

Christmas Comes to Haiti by Leslie Rolling

Here in Haiti it's so easy to have months just sort of slide by without notice. I think it's the consistent weather. Sun. Sun. Sun. More Sun. The length of days does change, but not as noticeably as I remember back in Canada. The only real mark of the seasonal shift is that it stops raining and things turn from green to brown. And there's lots of dust.

I remember this time last year. I had just celebrated my one year anniversary of having moved to Haiti. We had been married for about 5 months. We were getting ready for Chris' parents to visit. It didn't feel like Christmas at all.

I come from a home where Christmas is always a big deal. Decorations, lights, cookies that will keep you well fed until Canada Day—it's all there. In fact, I am the official "Christmas Tree Lighting Engineer". It's my job. You can imagine that coming from a background like that must have left me in a position of not quite knowing what to do with myself and this whole idea of getting ready for the holidays in a place like Haiti.

Last year we already had plans to spend Christmas with my family in Canada, so it wasn't a matter of not having what was a "normal" Christmas, it was a case of trying to not feel like I was totally removed from everything just because we lived here. I was actually surprised when I visited a store in St. Marc and found not only mini-lights, but also 4 foot tall Christmas trees—artificial of course. I was happy that there was something familiar there, and bought two sets of lights for less than \$2 US each, but also felt a bit sad that my Western culture was starting to seep in more and more here.

The mini-lights were quickly strung on our patio. Chris thought I was silly. His thoughts were quickly reinforced when I started playing Christmas music (I would like to point out that this only started happening at the *end* of November). I

think I baked a batch of cookies. I think I also had to use butter that was "turning" to do so. What can I say, your quality standards go down when you're desperate.

It was great to have Chris' parents with us at the beginning of December. We crammed a lot of celebrating in—Chris' birthday and an early Christmas dinner of roast chicken with all the fixings. It was great considering we wouldn't see them over the holidays.

Out of curiosity I asked around to find out how people here celebrated the holidays. Haiti actually

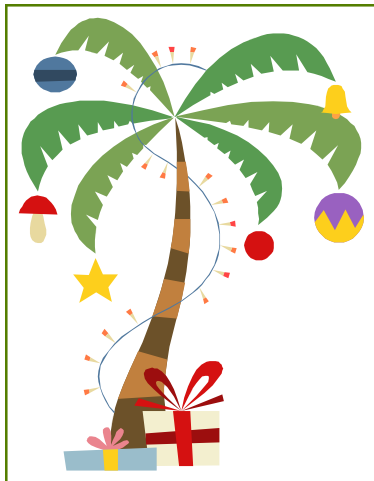
has a very strong religious stream flowing through it, so there are the normal church gatherings. There is also a big meal, usually it's goat though, not turkey. If they really want something special they'll eat cat. We learned the hard way that you have to clip a cats ears so people know it's a pet.

Here in Haiti Christmas does bring celebration. They do have days off work, and they do spend

a lot of time together. There are traditions, just like in North America. Did you know that on New Years Day after staying up all night to welcome in another year the ladies in the house will make a big pot of Soup Joumou—*pumpkin soup*—to help celebrate?

When people in Haiti celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of another they do so with a different sense of purpose in their hearts. Many celebrate that they have lived one more year. That fact breaks my heart, but at the same time gives me a different awareness of how precious life is and how often I take it for granted.

This year as you move into the holiday season and all the celebrations that it holds I hope that you'll consider helping a family in Haiti celebrate for many years to come by making a donation that can provide them with a Biosand filter, and in turn the life giving gift of clean water.



our mission:

To demonstrate our love for the Lord and our neighbors by providing support and expertise for sustainable water projects in Haiti.

