

# Add Your Light Projects

Newsletter of the Add Your Light Charitable Foundation ([www.addyourlight.org](http://www.addyourlight.org))

"you do whatever you can about the misery that's in front of you... add your light to the sum of light" (from the movie, "The Year of Living Dangerously")

## Dear Friends,

Since I last wrote in early March, I've been back to the Dominican Republic twice! Due to those trips and an intensive schedule of presentations, I was unable to write another print newsletter until now. There are **many photos & stories to share. Page 3 will be of particular interest to some of you & I would appreciate your feedback.** This letter is filled with gratitude and, while I mention specific names at times, **I extend this thanks to all of you for your support!**

**My next trip to the D.R. is Oct 17 to Nov. 1st.** Some Calgary Rotarians will be joining me for a week of discovery, work & fun. Add Your Light's proposed goals for the next four months are listed below. **Thank you for any financial help you can give! Jan Tollefson**

Jan with children in D.R.



What a treat to meet up with the **Courtrice** family in the D.R. The photo shows **Sidney, Cliff, Paige, Erin & me** with Ana & her family. Juan installed a Biosand filter, which Ana shares with neighbors.

Courtrice family in Dominican home

Thank you so much to the congregation of **Red Deer Lake U.C.** (especially **Dericka Justus and Pat Claydon**) AND to the members of **Lynn Valley U.C.W.** for their incredible fundraising efforts!! We now have the funds to build the **kiln** to make the clay jar "coolers" that preserve vegetables for people who have no electricity. I'll include more photos in the December newsletter.

## Our Financial Goals:

***If you can lend us a hand, this is what we can accomplish before the end of 2009:***



Ana's New Filter

- build the kiln & coach Daniel in starting a small business,
- build a rural classroom (and plan locations for 2 more),
- provide computers & textbooks for the Youth Study Center,
- lead a small group from Calgary to the D.R. for a week,
- apply for an Alberta Government grant for 3 more classrooms,
- finish the final reports for two other grants,
- buy & install 4 large batteries & an inverter for the Center's solar power
- provide accounting and organizational support to the new NGO,
- research ways to introduce the LED lamps to Cuba at lower cost,
- supervise the bursary fund for 3 adult & 4 younger students
- train a new water filter-maker for Haiti,
- develop microcredit workshops for the communities,
- supervise filter/loan project in Mao, etc.

***With your financial help, we can do ALL of this in the next 4 months. The budget for the above projects is approximately \$55,000. Please send cheques to Add Your Light, #1506, 80 Pt. McKay Cr. N.W., Calgary, AB, T3B4W4. Or simply use CanadaHelps.org to donate online with a credit card (see pg. 4). THANK YOU!***

Our LED/Solar project combines humanitarianism with microcredit & energy efficiency. You are part of this!

First of all, and most importantly, we have had **no technical problems** for 2 years. **We now have ~ 900 systems** installed in homes, supplying clean, safe light to Dominican & Haitian families.

**Thank you to Mike Grant of [www.mikegrantdesign.com](http://www.mikegrantdesign.com)** for his graphics work on our brochures & installation drawings. **What talent!!**



**Add Your Light's LED lamp**

**Jan with Ariel installing lamps in D.R.**



Thank you also to **Ted Knudtson** who created our **catchy video**, which you can see on **our new YouTube channel**

<http://www.youtube.com/user/addyourlight>. Ted also designed beautiful Mother's Day cards to help us raise funds! We will soon be selling new sets of cards & we'll have updated gift certificates at [www.addyourlight.org](http://www.addyourlight.org). **There will be a fundraising party in November in Calgary — plan to come!**

**I have recently taken the step to purchase Add Your Light Products Inc. from the charity.** Now, if someday the charity must shut down, there is no risk that we will lose the intellectual property to another charity or company. The company will sell lamps to the charity at "cost only". Perhaps some of you can help me **sell lamps to campers & people living off-grid**. The more lamps we sell, the more we can lower prices for the D.R. & Haiti. Ideas?

