



Ensley Jerome and his Grandma: the first surgery for a Cite Soleil resident under our new collaboration with AmeriCares

(Story inside)

## The State of the Lamp

by Founder and Medical Director James Morgan MD

For most of my adult life, a common refrain that I have heard is "we are living in difficult times". I suspect that throughout the ages, there has been a tendency to say that the current epoch is more difficult than the ones preceding it. And yet what often shapes our common knowledge of those eras is not so much the difficulties faced but the responses, the human responses, sometimes right on the mark but just as often a little off-center. Mother Teresa comes to mind as one who faced

certainly overwhelming odds in addressing poverty. But rather than feel hopelessly paralyzed she put one foot in front of the other, and tirelessly cared for those that even the inanimate gutters of the dirt and cobblestone streets seemed to have rejected. She would go on to start an order of nuns providing care to the most marginalized persons of the globe. (She started two homes in Port-au-Prince which operate there fully today!)

The earthquake in Haiti, that furious and

terrible 40 seconds, seconds of horror that would for some bring years of misery, was in January 2010, almost three years ago. The country in the immediate aftermath was a cracked shell of the shell it had been just before the *tranbleman tè*. It was, in a word, teetering. People living there and people all over the globe, people just like you who care about souls they have never met and never will meet, people who have families and jobs and debt, and parents who are aging and grandchildren who are

(Continued on page 2)

## Voices of Bwa Nèf : Pastor Romain

*On a recent visit to Haiti, I sat down and talked to a few people as they waited to see the doctor.*

Pastor Romain is the leader of a church in Cité Soleil, just outside Bwa Nèf. He himself lives in La Plaine, a settlement that is perhaps 45 minutes from Bwa Nèf by tap-tap ~ on a day with no traffic. He has come to the clinic several times of late, as he fights through a serious illness. Although he is not officially from Bwa Nèf, Pastor Romain has been a great supporter of the Lamp. He often participates in local community

meetings and his positive spirit always has a marvelous impact. He strives to encourage the staff to believe in their mission. "A lamp", he says, "is a reference point in the night, and the Lamp is my reference point." My own work, he says, is evangelization, but that is spiritual work that is hard to see. Here, the spirit is visible for anyone to see. The Lamp is a very good clinic, a kind of home, and an inspiration. "This is not a good zone," he adds softly, so that the surrounding people do not hear, "and you would not be here if you did not have a true heart."



Pastor Romain



## Voices of Bwa Nèf: Madame Sizé Mettilus

Madame Metillus is very distraught. She has come to the clinic because Jena, the four month old child that she is holding, has a large protrusion from her belly. Unfortunately, this is not the main reason for her distress. Just yesterday, she says, Jena's mother passed away. Jena's mother did not have any family here, so Sizé has taken responsibility for this young girl's life. "What else could I do?" But she is very afraid that she will not be able to cope. Although two of her children have jobs ~ one as a driver and another as a nurse's aide ~ there are now ten children in her family. The whole family is dependent on those two, very small, incomes. If either child loses their income they will all be in serious difficulty.

But she knows that she can rely on the Lamp for her family's healthcare. This is one area in which she need not worry. She has come to the clinic before, when her children were ill. She is very impressed with the drugs that they received: "They were very effective!" She is confident that the Lamp doctors will be able to help Jena.

### Title story continued:

sick, who themselves have health problems, these people – you are among them – reached out a hand and said “grab hold. I can help. I can’t do it all, but I can help.” And it is because of *your* solidarity, real and pragmatic and soulful, I am convinced, the country did not teeter over the edge into absolute despair. There is progress. I bet Mother Teresa would be proud of your path.

