



RAYJONSHARECARE

e-bulletin

APRIL (2016 #02)

Rayjon Board Announcement – by Den Shannon (Chair)

After more than four years as Rayjon's first Executive Director, Ann Tuplin has decided to retire and work at other roles within Rayjon. Ann has worked in a very quiet, cooperative way to accomplish many improvements in the way that Rayjon operates. Rayjon is more compliant with regulations and on a firmer financial footing now, thanks to her work. Ann plans to continue to help Rayjon by providing guidance to Andre in Haiti and coordination for our volunteers in Canada.

Rayjon's new Executive Director, beginning March 1st is Heather Smith. Heather was selected from a large group of applicants and brings many skills and talents to the role. Heather has already spent some time with the Board of Directors and on trips to Haiti and Dominican Republic. Rayjon is certainly blessed to have people like Ann and Heather offer to make us even more successful.

Message from Outgoing ED - by Ann Tuplin

As the retiring Executive Director of Rayjon, I am so happy to see this position now being filled by Heather Smith. Heather has been a Rayjon volunteer for a couple of years, and I am excited that she will have the opportunity to use her knowledge of Rayjon, her solid education including but not limited to non-profit management and her youthful energy and dedication to work with the Board, donors as well as Rayjon supporters and volunteers to achieve Rayjon's vision and mission.

In the last four years I have spent as Rayjon's part time Executive Director, I have had an opportunity to meet and become friends with an amazing group of dedicated people who care passionately about social justice in our world. I am beyond pleased that in my continued role as volunteer with Rayjon, I can maintain and build upon these friendships for the benefit of Rayjon and, most importantly, enjoy the opportunity to work with our partners in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, supporting them as they seek to improve the quality of their lives.

Message from Incoming ED - by Heather Smith

Our volunteers and members are busy planning both the celebration of our 30th anniversary and the direction of the next stage in Rayjon's history. We remain committed to our core values while welcoming innovation that will increase our impact in social justice.

In Canada I am excited about new opportunities for youth to become involved, a growing Rayjon presence on social media, and development of new local partnerships. In the field our projects continue to improve services offered, and build the capacity of local leaders. We are learning and growing.

Many thanks to all of the volunteers and supporters that have welcomed me into Rayjon and continue to help me learn the ropes. The future of Rayjon is bound to be exciting!



RAYJON Celebrates Thirty Years of Sharing and Caring

Thank you for your ongoing support!

We invite you to share a favourite memory or lasting impression of your Rayjon experiences. [E-mail to: rayjonsc@gmail.com] We will publish some of these comments at a later date during our anniversary year.

Keep your eyes on Facebook (Rayjon Share Care) for 30th anniversary highlights.

A Special Acknowledgement - Professor Emeritus

We wish to acknowledge the honour recently bestowed upon Marilyn Couture. Lambton College presented her with the Professor Emeritus Distinguished Award, recognizing Marilyn's teaching performance of exceptional merit, her creative contributions to the development of the School of Health Sciences and her outstanding contributions to her profession.

More than 20 years ago, after participating in the profound experience of a poverty awareness trip with Rayjon Share Care, Marilyn returned with a vision. Inspired by the dedication and commitment of three Canadian Sisters of Charity (two nurses and one nutritionist) in the Dominican Republic, combined with the support and encouragement from Rayjon members, Marilyn wanted to develop a hands-on experience that would enhance nursing students' assessment, communication, critical thinking and problem solving skills. One of her favourite quotes is, "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." [Aristotle]

Marilyn developed a nursing elective course called "*A Nursing Cultural Experience*." This participatory course focused on discussions of third world issues, cultural adaptations, trip logistics as well as trip fundraising. The final phase of the course was the actual trip to the Dominican Republic, followed by evaluation and closure.

The first trip was in March 1998 and they continued annually for the next 11 years. A typical trip included 21 people, 42 suitcases and a grateful clientele of about 625 people. "Every trip was unique and rewarding to see the students' blossom, sharing of themselves, but receiving so much more in return." These trips were an incredible addition to the curriculum, making a difference by helping one person at a time and witnessing God's love in action as they followed in the footsteps of the Sisters of Charity. " No words can describe the feeling when you receive a hug from a malnourished child, cleanse a machete wound of a sugar cane worker or see the smiles of the leper patients when you touch them". Students developed a new appreciation of everything most take for granted, especially when it comes to health care in Canada.



