

Phone: (309) 472-7522  
E-mail: mariakingcarroll@gmail.com  
Website: www.haitianhearts.org

Blogs of Interest:  
www.livefromhaiti.blogspot.com  
www.dyinginhaiti.blogspot.com



## Haitian Hearts Helps the Navy's USNS Comfort Bring Health Care to Haiti

In August, Haitian Hearts was asked to assist with the United States' Navy's efforts to bring health care to the people of Haiti. The USNS Comfort, a hospital ship, conducted a five-month, nine-country, Continuing Promise 2011 mission, with its last stop in Haiti. The Navy needed medical personnel and other volunteers to work at a surgical screening clinic and a medical clinic.

With Dr. John's knowledge of tropical medicine and Creole, he was invaluable to this process. The Navy made him the initial contact for all patients who wanted to be considered for one of the precious 100 plus surgical slots on the ship. John triaged all the patients so effectively that the pre-surgical clinic was completed in a day and a half. John also worked in the medical clinic, seeing patients, with general medical needs. Other Haitian Hearts' volunteers helped coordinate the translators who interpreted for the Navy and the patients.

Continuing Promise was an awesome mission for Haitian Hearts to be a part of. The USNS Comfort is nine stories tall and the length of three football fields. It has more than 200 hospital beds and 12 operating rooms, and is staffed by fantastic Navy doctors and nurses. Haitian Hearts is thrilled for the Haitians who were able to have surgery on the Comfort and was glad to be able to help!



### Luckner: Patient #151

Dr. John Carroll was working hard at the Cholera Treatment Center in July 2011 when a 22-year-old man named Luckner asked to see him. With his strong physique and no apparent symptoms, Luckner obviously wasn't suffering from cholera. However, Luckner does have a serious health problem. Due to a genetic defect, Luckner's aortic valve leaks and badly needs to be replaced. A colleague of John's sent Luckner to John, hoping that Haitian Hearts could help. John examined Luckner and read the report of the echocardiogram Luckner brought, which confirmed the diagnosis.



After a heart patient is identified, our next step is to find a medical center and surgeon willing to operate on the patient. This can take months and even years. However, in Luckner's case, we found a hospital in a record-breaking one week! Dr. Bryan Foy, who has operated on several Haitian Hearts patients and Provena St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet, Illinois both accepted Luckner! We are hopeful that Luckner will have surgery by the end of the year.

# CHOLERA: A New Challenge for Haiti

In October 2010, cholera, a disease which had not been seen in Haiti for 100 years, spread to this island nation. The Haitian government and NGO's working in the country have set up Cholera Treatment Centers to help battle this deadly, but easily treatable, disease. In July, John spent three weeks working at the Cholera Treatment Center at Hopital Albert Schweitzer in the Artibonite Valley close to where the initial outbreak occurred.

"The hospital set up tents that were like MASH units to treat patients with cholera," said John. "Some patients were carried in, so weak that I couldn't even feel a pulse. These patients were hooked up to IV hydration solution." Cholera can kill people quickly by thoroughly dehydrating them through diarrhea and other loss of bodily fluids. When the patients are given fluids, their recovery is dramatic. "Patients who were near death were sitting up and talking a few hours after having received fluids," said John. Less sick patients who were still conscious and able to drink took oral rehydration solution by mouth. Fortunately for the caregivers, cholera is not very contagious from person to person. It is primarily transmitted by poor sanitation, which is how it has spread in Haiti.

To read more about his experiences working at the Cholera Treatment Center and other places in Haiti, check out John's blog that he wrote for the *Peoria Journal Star*.

<http://blogs.pjstar.com/blog/author/jcarroll/>



## Haitian Hearts in the News

In 2011, the good work of Haitian Hearts was featured in stories by the *Today Show*, the *Sacramento Bee*, and the *Peoria Journal Star*. The stories centered on our patient Widnerlande Jean-Marie, a 7-year-old girl who had life-saving heart surgery at Sutter Children's Center in Sacramento California.

