer Vanstenkiste – *Director of the Urban Community Project (UCP) in Cap Haitien*, Fr. Tom Lever – *RAYJON Spiritual Director (with Br. Anthony VandenHeuval)*

Once again, a very big thank you to Dave Woods & Linda Macdonald for opening up their home and hosting a wonderful evening. A big thank you also to Megan for arranging the perfect weather for the event.

Congratulations to Gordon Thompson and Reine Abi Raadon on their marriage in Lebanon on April 19th 2009. Gordon is a long time volunteer with the RAYJON Eyeglass Program.

Condolences to Monique Dostaler on the death of her mother in May 2009.

Condolences to John Popiel on the death of his sister, Kathryn, in May 2009.

Congratulations to Nancy & Mike Berry on the birth in June of their first grandchild, Reese Elliott, daughter of Jennifer & Jeremy Wilson.

Congratulations to Maureen and Bill Morkin on the birth in June of their first grandchild, Rebecca Marie, daughter of Sue & Scott Morkin

Congratulations to Danielle (Beaubien) and Paul Bruyns on the birth of their second son, Morghan Gerrard, on June 28th 2009.

Condolences to Maria and Rene VanBommel on the death of Marie's mother, Josephine Thuss, on July 14th 2009. Marie and Rene volunteer with the Hope for Haiti Work Group in St. Marys.

Condolences to Susan Osso on the death of her father, Guisepe, in August 2009.

Condolences to Joan Oxley, Josie Savage & Marie Buchanan on the death of their brother, Jack, in England.

The G8: Why Grey is Good

Another summer has come and gone and this means one thing: another G8 summit has taken place, this time in L'Aquila, Italy. The summer of 2010 is going to be bigger still because the next summit will take place in Huntsville, Ontario. Those of you who don't know what the G8 is probably wonder why you should care. Those of you who know what the G8 is may have such a negative opinion of it you probably still wonder why you should care. If you indulge this article for about 7 minutes I will not only say what the G8 is, but why you should care and why, perhaps, it might actually be good.

The G8 or "Group of 8" are 8 countries: Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia. The first seven countries formed the group in the mid-1970's to meet annually as "world leaders" to hold discussions about global issues. In 1998 Russia was officially added as the eighth member. The summits themselves last for 3 days. The first two are meetings and the third is taken up by press conferences and photo-ops, generally to talk about how "good" the first two days went.

There is a litany of criticisms that people have about the G8. Many of them are well-founded and justified. Here they are in no particular order: The G8 is obsolete because India, China, and Brazil are economically bigger than many of the countries in the G8. The announcements of the summit are decided on beforehand. The announcements are a lot of hot air; they are never followed through. The group does not affect international organizations with financial power like the United Nations or the World Bank. The meetings are closed-door and undemocratic. Organizations and charities don't have a say. The G8 doesn't affect the average person, therefore there is no need care about it. My list is done. If there are criticisms to add please let me know.

Now I want to tell you about why you should care. First of all, although more countries should be included, any talking between countries is a good thing. Preparation and wrap-up meetings keep representatives of the G8 talking and coordinating all year. Part of what made the Great Depression great was the fact that countries thought of themselves of islands. Canadians and others around the world are in a recovering economy so quickly because world leaders actually TALKED to each other when an economic crisis took place. The summit also involves a Junior Summit of young people and a meeting of charities and organizations. The summit brings thousands of people together, not just 8 powerful people who are mostly men. Second, while the G8 is not accountable to the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the G8 still has a large influence over these institutions. The World Bank and the IMF set global financial rules, and whatever is discussed by the G8 usually turns up in their policies. A decision made by the IMF will not affect me immediately tomorrow, but the rules it sets do help make it possible for me to buy a \$9.99 shirt at Wal-Mart that was made in Bangladesh.

Third, individuals and also organizations do sometimes make a difference. In 2005 the G8 committed to billions of dollars in debt relief for developing countries AND they followed through with it. This happened because countless people (possibly including you) signed petitions and lobbied for debt forgiveness. Your life may not be better with debt forgiveness, but for millions of people in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, and Iraq their lives are.

Fourth, the fact that we are actually talking about the G8 is a good thing. Most of the year I and almost everyone else are so caught up in our own lives that we do not think about how we are connected to the rest of the world. The fact that the summit makes us perk our heads up once a year and think about international relations (even if we are critical of them) is a good step.

Is the G8 perfect? Absolutely not. Are there major faults in the G8? Of course! Is the G8 completely negative? No. Is there some good that comes out of it? I think so. Like all things in life, the G8 is not black and white. The fact that the G8 is in a grey area means that we can talk about issues and find a way to improve them. While the G8 does not miraculously make the world better, its meetings in Huntsville and around the world do help in the murky, unsteady, steps toward improvement.

