

## Team Trip Report - October 8, 2012

The latest Love for Haiti team of three representatives (Maryanne Fike, Judy Rector and Ann Marie Pelletier) arrived at Anis Zunuzi Baha'i School October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012. We were there for several purposes:

- 1) to insure scholarship students sponsored by LFH supporters were enrolled in their schools for the 2012-2013 school year
- 2) to visit possible coffee suppliers for Maryanne Fike to arrange for export to her new business venture in Hoboken, NJ. Proceeds from this coffee shop featuring Haitian coffee and other products will support the scholarship program in the future, allowing for continued support of present students and inclusion of many others
- 3) to support the school with additional teacher training and encouragement in the arts program which they asked for
- 4) to visit Caribbean Craft, a Haitian business which employs over 200 people in traditional crafts and exports to the US and see how the collaboration was progressing between Anis Zunuzi and this business
- 5) to work with the newly hired elementary art teacher to explain the arts curriculum lessons which integrate art with the national curriculum

Each day we awoke with a new purpose and plan to accomplish one of the above goals. . . a very busy schedule! The head of the administrative committee for the school, Ribentrop Louis, drove us to the various locales and translated for us to help us get answers to our questions.

**Scholarship update:** David Menard was enrolled for the second year in his International Diplomatic Course; Gerardine Prevot enrolled in her third year of medical school; Ralph Intellus is in the process of taking his physical and admissions tests for medical school which begins in January; and Emmanuella Raymond is in her second year in nursing school in the DR. We were unable to contact Merline Santea in the Artibonite province so at this time we don't know her status. Ribentrop Louis will continue to try to locate her and see about her continued enrollment in nursing school. Please see the heartwarming live interviews attached to each name on our website. These scholarship students could not have registered for this semester without the kind and thoughtful support of many contributors here in the US. We are so grateful for their trust and support and we encourage these capable youth in the rebuilding of their country.

**Coffee Shop Progress:** Finding organic coffee farms to visit nearby was a challenge. The roads are terrible, making travel



long and difficult, even if the distance isn't far. However, we were able to visit an environmental farm called 'Wynne Farm' in Kenscoff area, run by Jane Wynne. She is an expert in all things environmental and gives classes to schools on sustainable farming, worm fertilizer production, composting, solar ovens and plant propagation. She was most helpful in explaining Haiti's farming needs and her hopes to help reforest the country through education. She also has a neighbor who was very interested in Maryanne's coffee shop plan. He grows his own coffee and so we went to his yard for pictures of coffee trees and talked to him about coffee production.



We also visited a local coffee cooperative to check on the possibility of exporting from them. However, a visit to Rebo Coffee near the airport already has an established exporting business and it would be easier to work with them at least in the initial stages of this venture. They were very professional and helpful in setting up contacts, discussing prices and possible collaborative efforts for the future.

**Anis Zunuzi Teacher Training:** After school on Monday and Tuesday the elementary teachers met with me for additional experiences with art mediums. Part of the reluctance of teachers to initiate classroom art activities is that they have personally not experienced most of aren't familiar with or have painting, weaving and creating. They each activity. They seem excited with lessons, but understand they are program.



the art activities. It's difficult to teach what you experienced. So we tried out new methods of were enthusiastic and participated willingly in the idea that they don't have to teach these there to support the art teacher who knows the

On Thursday afternoon, five teachers who wanted to create a poster for their classrooms stayed for an additional session with me. Each one created a poster related to their subject, using eye-catching letters and papers to make their poster interesting. Though these posters are unfinished, you can see from their faces that they were pleased with their results!



**Caribbean Craft Visit:** Ribentrop Louis took us to visit Magalie Dresse, the director of Caribbean Craft near the airport. This business creates traditional arts in metalworking, paper mache, weavings and paintings. Dona Karan, a designer from New York, works with this company already to create items that Americans and others might be interested in buying. They also sell to "Restoration Hardware" and "Anthropologie", well-known, high-end stores in the US. They are collaborating with Anis Zunuzi school already, by having Michele Aurelius, an elementary teacher along with five high school students, work with their artisans to learn these processes. These students, under Mr. Michel's direction, will then assist their classmates to recreate these processes back at the school. The idea is that the sale of these crafts in the US might help offset the tuition costs for students who cannot pay to attend school. This is a great idea and we feel confident that with the proper marketing, will be very successful for both the school AND Caribbean Craft. EBAZ



summer school 2013 will be entirely arts and English practice as the arts program is emphasized and strengthened.

**Elementary Art Program:** The newly hired art teacher Suselaine Besoin is enthusiastic and energetic. She really wants to do a good job with the art basics that the K-6 students need to create and understand art processes. I am very hopeful that under her steady direction, students will enjoy the creative process and learn the



many possibilities that can happen when they are encouraged to let their imaginations work freely. This foundation will lead to better products and creations at the high school level as well. Specific gratitude is extended to two specific individuals who were willing to financially support this teacher for this year! Ribentrop mentioned that the school was hard-pressed to come up with her salary and asked Love for Haiti to help pay for one year of her salary. It is hoped that next year another source will be found to continue the program.

**Orphanage Visit:** Two scholarship students, Ralph Intelus and Gerardine Prevot along with Suzelaine and Mr. Michel the EBAZ art teachers, volunteered to accompany me to a nearby orphanage on Wednesday, a national holiday. The administrator there had requested art activities for the 94 children in residence. The teachers and students led four classes through various art activities in painting, beading and crafts to the delight of the children. It was commendable indeed that all chose to spend their day off in service to these children who have so little.



**A return trip to Haiti to assess progress on all fronts will take place in the spring. Each scholarship student's school will be visited and their service supervisors contacted. One requirement for each scholarship is five hours a week of volunteer service. We sincerely appreciate your support of these particular students and the Love for Haiti initiative in general.**

**Judy Rector**