

# FTH Project Update

May 2012 by Billy Almoza

In an effort to promote science over prayer and superstition, the Free Thinkers of Haiti (FTH) recently conducted a solar box cooker demonstration in the town of Cavaillon. This small town is located in the southern region of Haiti. Thanks to the teaching tools sent to FTH by the Freethought Society (FS), members of FTH were able to show the Haitian people how to use solar energy. The activity in Cavaillon was organized by FTH to combat deforestation and to promote the use of solar power for water purification and cooking.

Many people in Haiti use wood as a source of revenue. They survive by selling the wood for cooking purposes. This method of making a living has caused great harm to the land and air quality. Deforestation has become a major concern to many Haitians, who realize the importance of preserving natural resources. Haitians, however, must find some way to make money in order to send their children to school.

We were proud to show the citizens of Cavaillon how they can use solar cookers to purify water and cook food. FTH volunteers conducted the training in a supermarket located deep in the mountain area. It was the ideal place to meet people who live in the countryside.

Cavaillon is remote and the people who live there do not have access to any electricity. Many residents have never traveled to any major city. The demonstrations were well attended and FTH rented a camera to film the event. We also took photographs showing how happy the people were to learn. Unfortunately, the video and still camera were stolen the very evening we returned to Port-au-Prince.

At 8:30 PM, I was jumped and beaten by thieves who stole my briefcase, which was full of equipment and important papers. I spent three days in the hospital as a result of the beating. This is why I am not able to send photos to FS along with this update about our project. I filed a report with the police, but they have not captured the people who attacked me. My important papers are now gone and I must try to replace everything that was stolen.

The work FTH has done is difficult because of our lack of funds and terrible living conditions. Even so, FTH members are satisfied because the message of science and technology was conveyed to many people who have never thought about purifying water and ending the deforestation of their land.

People have become aware and most of the Haitians we met are committed to protecting the environment in which they live. Solar box cooking will be very helpful with this goal.

Thanks to FS supporters who donated to the solar box cooker project, FTH has helped many people improve their lives. Members of FTH appreciated the generous donations and many good things were done to promote science and rational thinking.

**From the FS Newsletter, May-June 2012 (complete newsletter is available in the NEWSLETTER section.)**