Our local paper, the *Journal Star*, did a before and after story on Widnerlande. The *Sacramento Bee* also wrote a story about Widnerlande. A producer for the *Today Show*, Dana Roecker, saw the article and thought Widnerlande would make a compelling story for their international audience. Dana traveled to Sacramento to film and interview Widnerlande, John, and the good folks in Sacramento. He and national correspondent Jenna Wolfe then came to Peoria for more interviews and footage. Below are links to the stories, which highlight the life-saving work Haitian Hearts does along with its generous partners.

**Peoria Journal Star: Widnerlande Before Surgery**

<http://www.pjstar.com/news/x1500472536/Haitian-girl-finally-makes-it-to-U-S-for-needed-heart-surgery>

**Peoria Journal Star: Widnerlande After Surgery**

<http://www.pjstar.com/homepage/x1173746175/Program-has-heart>

**Sacramento Bee story**

<http://www.sacbee.com/2011/01/24/3346199/haitian-girl-set-to-have-heart.html>

**Today Show**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoeES-47OJU>

## Jim & Jane Ebel:



## Most Valuable Partners for Haitian Hearts

**H**aitian Hearts is blessed with many generous supporters. Two of them are Dr. Jim and Jane Ebel of St. Louis. They have truly used their time, talent, and treasure to help children from Haiti. During the past seven years, the Ebels have hosted six Haitian Hearts children who have received cardiac care in St. Louis. Frandy, Marie, Mauricio, Jenny, Christelle, and Medjina have all been beneficiaries of the Ebel's wonderful hospitality. These children became members of the Ebel family while they stayed with them, sometimes for several months. And, in fact, two of these young people continue to benefit from the Ebel's care and love. In 2009, they adopted Jenny, who is now sixteen years old. They are also sponsoring Frandy as he attends college in the United States.

As a host family, the Ebels took the children to a myriad of medical appointments, stayed by their side during surgery, and nursed them through their recovery. They showed them the sites of St. Louis and produced several new St. Louis Cardinals fans! The Ebels have been generous financial supporters of Haitian Hearts. Their support of our medical work in Haiti has helped saved many lives. We are blessed to have Jim and Jane Ebel as partners in the work that we do.



**M**argarette, 39, has worked as a nurse at the Hopital Lumiere Clinic in Bon Fin, Haiti since the late 90's, frequently serving as John's nurse when he is working at the Clinic. She is very kind and gentle and gives her patients excellent care. Unfortunately, Margarette was diagnosed with breast cancer in December 2010 and underwent a mastectomy the following month in Port-au-Prince.

This past spring John visited Margarette. She was receiving chemotherapy, which made her extremely ill. John reviewed her case with an oncologist in Peoria and determined that Margarette would be a candidate for Tamoxifen and that her chemotherapy could be stopped. Haitian Hearts purchased 500 Tamoxifen tablets for her and will supply her with five years worth of Tamoxifen.

Margarette is now back with her four children in Bon Fin, and she was able to start working again at the Hopital Lumiere Clinic on August 1. It is great to see Margarette again with a smile on her face and reunited with her children.





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**Haitian Hearts**  
2727 W. Heading Ave.  
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## Following Up With Haitian Hearts Patients

**H**aitian Hearts makes a big commitment to its patients. We continue to monitor their health and provide them with the medications that they need after they return to Haiti. On our August 2011 trip, Haitian Hearts met with Heuresse, Suze, Roldolphe, Henri, Jenny, and others. All five of these young people had surgery in the United States. They continue to need follow up care and medicine, which Haitian Hearts provides them. Roldolphe and Henri are in need of heart surgery again, and so our search for medical centers willing to accept them continues. Please help these courageous patients and many others in Haiti by your support of Haitian Hearts.



*Dr. John examines Roldolphe in Haiti.*



*Heuresse and Suze after receiving medications from Haitian Hearts.*