



RAYJONSHARECARE

Awareness Trip to Haiti

During March Break a Rayjon group set off from Sarnia to visit Haiti. Here are the reflections of two of the trip members.

<Amanda>

My Rayjon Awareness Experience in March 2017 was life-changing. During this trip I witnessed first-hand the struggles that come with living in the Global South. In seeing the poverty and lasting destruction from the 2010 Earthquake it definitely put our privileges of the Western world into perspective. The deep faith and joy the Haitians share each and every day gives hope to better conditions for the future.



Interactions at the Cap Haitien Nutrition Centre // *Tipa Tipa* (Step by Step)

The trip had many opportunities for visiting Rayjon projects, as well as cultural experiences, so that we could gain an understanding of Haitian daily life. Some highlights for me were visiting the Nutrition Centre in Cap Haitian and hearing the testimonies of Bill, our host, in Port au Prince. By seeing the Nutrition Centre I was able to get an idea of the dire needs that some of the locals experience every day. In hearing about Bill's work with the boys at the St. Joseph's Family Home, I came to understand that even through a struggle we are called to trust in God and continue on.

One of the boys from the home serenaded us with his gift of music. His words "*Tipa tipa, toujou*" stood out for me. In English this phrase means "Step by step, always". As we return back to our busy lives in Canada we are called to remember our Haitian brothers and sisters, as well as keep in mind that when we face struggles we need to keep moving forward *tipa, tipa*.

<lan>

Our trip to Haiti was a great experience for everyone in many different ways. It was a first for the majority of our group and we certainly got to take in a lot - from the natural beauty of the mountains and waterfalls to learning about a new way of life from new Haitian friends. Many people were more than willing to share and teach us. There were eye-opening moments throughout.

We were exposed to some things that were difficult to see and hear including poverty, malnutrition and inequality, but there were also inspirational things: we saw people's perseverance, drive and compassion for one another and we learned about the positive impacts of projects in Haiti including several of Rayjon's,

Since we have been back, conversations have frequently found their way to the inspirational side of things and we have recognized the importance in sharing with others the challenges and issues we learned about on the trip. I'm sure it's not an unusual sentiment following an awareness trip but it's worth saying again - I couldn't have guessed what this experience would exactly be like but it was as worthwhile as people said it would be!

You can learn more about the daily adventures and reflections of this Awareness Trip group by reading their blog, currently posted on the [RayjonExperience Blog](#) website.

Atizani



At Rayjon events it is quite common to see hand-crafted works of art from Haiti for sale. Equally common is the misconception that these finely crafted items are referred to as artizani, but the correct spelling is *Atizani* (no "r"), the Kreyole word for "artisan".

There are various forms of art purchased in Haiti: primarily 2D and 3D metal sculptures, bead work, paper mache (papier-mâché), and paintings. One of the most striking examples of craftsmanship is the metal work that is sculpted from recycled oil drums. Attention to detail is superb given that the artists are working with

limited tools in fairly rustic settings (no fancy studio). We live in a throw-away society and these artists use reclaimed materials (oil drums and rebar) to produce exquisite pieces of art. There is much to learn from them.

Through this endeavour, Rayjon not only supports the Haitian economy and the artists personally by paying them fair trade prices, but all proceeds from their sale are rolled back and funneled into the Rayjon project work.

The sale of Haitian art is one way Rayjon seeks to continue to empower the people of Haiti and to share in the culture of this beautiful country.

Celebrating Successes in Community Engagement

“From Dark to Light” was the theme of the Rayjon benefit concert in April, put on by the *Bluewater Chamber Choir*. The evening’s theme was intended to inspire hope, thankfulness and generosity, and the audience at the venue-packed Queen of Peace Church warmly and generously responded.

Roughly \$1000 and a large bag of eyeglasses were donated and about \$375 was received in coffee, vanilla and Atizani sales!

On May 13th over \$2,687 was raised at the Rayjon yard sale – part of the community-wide annual yard sale in Point Edward. Events such as this support the Projects that Rayjon is involved with in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Rounding off the list of recent activities, there was a Paint Night and a Pickleball tournament earlier this month, which contributed about \$1500 to Project work. In addition to being lots of fun and supporting our Project efforts, these activities are organized to help with raising awareness in the community about the work that Rayjon is engaged in. Keep an eye on the **News & Events** section of the Rayjon website (Rayjon.org) for the latest information about what’s planned and happening.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Adult Paint Party! Abstract Painting Classes

Learn to paint abstract & have fun with budding artists like you!

Join us for a Rayjon Fundraiser to discover hidden artistic talent!

You will go home with a beautiful piece of abstract art.

Beginners Abstract Painting Class

Saturday, May 27, 12 pm to 3:00 pm @ Lawrence House,

127 Christina Street, Sarnia

Intermediate **Abstract Painting Class**

Thursday, June 22, 5:30 to 8:30 pm, 3270 Devonshire Road, Camlachie

- Guided step-by-step instruction by Sarnia Artist Kirsten Anderson
- \$60 per person (all materials provided) Cheque or Cash
- Wear an apron or comfortable old clothes.
- Refreshments & snacks provided
- Maximum class size 15 people

Contact to Register:

Veona Drennan (519)-331-2363

Ann Tuplin atuplin3270@gmail.com

About the Artist Kirsten Anderson Self-taught & inspired creator & teacher of abstract originals for the past 2 years with showings at the Lawrence House & Cafe Yoga. <https://www.facebook.com/kirstenandersonart/>

Rayjon/DeGroot's 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 2nd – 4th. [8-8 on Friday; 8-6 Saturday; 9-4 Sunday] and purchase beautiful 10", red or pink hanging Dipladenia plants for your garden - they flower all summer long and are proven butterfly magnets.



Red Dipladenia - 10" Hanging Basket

The same event last year was a great success! Profits support Rayjon's Haiti projects. These are the same plants we offered last year. (\$25, cash, cheque or credit / no debit)

For more information or to volunteer for a 3-4 hour shift at this fundraising event, call Dianne McKillican at

519-862-1963

Dinner for a Cause

June 20th @ Ciao Chow's restaurant in Sarnia (549 Murphy Rd)

6:00 sangria and apps then dinner at 7:00

Door prizes and entertainment

\$50 per ticket

Contact marlowright27@gmail.com or 236-886-0476

Choice of three entrées shrimp skewers, chicken piccata or eggplant parmesan



Rayjon Fall Fair: coming on Sept 16th.

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.

To Purchase or Distribute Rayjon Cards, Coffee & Vanilla:

- Beautiful Gift/Memorial donation cards - receipts issued for donations of \$20 or more (please call Kare

Karen: 519-542-4247)

- 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)



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