Lamp's Health Center is now staffed with full time professionals and support personnel. Our primary and urgent care setting allows people to see one of our two physicians, Dr Jude Dorsainvil and Dr Barrère Hyppolite who provide respectful and quality healthcare. Our laboratory allows for testing for common diseases of poverty and the tropics, like malaria and typhoid, as well as basic serologies that serve to screen for illnesses such as diabetes and kidney disease. Our pharmacy has benefitted from donations from individuals and larger organizations, for example AmeriCares and Catholic Medical Mission Board, and allows our doctors to appropriately treat those conditions, and then to see the patient back in follow-up weeks or months later.

We are especially proud of our own Ms Moza Flaire Alcius, RN, who next month will complete a one year training program to become a nurse midwife. Lamp

sponsored her enrollment in this excellent schooling, run by Midwives for Haiti, located in the country's Central Plateau. Ms Flaire will be the driving force behind our women's center, slated to launch January 2013. She is guided by Anjali Gupta, MD, a physician in New Jersey, as well as Board member Dr Dulaurier Jacques, a Haitian OB-Gyn physician.

We continue to provide our services, including medications and supplies and labs testing, at no cost to the patient. This is an issue that has been visited and revisited, and we always come to the same conclusion that people will not choose health care when they cannot buy food. Until the economic climate improves in Cite Soleil – the typical resident there gets by on about 50cents per day, in a country where one gallon of gas is about eight US dollars ~we believe that we have no other option.

In what is certainly a good sign, we are growing out of our current space. The coming year will see us either expand locally or move to a nearby spot where we can build. When we do, of course we will maximize our use of local labor and skills as we are able.

These *are* difficult times, especially if one lives in a slum in Haiti, under a leaky tin roof. And yet this project, the work of the community and staff of Lamp, and of our supporters should give one pause for hope. Most of you reading this have heard at one

time or another that Haiti has made no progress in these past three years. I disagree with that, at least in some arenas. (With regards to the public sector it is true that thousands of people are still living in ragtag tents today. However the Ministry of Health is a much stronger bureaucracy than it was before 2010, and has played a key role in helping to address major public health issues like cholera. There are certainly many other like examples. ) Many nongovernmental organizations like Lamp for Haiti, Partners in Health and St Damien's hospital have made tremendous inroads.

At Lamp, as in each of our lives, we effect change where we stand. This model of quality care in one of the poorest slums on the planet, of showing compassion and solidarity by providing not just throwaways but quality, solid meaningful care, by and for Haitians, this is something of which we ought to be proud. Let's celebrate that and keep up the effort. Thanks for your continued support and confidence in this important work.

To donate online, click on the Donate button at the Lamp website:  
[www.lampforhaiti.org](http://www.lampforhaiti.org).





## AmeriCares Surgery Collaboration Begins!

A collaboration with the large nonprofit AmeriCares has resulted in a marvelous opportunity for Bwa Nèf residents. The Lamp receives vouchers for free minor surgery at a Port-au-Prince hospital, and Ensley Jerome, pictured here with his mother, was the first lucky recipient. It is unlikely that his painful hernia would have been treated in the absence of this program. His future is now very much brighter! You will be hearing more about this fine program in future!

## Staff Profile: Dr. Barrère Hyppolite , In-Country Medical Director

### Dr. Hyppolite speaks about his role:

I chose this job because it is a real concern for me to give better healthcare to all Haitians. In my country, people have no medical insurance so that everyone must pay for their healthcare from the beginning to the end. I have seen the problems which this causes, in public and private hospitals; I have seen many patients die in front of me because they ran out of money before they were able to complete all the necessary phases of treatment. They were unable to pay for testing, medication, adequate follow-up or some other fee. Some colleagues and I tried to create solutions for this in public hospitals, but it was a long process and we encountered many challenges; finally, this generated a lot of frustration for me. To succeed in these kind of systemic changes we need to build partnerships (in all sectors, but especially in health). It's a big challenge to overcome

It's a real opportunity for me to bring my medical knowledge and skills to the people of Cité Soleil, to deliver quality healthcare in this environment, and to build relationships with people here. I have been very surprised by the capacity of people here to organize themselves, and also by their will to move forward with development in every aspect of community life. Because this is an area where the government almost doesn't exist, it was amazing to me to see the schools, the small businesses and some institutions of health like LAMP. I think in the career of a physician, we



sometimes need to give our time to this kind of struggling people because they need our help. If we take care of their health we can give them hope for the future and especially for their children.