**100 LED/solar systems went to Cap Rouge, Haiti in January, thanks to**

**Arms of Jesus (AOJ) Children's Mission** of Pickering, Ontario. They bought the systems & taught the Haitians how to install them. AOJ has received several touching emails from the Haitians, thanking them for **"bringing light"**, that their **"children can now study"** at night. **And "no more kerosene"**.

**These are the words we have been waiting to hear for such a long time!**

See their lovely YouTube video called **"Haiti Mission 2009— lights"** at <http://www.youtube.com/user/billbradbury>



**Two seniors who now have light!**

**Below: AOJ volunteers install solar panel in Cap Route, Haiti.**



**The Frank Flaman Foundation** donated \$5000 towards this project, and we are so grateful to **Frank, Crystal, and their team** for this support! They are doing some fine work in the world, and we are honored to be able to partner with them. See [www.flaman.com/foundation/](http://www.flaman.com/foundation/)

**Cindy & Carlos Pardo of Bridge The Gap Tanzania** took 24 lighting systems to Tanzania to put in 2 public schools & some homes. Thanks to the **Progress Club & others** who helped fund some of the systems!

[www.bridgethegaptanzania.com](http://www.bridgethegaptanzania.com)

**Carlos Pardo teaching friends**



**We have been asked to partner on a project in Haiti with SHELTER2HOME, a U.S. based NGO,** which builds homes using a really innovative method developed by a company called **Stucc On Steel**. If their project of 1000 permanent homes is approved as proposed, **Add Your Light Products Inc.** will be supplying the LED lamps for these homes. I'll let you know more in December. For more information on S2H, see [www.shelter2home.com](http://www.shelter2home.com).

(See their fascinating video re: construction of emergency shelters & conversion of shelters to homes!)



Jan at the Mothers' Center meeting

**DONATIONS ONLY RELIEVE POVERTY. THEY WILL NEVER, EVER RESOLVE IT. SMALL LOANS MAKE FAR MORE SENSE.**

**We are proving that people will pay for household items that are good for their health, if we offer them a way to pay slowly over time.** José Rivas has been collecting payments for the LED/solar systems & the Biosand water filters, and recycling the money into more lamps and filters. We will still donate to people who have no resources, eg. seniors living alone, but this is rarely necessary. **Loans are much more realistic than donations.** Do-

nations also cause something called "market distortion", that is, they distort the real price of a product and **destroy fledgling businesses that are selling the same product.** Is that really good for a country's economy? What happens when donations end? **Suggested reading: Dead Aid, by Dambisa Moyo.**

**The women of Centros de Madres (Mothers' Centers)** understand that donations can actually cause harm by fostering dependency. They also understand that people tend to value things that they pay for. They "get it" that donations will only reach a few, whereas loans can reach practically everybody. As groups, these women are often willing to screen the loan applicants & guarantee the loans.

**Our partner NGO "Fundación Agrega Tu Luz" is now a legal nonprofit!!** The photo below shows officials presenting the legal documents to the Board of Directors. **Your donations have allowed Jan to coach them through this process** and also to teach **Adis Rodriguez** how to use Simply Accounting to track revenues, expenses, and inventory. The NGO is leaping ahead and already applying to the Dominican government for a grant. Adis will start their loans program before the Rotary visit in October. **Great progress!**



Jose collecting payments from Doña Luz.

**ONCE AGAIN, WE ASK THE INVOLVED ROTARIANS TO RECONSIDER THEIR STRATEGY** before the negative consequences are irreversible. **The August, 2009, issue of "The Rotarian"** carried an article about the **Rotary Biosand filter program in the D.R.**

Here is the internet site: <http://www.rotary.org/en/MediaAndNews/TheRotarian/Pages/BioSand0908.aspx>  
Friends, please read this article in the context of what is written above re: donations, local employment, etc.

