



FEBRUARY (2017 #02)

A Fresh Look at Barrio 41

The New Year heralds in a new look for the PLANDESCULBA (Plan de Desarrollo Social y Cultural para los Bateyes – or known in English as the Consuelo Community Development Project) in the neighbourhood of Barrio 41, Dominican Republic.

A fresh mural on the outside of the centre captures well the spirit of positivity and progress.



The images below show the garden in November 2016 and just one month later. After a very difficult year and despite the additional hardships of Hurricane Matthew, the community of Barrio 41 is joining together for progress. The garden is now providing nutritious snacks to the children at the preschool (who come from severely impoverished families).



Project Director Jorge has started a pilot project in aquaponics (raising fish) with the goal of providing a sustainable source of protein (and eventually income) for the centre.

Donations received in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew have assisted families in the neighbourhood that were hit hardest by the storm to repair their homes. Many houses were severely damaged and their owners were living with terrible leaks, destroyed mattresses and bedding, and precarious structures. Lumber and tin roofing sheets have been purchased to help with the repairs.

Haiti in the News

It took about a year, but Haiti's new President, Jovenel Moise has finally been sworn in. The presidency has been vacant since early 2016 due to allegations of voter fraud and further postponements due to threats and security concerns.

Moise, 48, a business man (banana exporter) has many challenges ahead. According to the World Bank, Haiti's economic growth continues to "decelerate due to lower investments, an uncertain political environment and a modest recovery of the agricultural sector after a severe drought."

Haiti: News from the Field

Our local leadership of Rayjon has always emphasized the importance of *listening*. Our goal is to support projects that are based on community needs, vision, and direction. Naturally then, it was very exciting to receive a report recently on vision and leadership training that was just held in St. Marc. Exciting – because this represents the first time that our partners in Haiti have discussed, clarified, and captured in writing their vision and goals. This is true partnership: Rayjon in Canada supporting the vision and goals of our partners, as set out by them and their communities!



This training was held over 4 days, and included 17 members of the Rayjon Share Care Haiti (RSCH) team, with all sectors - rural education, adult literacy, health care, microcredit - being represented.

Following are some excerpts from the report.

“So we wanted to give the leaders a broader view of RSCH as an organization instead of individual institutions. This was not only important to us that we made aware of RSCH as to who it was, but it was as equally important that the present leaders define for themselves who RSCH was. Therefore, based on the impact that they have made, the experiences that they have, and the passion within them concerning RSCH that they for themselves express who RSCH was and put it in writing.”

Mission Statement:

This is the RSCH new mission statement voted upon by those that participated in the training.

*“Community building for a better Haiti tomorrow” (English)
“Na p bati kominote nou pou yon pi bon Ayiti demen” (Ayiti Kreyol)*

Mission:

This is the RSCH mission voted upon by those that participated in the training.

“RSCH mission is to provide good education, basic health care, and assistance to those working in agriculture, for the poor and needy in the areas round and about rural St. Marc where neither the private nor public sector is currently doing so within walking distance in the rural communities.”

Vision:

This is the RSCH vision voted upon by those that participated in the training.

“RSCH vision is that those living in rural St. Marc would have equal opportunity and access to affordable education, basic health care, and agricultural knowledge just as in any place in the world, to cause lasting transformation that could offer sustainable development in Haiti.”

And in conclusion, a comment from Andre Jean Pierre, Field Director (who facilitated the training):



“Currently RSCH is undergoing restructuring of its leadership and organizational structure, at the same time the programs and different sectors of RSCH are on the verge of rebuilding itself back up. This was the perfect time to do this training and capitalize on the current success while preparing for the shift in leadership as we search for those right leaders.”

UPCOMING EVENTS:

BCC Concert Performance Partners with RAYJON

Save the date: Saturday April 8th, at 7:30 p.m.

Location: Queen of Peace RC Church, 566 Rosedale Ave, Sarnia

The *Bluewater Chamber Choir* is providing an evening of music. There will be a short presentation about Rayjon during the evening and a table will be set up with the usual selection of Rayjon products for sale: coffee, vanilla, gift cards and Artizani goods. Refreshments will be provided and all proceeds of the concert freewill donation will go to Rayjon. The BCC is a large ensemble with individual adult and youth choirs.

The musical package is intended to be an inspiring and uplifting experience. You are encouraged to come out and support Rayjon and be treated to a wonderful evening of music.

Rayjon/DeGroot Plant Sale

Mark your Calendars!

Watch for the DeGroot's Nursery's postcard in the mail in late May, bring it to DeGroot's June 2-4 and purchase beautiful hanging Dipladenia plants for your garden - they flower all summer long and are proven butterfly magnets. The same event last year was a great success! Profits support Rayjon's Haiti projects.

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



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Thank You!

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Mail Cheques To:

Rayjon Share Care, PO Box **2482**, Sarnia, Ontario N7T 7T1.

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: 519-542-4247)

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Our mailing address is:

Rayjon Share Care
P.O. Box 2482
Sarnia, On N7T 7T1
Canada