



Waunakee Rotary Club

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Bill Erickson and Phil Willems saw firsthand how the Waunakee Rotary Club's contribution was used to dig a well in Haiti. The Waunakee Rotarians shared their experiences there at the club's March 15 meeting.

The Waunakee Rotary Club donated \$1,250 toward the well to be dug in Pignon. A Rotary Club from District 5950 in Minneapolis matched that, and Rotary International chipped in another \$2,500 to total \$5,000. That paid for the contractor and the well.

Bill said people were very frugal and knew how and when to dig a well. Sometimes they found difficulty finding the right place, though, as some of the ground is stone, not soil.

About 46 percent of the Haitians live without fresh water, and the life expectancy is just 47 years old, Bill said. Some 21 percent of children die before the age of 5.

Rotary District 5950 has several goals, and among them are to dig 141 wells, build 420 latrines, and to provide education on good sanitation practices. Now, over 40,000 Haitians have safe drinking water.

Bill said for years, hand-pumped wells had fallen into disrepair. The new wells are dug in enclosed cement block structures that keep cattle from drinking from them and defecating near them.

Bill called the Haitian people "the salt of the earth" and said the country is beautiful. One missionary built an orphanage in Haiti, and a couple moved there and committed themselves to stay and operate it until the children are grown.

Some Rotary members from Minneapolis went on the trip to build a house, and Phil and Bill traveled with them to help out and visit the well. They first flew into Port-au-Prince and then traveled to Pignon.

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A gentleman from Minneapolis had sent \$1,500 to build a house for a Haitian citizen. While the average wage in Haiti is \$2 per day, the wage for teachers is \$1, Bill said. It was decided the home would go to a teacher, his wife and three children.

Phil said it was the only house in the neighborhood with a concrete floor. The home was built with stones supplied by residents who in turn were given food.

The Rotarians helped the builder and his apprentices mix cement, and the stones for the house were shaped with machetes. There were no power tools. In fact, even at the airport on the way home, there was no power.

Bill and Phil seemed impressed with the Haitian people.

"People in Haiti are honest and poor," Phil said, noting the exception in Port-au-Prince, where crime seems rampant.

Bill said the \$1,500 donation for the home did not come from Rotary, which frowns on brick-and-mortar projects, but from an individual. Bill is hoping someone might donate \$1,800, and Rotarians could build another home with District 5950.

"If you want to go to help in Haiti, here's a way you can go," Bill said.

Other items:

- Phil said two trips are planned to the Rotary Gardens in Janesville April 19 and April 24 if Rotarians want to go.

- Super Raffle tickets have been selling. Five to six volunteers are needed for the evening of March 21. Anyone who is donating prizes can get the prizes to Mike Lawrence or Kim Lengfeld.

- Harriet Statz updated the club on the Russian exchange. A van has been reserved for taking them on tours. One other host family is need-

Calendar of Events:

March 21, Super Raffle
April 12-28, Russian visitors
May 4-6, District Conference
June 17-20, RI, Salt Lake City
June 28, Steak Fry

ed for a one-week commitment.

Guests: Ava Newell, guest of Ed Niebuhr.

Visiting Rotarians: Bruce Mohs, Madison West.

Birthdays: March 15, Rich Murphy; March 17, Ellen Schaaf

Anniversaries: None.

Prayers: March 15, Pat Durden; March 22, Msgr. Kramer.

Programs: March 15 ???

Greeters: March 15, Tom Laufenberg, Drew Lawrence; March 22, Michael Lawrence, Kim Lengfeld; March 29, Robert Lenz, Jim Leonard; April 5, Joyce Maly, Traci Mann; April 12, Gordy Meicher, Jim Meyer.

Make up meetings online

It's easy to make up a meeting on the Internet. The site is www.rotaryclubone.org. Print out the form and give it to Phil Willems, the club secretary.