**We respect the goal of the Rotarians involved in this project — to save lives. However, the argument for switching to the imported HydrAid — ie. transport costs & not having enough Dominican filter makers to make concrete filters quickly enough to save children from dying — is not convincing.** Why not just decentralize operations? What do I mean? Well, instead of investing the proposed \$125,000 USD in a distribution center for the imported HydrAid, why not invest in, say, 100 steel molds for concrete filters (\$65,000 USD)? Why not transport the molds (not the filters) to multiple key sites in the D.R. and have the existing skilled filter makers employ & supervise locals? **They could make 100 FILTERS PER DAY, 700 FILTERS PER WEEK.** Transport costs would drop dramatically. Why not invest



the other proposed \$60,000 in mobile infrastructure that can go site to site (eg. large production tents, carts, etc.)? The article did not mention that **the concrete filter** has significant advantages, eg. **it will last a lifetime.** The HydrAid will last, what, 10 years? Then what? **Take this further.** Why not use your grant money as loan capital, working with local NGOs or banks that have experience with small loans? Many Dominicans could slowly pay back their loans, making funds available for more filters. **Look at the evidence supporting microcredit.** Organizing financing is harder than giving things away, but lots of Rotarians are getting on board.

**Above: Sr. Betance (INDENOR) gives speech at Fundación Agrega Tu Luz**

**Why not try something like this? Why not employ Dominicans, build in-country capacity, AND save lives? Now that would be a win:win.**

Henry Wisewood Interact members present Jan with a cheque. What a great group!!



**THANK-YOU TO THE HENRY WISEWOOD INTERACT CLUB & MS. SENGER!** They sold ice cream to raise funds for a youth baseball team in the D.R. Thanks also to the **Rotary Club of Calgary Chinook** for matching these funds and to the **Marble Slab** at **Shaughnessy Shopping Center** for their generous discount on the ice cream! We have some great photos of the team with their equipment!

**THREE RURAL CLASSROOMS** will be built, thanks to donations from the **Rotary Clubs of Red Deer East, Calgary Centennial, and Calgary South**. We will apply for a matching grant and hope to achieve our goal of at least six classrooms! Thanks to **Dave Marchant & Phil Jackson (from Calgary South)** for all their efforts to make this happen!!

**DONATIONS TO OUR BURSARY FUND**

help selected students who could otherwise never attend school or university. At this time, we are supporting Yudelkis, Rebeca, Alba Iris, Mariela, Cristian, Abel and Liriana. **Thank you to those of you who care about these young people** — even enough to call me at times and ask if I have enough money for them! I am so grateful for that kind of help, as it is impossible for me to keep up with all of this on my own.

Below is one of 16 classrooms built by Add Your Light donors!!



Liri & Abel show Jan their marks.



**The Rotary Club of Calgary Chinook** obtained a matching grant from the **Wild Rose Foundation** to supply loan capital for 150 Biosand water filters.

Rotarian José Alberto Blanco, technician Juan Bencosme, and I taught a “clean water through small loans” workshop involving the Society of Youth Ecologists. These youth will also be involved in Chinook’s reforestation/environmental clean-up project.

**Workshop grads:**



**We continue working towards A STUDY CENTER FOR YOUTH** who cannot afford computers or textbooks. Thank you so much to **Sherri & Geoff F.** & the **ARK** children for making candles, to **Kristine D.** & the **Youth Group** for hosting lunch, to **Ted K.** again for the cards, & to all the congregation at **Parkdale United Church** who bought the candles & cards. Thanks to **Staples** staff, including David Kelly, Trent & Karen for their kind donations!! We are **1/4 of the way to our \$10,000 goal**. Can you help us get there?

**HOW TO MAKE AN ON-LINE DONATION:**

On-line donations can be made through [www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org). Go to their site, select Add Your Light, and follow the easy instructions. They will deduct 3% for their administrative costs. You will receive your tax receipt from them, not us. You can set up **automatic scheduled giving** (eg. monthly or quarterly), so you don’t have to remember anything! **Thanks to those of you who donate this way!**

Jan is a medical doctor with specialist certification in Community Medicine & a Masters in Health Care & Epidemiology. To make a tax-deductible donation, see the enclosed donation form, or contact Jan directly. Jan’s email is [jan@addyourlight.org](mailto:jan@addyourlight.org), the office fax is 403-670-0163 & the business phone is 403-775-9536. We spend ~\$1700 per year on fundraising and our goal is to raise ~\$210,000 this year.