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contact us:

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visit our website:

www.cleanwaterforhaiti.org

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donation information:

In Canada:

CLEAN WATER FOR HAITI
c/o Vernon Alliance Church
2601 43rd Ave.
Vernon, BC
V1T 3L1

A registered non-profit organization
Charitable giving # 83462 6673
RR001

In the US:

CLEAN WATER FOR HAITI
4606 NW Grant Place
Vancouver, WA
98663

A registered non-profit organization
IRS 501(c)3

Please make all checks payable to:
"CLEAN WATER FOR HAITI"

CREDIT CARD DONATIONS
www.cleanwaterforhaiti.org

All donations are tax deductible.
Tax receipts will be issued at year end.

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looking to volunteer?

Contact us via email or visit our website to download our Staff Application Package.

Christmas Campaign 2007

Are you having a hard time finding the perfect gift for the person who seems to have everything? We can help.

Last year two CWH Board members did a Christmas email fundraising campaign encouraging friends and family to make a donation to Clean Water for Haiti that would provide a water filter for a Haitian family on behalf of someone on their Christmas list. They encouraged those they told to tell others. In one month over \$12,000 was raised. As we shared the success of this effort the response we often received was, "Why didn't I hear about that?"



This year we are giving everyone who supports Clean Water for Haiti the opportunity to be involved in this years **Christmas Campaign**. For \$50 we can provide a Biosand water filter for one Haitian family, giving them access to clean water and better health indefinitely! What an amazing gift.

It's simple. For each donation of **\$50** we receive for the **Christmas Campaign** we will send one of the following to the person of your choosing:

- a) A high quality drinking water bottle with the Clean Water for Haiti website printed on it and a card tucked inside letting your loved one know that a donation has been made on their behalf.
- b) A "Message In a Bottle" - a 6" decorative glass bottle with a scroll inside telling your loved one of the donation made in their name.

Donations for this Christmas Campaign must be received by **December 7, 2007** to ensure gift notification arrival before Christmas. Please use the donation form at the bottom of this page to participate in this fundraising effort.

\$12,000 goes a long way. \$25,000 goes farther. \$50,000 will change over 10,000 lives. Isn't it nice to know that in a day and age where we have access to everything we can help change the lives of those who don't?

What Have We Accomplished?

By the end of 2007...

- ◆ There will be over 650 new CWH filters in the field.
- ◆ About 7000 more people will be drinking clean water.
- ◆ There will be over 15 new technicians working with other filter projects.
- ◆ We will have a new Daihatsu truck.
- ◆ The mission house roof has been replaced.
- ◆ A new workshop addition was completed.
- ◆ Plans will be underway for a new staff housing addition on our dorm building.
- ◆ New welding equipment for making molds will have arrived.
- ◆ Plans will be underway for our new solar panel system arriving early next year.
- ◆ We will have hosted two weeks of Vision Trips and many other visitors.
- ◆ Many facility improvements and upgrades will have been made around the mission.

Thank you for your generous support!

Vision Trip Update:

We have been very encouraged by the interest in our **Vision Trips**. Dates for next years trips are:

**March 22-29 ~ April 5-12 ~ October 18-25
November 1-8**

These one week visits to our mission base in Haiti are a wonderful way to see the work that we do first hand. If you would like more information or to register, please contact:

Leslie at office@cleanwaterforhaiti.org

We would encourage you to register as soon as possible as spots are first come, first serve and the are already being filled!

CWH Donation Form

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____
 POSTAL CODE: _____

Please find enclosed my donation of _____

I am designating my donation to:

General Fund

Christmas Campaign 2007

Please fill out Recipient Info for Christmas Campaign.

Other _____

CWH Christmas Campaign Recipient Info

I am making my donation to the CWH Christmas Campaign on behalf of:

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____
 POSTAL CODE: _____

Please send them the following to notify them of the gift on their behalf:

Water bottle and card Glass bottle and scroll

***If you have made a donation on behalf of more than one recipient please include a note with the information for each recipient or visit our website to print off more copies of this form to include with your donation.*

Thank you for your thoughtfulness this holiday season!

All donations are tax deductible. Tax receipts will be issued at year end.