## Voices of Bwa Nèf : Madame Maxine Georges Duverger

Madame Georges' face positively glows with energy and good will. She does not want to say why she is seeing the doctor today, but she is overwhelmingly positive about the clinic. She has come to the clinic before, when her daughter had a high fever, and when her mother injured her knee. "The doctors are very good," she says. I ask her where she would go if this clinic was not here. She tells me the names of some other, distant, clinics in Cité Soleil. She is willing to pay for medical care, but she often has no money. If she becomes ill when she has no money on hand, she will be forced to stay at home and hope for the best. There are many people in Bwa Nèf, she says, who cannot pay for medicine or doctors. If the Lamp was not here, they would just forgo treatment. "I wish a great blessing on the staff," she says, and then adds, echoing Pastor Romain, "Although there are many people here who are *méchant* (troublemakers), this clinic shows that God loves this zone."

P.O. Box 39703  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
Phone: 267-295-2822  
Website: [www.lampforhaiti.org](http://www.lampforhaiti.org)

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
PHILADELPHIA PA  
PERMIT NO. 7357

**Board of Directors**

Phadoul Amisial  
Kenscoff, Haiti

Georgette Delinois  
Teaneck, NJ

Richard T. Evans  
Montclair, NJ

Dianne J. François, M.D.  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Pamela B. Hawes  
Ivyland, PA

Dulaurier Jacques, M.D.  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Kellie Molin-Kenol  
East Hanover, NJ

James P. Morgan, M.D.  
Cedar Grove, NJ

Cornelia Suskind  
Washington, DC

Daniel Tillias  
Croix-des-Bouquets, Haiti

**Executive Director**

Henry Reimer  
Philadelphia, PA

## Solidarity *par excellence*, by James Morgan M.D.

The term solidarity is generally thought of as meaning *being at another's side*. Being for someone. Loosely thought of, it invokes such sayings as "I'll be thinking of you." But a deeper reflection on the concept of true solidarity involves action. Not just being *for* someone, but being *with* them. Dr Hyppolite has my vote for Solidarity Man, 2012.

Imagine that you are born in one of the poorest countries on the planet. Fortunately, your parents have the means to send you to a good school, and you understand at an early age the importance of studying hard. You are admitted to the nation's top medical school, and then

secure a job in a less stressful area, away from the crowded capitol and not far from the sea. Life seems pretty good.

But then one day comes a surprise knock on your door, and you are offered the opportunity to lead a medical team in a notorious sprawling slum in Port-au-Prince, teeming with disease, poverty, and insecurity. What do you do?

For **Barrère Hyppolite, M.D.**, the answer was clear. He accepted the challenge. To our patients', and to my own, great delight he has been the anchor of a growing and successful model of quality free medical care for the poorest of the poor.

Dr Hyppolite, recently married, is a perfect addition to our team. A graduate of Haiti's Notre Dame University School of Medicine, he worked in Cap Haitian in the north of the country prior to our recruiting him to work with Lamp.

His professionalism has been contagious and it sets the tone each day at Lamp's Health Center in Cité Soleil. Patients regularly comment on the care that they

receive from both him and his colleague, Dr Jude Dorsainvil. They tell me that our doctors treat them with respect, and that they know they are getting quality care. This patient feedback is not at all surprising to me as it is consistent with many conversations Barrère and I have had re: healthcare for the poor. Hats off to Dr Barrère Hyppolite!

To watch an interview with Dr Hyppolite, visit our website at [www.lampforhaiti.org](http://www.lampforhaiti.org)



*Dr Hyppolite participates in a recent distribution of school kits*

To donate by mail,  
send a check to:  
Lamp for Haiti  
PO Box 39703  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

*Thank You!*