The French author and poet, Victor Hugo once said: “He, who opens a school door, closes a prison”. This quote fits so well with what we have been trying to accomplish for the past 18 years. Yes, since 1994, we have been working to educate children in Kenscoff, Haiti. From the humble beginning of sponsoring 65 orphans, COHEF now sponsors activities in 5 small schools and one orphanage with a total of close to 600 children.

We continue to promote “Independence through education” by providing continued help to students and young adults in Kenscoff. Last year we awarded scholarships to 150 elementary school children, six young adults in a technical school and one university student.

Last Summer COHEF & Wynne Farm Ecological Reserve organized the Sixth Annual Summer Camp, “Camp d’Ete Haiti Vet” and always with a theme related to peace. We had the pleasure of having a volunteer, a school teacher from Miami, Florida, Mr. Joseph Vasile, the creator of “Peace Flag in the Wind”. Consequently, the theme was: “Peace Flags in the Wind for Haiti”, “Drapo la pe ap flotte pou Hait”. (Please refer to the article that Mr. Vasile submitted to us on the page 2). Dr. Felix Harris, an Assistant Principal from Miami, Florida also joined us. We want to thank our sponsors: Second Baptist Church of Richmond Heights, Miami, Unity Center of Miami, Operation Green Leaves, Miami, Zafen.org, Haiti, Mr. Jacques Theart, Kola Sejourne, Haiti. We are so grateful to them for their participation.

As always, our dedicated volunteers in Haiti surpassed themselves by donating their time which contributed to the success of our camp. We are so appreciative to them. We are sending a special thank you to Dominga Leroy, who tirelessly solicited and was able to obtain food and drinks for our campers. We cannot forget Rachel, not only for her volunteer services in the art class, but also she donated a delicious cake to celebrate the closing. On behalf of our children, a big thank you to all who participated. Without them, we could not have had such a successful camp.

My trip to Haiti last November was to distribute school supplies, backpacks and teddy bears. The school supplies and backpacks were graciously provided by The International Awareness Program of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Miami Alumnae Chapter, and also by Dee Anne Treadway, Unity on the Bay, Angels Everywhere. In addition, the teddy bears were donated by the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., Miami Alumnae Chapter. I also had the pleasure of visiting two orphanages and I was able to distribute toys and Levy Jeans outfits. These clothes were donated to us after the earthquake, January 12 2010. I was glad that I could hand them out in personally. I was pleased I made a lot of happy children. Again, on behalf of our children, I am most appreciative to all.
Sixth Annual COHEF Summer Camp - “Peace Flags in the Wind”

A Volunteer’s Perspective

Installing J.L. Vasile’s “Peace Flags in the Wind” exhibit and the thousands of individual messages of peace in Kenscoff Haiti with the Children of Haiti Enhancement Foundation was an unforgettable journey for all who experienced it. I knew it would be a life changing inspiring experience but the 11 days spent in Haiti have been engrained into the depths of my soul and consciousness, transforming me and “Peace Flags in the Wind”. I could never imagine it would run this deep. The first day I lined up thousands of peace flags in the courtyard. With art there is no language barrier and two of the young campers came up and climbed the fence to hang the peace flags.

A few minutes later, the energy of Kenscoff was transformed by thousands of individual messages of peace and hope that blew in the wind. The classroom in Haiti was embraced with the peace flags, as the children looked up, it was a vortex that connected them to the light with a variety of messages, images, symbols and words of peace above their heads. The excitement in the air continued as the children picked their peace flag color that connected to earth’s elements red for fire, blue for sky, green for water, white for wind, and yellow for earth.

COHEF’s volunteers translated my words with precision and patience assuring that every child understood ‘What a peace flag was and how to create one’. With art supplies handed out including glitter, the children once again looked up at the flags for motivation, inspiration with intensity in their eyes, some emulating the flags above their heads and others drawing the symbols of Haiti including roosters, tap tap’s, houses, trees, the silhouette of Haiti with a big flag in the center.

Some of the Kenscoff youth walked miles to come to the camp. Some were dehydrated and had not eaten in days. They were so grateful for anything we did for them. Even though many were starving when food and water was in front of them. They never pushed, never shoved. Instead they waited patiently for the teacher or volunteer to tell them to get the food or beverage. When the teacher was talking you could hear a pin drop in that classroom.

Over five hundred peace flags were created over the course of COHEF’s camp by the youth of Kenscoff. The next step was to sew all the flags to hang them the last day of camp. The Kenscoff community came together in force quickly picking up needle and thread, one united team with a common vision. Every ounce of energy was worth it to see the excitement in the children’s eyes as they enthusiastically pointed to their peace flags. Since the flags have been created in Haiti they have been displayed and traveled to the top of the highest building in the United States the Sears Tower in Chicago, The Florida Keys, and Times Square in N.Y.C. It has now joined the interactive art installation which is J.L. Vasile’s “Peace Flags in the Wind”.