The Dominican Republic trips had a significant impact on students and some graduates have returned as nurse mentors on subsequent trips and others have pursued international nursing experiences. Some of Marilyn's fondest teaching memories include working with the students, sharing her knowledge, inspiring hope, wiping tears and touching hearts.

Congratulations, Marilyn!

In addition to Marilyn's inspiring career at Lambton College, these Nursing trips were replicated at Georgian College by Sylvia van der Weg over 15 years ago and are still going strong today. This synergy between Rayjon and Ontario Colleges has blossomed into an amazing program involving well over 100 students, faculty and community professionals per year from many different disciplines and locations, including Barrie, Bracebridge, Orangeville, Orillia and Owen Sound, and established linkages with Montreal.

[International Community Development Course – Lambton College:](#)

[Class Experience to Haiti-Feb 2016: Excerpts from two students](#)

[\[Amber Kisman\]](#)

Visiting Haiti changed my life in a multitude of ways that I could have never imagined. There were so many different moments that touched my life and awoke my soul in various ways. I will carry these moments in my heart forever. Before I left for this trip I used to stay in my own comfort zone and tried to keep to myself as much as possible. Yet when driving around in Haiti it was impossible not to be greeted by many smiling faces wanting to welcome you to their country or bless you. This has made me want to be more welcoming to every

face I come across in my daily life. I really want to embody the warm and happy spirit that the Haitians have with everyone I greet back in Canada.

One of my favourite parts of the trip was connecting with a family while using an interpreter. I loved asking them questions and answering theirs. It made me so happy to listen to the stories that they wanted to share.



[Carly Bourque]

In February I was given the chance to travel to Haiti with Lambton College. I had been before [Rayjon's awareness trip March-2015], so of course I jumped at the opportunity because I absolutely fell in love with Haiti and its people the first time. Haiti for me is like stepping into a whole different world. Everyone greets you, they all smile at you, and the country itself is so beautiful, it takes your breath away. It was expected by most people that I was going there to help Haiti, trying to fix their country. People asked me what I was going to build and what my mission was. So many people seemed to be shocked or even disappointed when I would tell them that I was going on an awareness trip. I was going to visit their country and learn about Haitians and their country and their culture. What I experienced is that we have more to learn from them, than they have to learn from us. They may be poor financially, but they are so much richer than us in so many ways. Haitians all live their lives to the fullest; they share so much love and appreciate every single thing they have. The children grow up sharing their last piece of food with their friends even if it means that they will still be hungry. Of course Haiti is not perfect, but neither is our country, or any country for that matter. We too have so much to learn.

Dates to Remember

Rayjon's 5th Annual - Women Helping Women

May 14th, 2016. Doors open at 5:30; Dinner at 6:45 pm

Location: Gourmet Café, UWO Research Park 1086 Modeland Rd

Tickets still available. Cost \$75 (must be 19 to attend)

Contact Maggy Barnfield at 519-337-0038 or barnfield@cogeco.ca

To join the mailing list only for WHW notices, please click here: <http://eepurl.com/bOFXfr>

Rayjon/DeGroot's Plant Sale - beautiful hanging Dipladenia plants for your garden

Watch for the DeGroot's Nurseries postcard in the mail in late May, bring it to DeGroot's June 3-5

For more information or to volunteer at this fundraising event, call Dianne McKillican at 519-862-1963

Thank You!

To our many donors, we must say again a tremendous thank you. With your donation you make a lasting change to the lives of people in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

To Donate Online:

www.Rayjon.org One time or monthly options

Tax receipt and Record of your online donations immediately available

Mail Cheques To:

Rayjon Share Care c/o D. Murray, 1923 Park Avenue, Bright's Grove, ON N0N 1C0.

To Purchase or Distribute Rayjon Coffee:

- Coffee - \$10/12 ounces (please call Mary: 519-541-0142) Organic, Fair Trade, 100% Arabica coffee, fine grind or beans, decaffeinated, medium roast or dark roast. Available to community organizations, churches, schools and service clubs to sell in support of communities in Canada as well as in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.
- Vanilla - \$3/2 ounces; \$6/4 ounces (please call Brenda: 519-344-3755)
- Beautiful Gift/Memorial donation cards - receipts issued for donations of \$20 or more (please call Karen: 519-541-4247)



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