



# RAYJONSHARECARE

JUNE (2018 #03)

## A Reflection

*Mr. Luckner is a long-time Rayjon employee living in Haiti. Currently the Director of Rural and Adult Education, he oversees the entire Alpha literacy program, as well as the Pinson school, and works tirelessly to see his community grow. A trip participant shared the following story upon their return to Sarnia.*

Mr. Luckner started our day by sharing a Haitian story, worth sharing with you as well, about the man who felt his situation was hopeless and worse than anyone else's. He was so discouraged he decided to hang himself.

He prepared a last meal of baked potatoes and brought them to the woods where he climbed a tree to tie the rope. He ate his last meal of potatoes while sitting on the branch where the rope was tied, getting ready to end his own life. As he ate the potatoes, he threw the potato skins on the ground below.

Another man came by and saw the potato skins on the ground; he raised his arms and thanked God for those potato skins, for he now had something to eat.

In that moment, the man in the tree realized:

1. there was someone else worse off than he was (perspective about his situation)
2. he had more to be grateful for than he realized (gratitude)
3. he was able to help someone who was worse off than he, and it gave him hope to live. (caring about others as well as himself)

These insights changed the course of the man's life and gave him purpose to go forward.

There is a message in this story for all of us, that joy comes from thinking of others as well as ourselves ... there is always reason for hope and gratitude even in difficult times.



## Haiti Project Updates & the Women's Federation

Rayjon is excited about working more closely with the Women's Federation groups in the coming year. These highly motivated women are already assisting Rayjon leaders in

program implementation, as volunteers and community partners rather than as employees.

Plans are underway to expand the **literacy program** to include Year 4, which will bring valuable basic business and financial training ... growing their capacity to earn income and better provide for their families.



Some of the women from the Federation

Rayjon is committed to maintaining a focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. A recent participatory and highly engaging session on **gender equality** brought attendees out of their shells and into stimulating debate! In Haiti there are some clear differences between men and women regarding what they feel are (or should be) their respective roles in society and in the family. We talked also about the very positive leadership roles that women have played in other developing nations, and that international development experts have identified the education and empowerment of women as a key to community development and the reduction of poverty. RSCH has a revised gender policy, and there are plans to follow-up by continually reinforcing the message that gender equality is a core value.

The **microcredit program** is also growing, and again involves the Women's Federation. The women help play a role in managing the funds and in the program direction, such as vetting potential participants. It has been highly successful, including a 100% rate of repayment. Because it is a village banking system, the women (and a few men) actually contribute their own money to the pot to be disbursed for loans. Last winter they were challenged to increase the pool of funds available so that more loans could be dispersed, with Rayjon matching their contributions (with help from donors in Canada). The group raised over \$1,000 USD(!) so 2018-2019 will see more adults receiving small loans. Additionally, the women have requested more training so Rayjon's budget for the coming year is attempting to meet this wish.

### **Rayjon Garage Sale**

The May 12<sup>th</sup> Rayjon Yard Sale (part of the town-wide Pt. Edward Yard Sale) started as a cold, wet day but ended as a sunny success. Many thanks to every volunteer who showed up and helped to make the day a success, especially Marlo for organizing the sale, and her family who allowed us to use their property to sell our wares, and also kept us fed and warmed through the day.

Helpers started setting up at 5:00 am. in pouring rain, and selling started around 6:30 am. - nothing stops a die-hard yard saler! Before the 1:00 pm quitting time there was brilliant sunshine and all was wrapped by 4:00 pm.

Total profits were just over \$1,600 – down from last year, but this was not a surprise considering the weather. All profits support Rayjon’s projects in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

### **Rayjon / DeGroot’s Plant Sale**

At this year’s sale we raised over \$14,000 for Rayjon projects in Haiti. A whopping \$5k more than last year! The community has always been exemplary in its support of Rayjon and they did it once again – purchasing even more plants than last year.



Special thanks goes out to Dianne Mc for her regular communications, her organization, and for assembling such a wonderful team of (over 50) volunteers; and many thanks also to John, Lynn and Dianne V. from DeGroots for their vision and support.



**Please Help our Charity Win \$10,000**

Every \$1 you donate to our charity in June via [GivingChallenge.ca](https://givingchallenge.ca) counts as a ballot to help us win \$10,000 from the GIV3 Foundation. This challenge closes June 30<sup>th</sup>. Please donate today - we really appreciate your help!



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Rayjon Fall Fair

When: September 15th at Our Lady of Mercy Parish Hall (390 Christina St N).  
Number 24: what a testament to the enthusiasm of both the women on the Fair committee & the ongoing support of our local community!

We have a “Wish List” of requested items to make each Fair a success. If you can help or donate any of the goods listed below, please contact the Convener in charge. We are always open to welcoming new committee members or helpers, either in supportive roles or as a small group coordinator.

This year we especially need an experienced **sewer/crafter** to oversee the sale of a large donation of fabrics & sewing supplies and a “**souper**” volunteer to be in charge of our soup/chili/quiche table. And if you are a **baker**, we want your “Specialty”!

|                         |   |                                   |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Books:                  | Kay McDonough 519 542 8897  | NO textbooks please!              |
| Women’s jewelry:        | Sharon Sharp 519 383 7578   |                                   |
| Attic Treasures & Toys: | Anne Marie Parizeau 519 542 8150, and<br>Mary Anne Wighton 519 336 6066 | NO stuffies                       |
| Preserves:              | Suzanne Michaud 519 542 4464  | Need <i>NEW</i> jar lids & rings! |
| Bake Table:             | Brenda Hogan 519 344 3755, or<br>Debby Winterton 519 862 3333           |                                   |

To volunteer in any capacity or for more information re: how to become involved, call Dianne McKillican 519 862 1963

## Volunteer Needed

We are seeking one or more individuals interested in being involved as part of our Trip Finance Coordination Team (assisting with the management of trip finances – accounting and tax receipts). Hours of actual work are limited and training is provided. Please contact rayjonsc@gmail.com if you’d like more information and/or are interested in this opportunity.

## **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:**

**[DONATE NOW](#)**  
One time or monthly options

Tax receipt and Record of your online donations immediately available

**Mail Cheques To:**

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

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