The positive energy seemed to go on forever and seemed much greater than any expectation I could have had before I boarded the plane to Haiti. The amazing sense of accomplishment for humanity and great human spirit was more than I could have ever expected to receive. The energy was so powerful that it felt like an outer body experience all I could think was I’m an adult and the human peace sign looks so big and massive and the flags are hanging so high, imagine that from a child’s perspective it was so much bigger than us. As I humbly received an award from COHEF and Elsie Craig and Jayne Wynne I said “This feeling of peace that you are experiencing right now, goes on to infinity, hold on to it and know it is with you every day of your life”.

That Haitian Spirit and “Peace Flags in the Wind” displayed in Kenscoff will be an everlasting memory embedded in my mind forever.

Written by: Joseph Lawrence Vasile
Founder of “Peace Flag’s in the Wind”
COHEF Calendar of Events

ANNUAL SUMMER CAMP IN KENSCOFF, HAITI
CAMP D’ETE HAITI VET
Sunday, July 15 to Sunday July, 22, 2012
This year’s theme: “Se Nan Respe Nap Jwenn Lape”

WE ARE CELEBRATING!! SAVE THE DATE!!!
Saturday, November 10th, 2012. We will be celebrating our 18th Anniversary. Let’s celebrate this milestone together. We will be looking for sponsors, please keep us in mind if you can help.

DON’T MISS OUR NEXT RAFFLE! November 10, 2012
First Prize: A Tina Turner Framed & Autographed Picture & Record
Second Prize: a framed “Anaconda: Immortal Blues” giclee by Carl Craig
Third Prize: A Kindle Fire

PREVIOUS COHEF RAFFLE WINNERS:
First Prize: Mr. Louis Lapointe, a framed giclee by Carl Craig, winning ticket sold by Eliane Armand (Florida)
Second Prize: Mr. Francky Calixte, a Digital Camera (Florida)
Third Prize: Marcelle Charles, A framed oil painting from Haiti, sold by Mona Desir (Michigan).

For more information regarding the summer camp or raffle tickets, please contact Elsie Craig at elsie.craig@gmail.com

Thank you all for your continuous support!

CHILDR EN OF HAITI ENHANCEMENT FOUNDATION
Benefiting our school programs in Kenscoff, Haiti

- FIRST PRIZE: A Framed Autographed Picture & Record Album of Tina Turner
  (Value more than $1,000.00)
- SECOND PRIZE: A Beautiful 16” X 22” Framed Giclee, “Anaconda: Immortal Blues” by Carl Craig, (value $600.00)
- THIRD PRIZE: A “Kindle Fire”, (value $200.00)

Drawing: Saturday, November 10, 2012
$5 per ticket, $50 for booklet of 10 tickets

Our Special Thanks...

As a member of the Second Baptist Church of Richmond Heights Florida, I want to thank the pastor and the members for their generosity for the past 17 + years. From our meager beginnings until now, a well-established 501©3 status holding organization, Rev. Dr. John A. Ferguson, pastor emeritus of The Second Baptist Church and now for the at least 10 years, Rev. Dr. Alfonso Jackson, have been in support of this organization and its mission for the children of Haiti.

A special “Thank You” to Sister Queen Armstrong, for her leadership and guidance as she regularly encourages the Missionary Ministry of the church to remember our commitment to the children of Haiti. She spearheads the collection of different items of necessity such as toiletries for personal hygiene, simple first aid articles, kitchen cooking utensils and disposal goods, to be sent to Haiti in support of COHEF.

Mrs. Armstrong is the direct link between COHEF and the pastor of the church making sure a monetary collection, church offering, is donated in the name of COHEF each year. Mrs. Armstrong never hesitates to ask, “What’s going on?” with COHEF and “what do you need for the children?”

Each school year she begins with the collection of school supplies. As the progress toward the holiday season, she is “Jonnie on the spot” with a toy drive to make sure there are enough toys for all of the children we serve and more. She is able to do this with the help of all church members and especially those active with the Missionary Ministry. Thank you so much Mrs. Armstrong for all that you’ve done and will continue to do in support of our mission.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., Miami Alumnae Chapter, the members of COHEF and the children of Haiti can not thank your members enough. Your generous donation made it possible for COHEF to purchase items for our schools, teachers, students and families of those we serve in Kenscoff, Haiti. Thank you also for the school supplies and Teddy Bears.

We would like to invite The Deltas to join us this year to participate in our Summer Camp. This year will be our seventh year and camp will only be one week in July. If you are interested in participating, please contact Mrs. Elsie Craig, President of COHEF for information re: travel and lodging. (786-208-0957).
We are:
A 501(c)3 not-for-profit, apolitical, grassroots organization, created by a group of friends to focus on and assist the underprivileged children of Haiti.

Our Motto:
Independence through Education

Our Mission:
Promoting education in rural Haiti, and improving the basic needs of a targeted population. Offer scholarships to young adults to attend college or university in Haiti.

I want to take this time to say how wonderful it was to work with the children in this camp. The children were full of energy and willing to learn the game of basketball. The experience I gained from these young men and women was humbling, yet very rewarding. I saw kids have such a desire to learn despite their circumstances. This camp has allowed me to see how much work that needs to be done and how to get others involved in a worthwhile program. I look forward to returning this year with a group of kids to teach American board games and dance.

Dr. Felix Harris
President of Oasis Educational Center & Foundation, Inc.