



Friends of SJF, Inc.

Friends of SJF partners with established grassroots organizations in the Caribbean that minister to disadvantaged populations.

P.O. Box 317
Mt. Vernon, IA 52314

www.friendsofsjf.org

*A 501(c) non-profit organization,
incorporated in 2015 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

Summer 2019 Newsletter

Fewer guests in Haiti lead to bigger challenges

Even though life has generally returned to normal, the protests that consumed life in Haiti in February are still having an impact on the country and on the St. Joseph Family. Following the 10 days of riots that shut down the country in mid-February the US State Department issued a warning against travel to Haiti. This has led to many groups cancelling trips to Haiti.

One of the ways the SJF contributes to its budget every year is through hosting groups at the Wings Welcome Center and the SJ Welcome Center.

Besides the benefit of allowing guests to see the wonderful work being done at the SJF missions first-hand, the Welcome Centers generate some necessary income to help support the missions.

However, the warning by the US State Department has caused many groups with plans to come to Haiti and stay with the SJF to cancel, and will likely prevent future groups from even considering a trip. The SJF has had just two guests since the first week in February and only two reservations pending for the next five months. We have no idea

when the warning level will go back down or when groups will start planning on traveling to Haiti again.

At the same time as income is down because of guest cancellations, the economic situation that led to the protests in February continues to deteriorate which is causing the value of Haitian currency to plummet and for costs to skyrocket. This puts the SJF in a dangerous position with less money coming in and more money going out.

To help make up some of the shortfall and deal with the rising prices we are asking you to consider a special "Virtual Guest House" donation. This challenge for donations of \$50 is to represent one night of guest lodging in Haiti. A generous donor to Friends of SJF has pledged to match all "Virtual Guest House" donations up to \$5,000, so your donation will go twice as far.

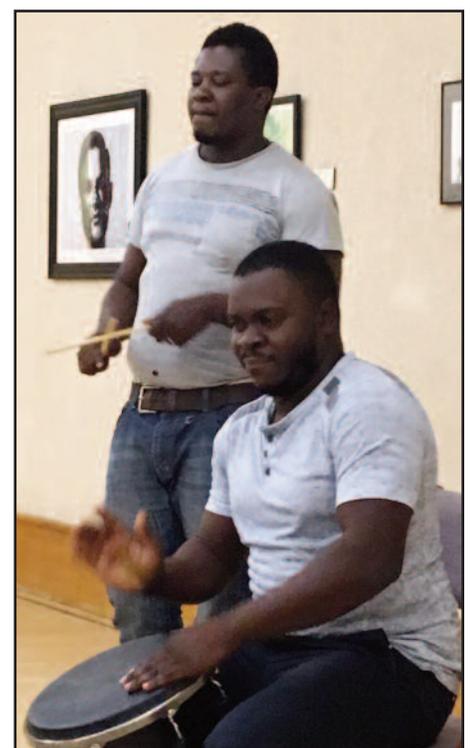
We would love to have you visit Haiti and experience the amazing work of the SJF for yourself, and we hope that is possible soon. But until then, please help us deal with the challenges the current situation is presenting.

**Donations may be made at:
www.friendsofsjf.org**

**Or by check to:
Friends of SJF
P.O. Box 317
Mt. Vernon, IA 52314**

HAITI COMES TO IOWA

In March FoSJF board members and SJF leaders Jacky Asse and Walnes Cangas spent a week in Iowa talking with supporters about the work of the St. Joseph Family in Haiti and enriching audiences with their Haitian culture.



**FRIENDS OF SJF has a redesigned website.
Check it out to find out more about our organization and those we support.
www.friendsofsjf.org**

SJF's new payroll system brings new opportunities

Friends of SJF joins the St. Joseph Family in recognizing that one of the things we are most proud of are the amazing employees of the St. Joseph Family.

Each day, even during protests, severe weather and other challenges, the SJF employees come to work to make sure the children and ministries are taken care of. Despite their buying power taking a hit with the crashing economy they never complained or demanded more money (which they knew the SJF didn't have).

Because of their faith and loyalty the SJF took a big step in March. It is a step that has been talked about and planned for a long time but one that comes at a cost; and it causes the SJF and its mission partners to take a leap of faith.

Up until March the payroll for the SJF has always been in cash. This was risky, for both the SJF and the employees. Large amounts of cash had to be transported between the missions. As the prices increased but the pay levels did not, the employees took the economic hit.

With the new payroll system, the employees are paid by check, in US funds. This means less risk for the SJF be-

cause large sums of money don't have to be transported. It allows the employees to deal with the fluctuating exchange rate and have more Haitian currency to take home at the end of the day.

With the move to the pay-by-check system, the SJF also enrolled in two government programs that will assist the employees. Now both the employees and the SJF pay into a Social Security-like system and a government health care system, and each of the employees have an account with both programs. All the employees also received slight raises to help them cover their cost of both programs and to reward them for their loyalty and work.

The SJF is still working out all the logistics of the new system, but it is an exciting step forward for everyone. It does come at a cost though, as it caused the yearly budget for wages to increase by 33% to cover the increased wages and taxes. The St. Joseph Family and its mission partners, including Friends of SJF, are being challenged to bring in more donations and income to cover the increased cost, but all are committed to taking care of both the SJF missions and the people who serve there.

You can get to know one of these residents of Wings of Hope, or any of the other 32 Wings residents, on a more personal level by becoming a Wings of Hope sponsor. For \$360 for a year (or \$30 a month) you can participate in the Wings of Hope Sponsorship program.

Sponsorship donations help provide for the daily needs and programs for the Wings residents. Since it costs more than that to care for each Wings resident, they have more than one sponsor whenever possible. But all funds support all the work, so their care and services do not differ depending on their number of sponsors.

Sponsors receive several mailings throughout the year from and about their sponsored resident so they can follow their progress and adventures.

To become a sponsor, send your yearly donation to the FoSJF address; or sign up for yearly or monthly donations online at www.friendsofsjf.org.



TEDDY



ACELENE



STEVE

The primary mission partner of Friends of SJF is the St. Joseph Family in Haiti, including Wings of Hope, the SJ Community Outreach Center, and Lekòl Sen Trinite