Andrea Weerdenburg – RAYJON Summer Intern 2009

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For the past 2 years, RAYJON's staff have offered an open, informative, education summit where underprivileged urban and rural successful grade 13 students gathered with teachers, college counselors and youth facilitators to be counseled, oriented and informed on possibilities, career orientation, existing grants, foundations for education, sponsoring opportunities, fundraising, monitoring, community college style and mainly counseling in Pre-University admission exams etc. RSCH's field staff commitment has shown once again that servicing the poor is a question of leadership, motivation and willingness to serve. Lack of funds did not impede the results of the summit and students came out of the 3-day workshops satisfied and aware of their potential and the variety of fields they can choose and to be successful. They have more than ever understood that the key to their success is education and in education and hard work alone. And they are willing and have shown they will do just that. Help them Lord.

Taken from Dieudonne's 2008/9 Final Education Report, Aug. '09

We await the exam results of RAYJON's first Grade 13 students from St. Patrick's High School in Barbe, Haiti.

Sarnia Justice Film Festival begins its second season on Saturday, September 26th at Sarnia Public Library Auditorium with a film entitled ‘**Call + Response**’. It is the first of its kind ‘rockumentary’ film that reveals the world’s 27 million dirtiest secrets: there are more slaves today than ever before in human history! ‘Call + Response’ goes deep undercover where slavery is thriving from the child brothels of Cambodia to the slave brick kilns of rural India to reveal that in 2007, Slave Traders made more money than Google, Nike and Starbucks combined! Music is part of the movement against human slavery and the film connects the music of the American slave fields to the popular music we listen to today, and offers this connection as a rallying cry for the modern abolitionist movement currently brewing. *Sponsored by RAYJON*

On Saturday, November 14th the film ‘**Consuming Kids**’ will be screened. This is a film about North American children and how the intrusion of marketing into their lives has not only robbed them of their childhood, but has given rise to a consumerism that undercuts the social and ethical values they should be learning. The film shows that we violate and dishonour children when we turn them into consumers held hostage by corporate advertising strategies.

Other films will be screened on January 23rd, February 20th and March 20th 2010. Details in December newsletter.

*All films are screened at Sarnia Public Library Auditorium on Saturdays at 7pm. Admission is **FREE**. Donations gladly accepted. Contact for information.*

Living Locally: Thinking Globally

After coming home from a trip or seeing something on the news that is happening in a different country people often think, “What can I do from my home in Canada to make a difference?” or “I can donate to difference causes, but are there other ways that I can stay connected to people overseas?” Well, the answer is you already are. The coffee and tea that is drunk by millions of Canadians every day comes from all over the world including South Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Check the “made in” tags on your clothes or the clothes in a department store. They are more likely to be made in China, India, or Bangladesh than they are to be made in Canada. These are links that you have with developing countries that are part of the everyday Canadian lifestyle.

A large number of these international connections are great for Canadian consumers, but hurt producers in developing countries. Workers in clothing factories around the world are most commonly women who are paid wages too low to live off. Furthermore, these women are often subject to long working hours in unsafe conditions and they can be fired for speaking out against mistreatment or for becoming pregnant. Likewise, coffee and tea farmers are often paid below market rates for the crops that they produce. Huge swings in coffee prices mean that farmers can feed their family one year, and struggle with necessities the next year.

However, there are things that Canadians can do to make sure that producers in developing countries are treated better and paid more. One major step is to buy fair trade certified products. Basically, fair trade products are certified by an NGO (Non-Government Organization) that makes sure the products were made using ethical business and labour practices, and that the producers received a fair wage. Buying a product with a fair trade label on it (see below) guarantees that you are supporting fair labour and trade practices, while helping to support small-scale farmers make a better income. Fair trade products include coffee, tea, chocolate, fruit, sugar, sports balls, and flowers. While not an exhaustive list, fair trade products that are available in Canada are Starbucks, Bulk Barn, A&P and the Water Bug Health Food Store.

Clothing is a little more difficult to make sure that it is ethically made. The main reason is that the number of stages that clothes go through from the weaving of the cloth to the sewing of the clothes to the selling of goods to the clothing line to their re-selling of goods to a department store makes it difficult to track where goods were made. However, there are some steps that can be taken. For one, you can buy clothes made in North America (although this may be VERY hard to find). While there is no absolute guarantee that the clothes will be made ethically within the continent, there is a better likelihood because of stricter laws in Canada and the United States. There are small shops (for example, ten thousand villages sells gift items) that purchase their clothes from ethical producers overseas. It is always best to talk with the staff or managers of these shops to see what their purchasing rules are. Lastly, there are online stores that have a fair trade policy.

There are many ways in which Canadians can help promote development in their everyday lives. While development efforts by NGOs and governments are still very important, it is great to know Canadians can have their fair trade coffee and drink it too.

Important Links:

Fair Indigo is trying to create a system of accountability that is similar or connected to transfair’s fair trade policies. This is a step beyond most “fair trade” clothing stores that say they have fair trade policies, but little to back it up.

American Apparel has a no sweatshop policy and there are stores throughout Southern Ontario.

Me to We is an organization that is associated with Free the Children. It sells sweatshop free clothing created in North America. Half of the profits go to Free the Children.

Transfair is the organization that distributes fair trade certified products in Canada and the United State
Andrea Weerdenburg

