

The "New Century"
Edition



You *are* making a
difference!

We're Moving Forward - Come With Us!

Hurricanes pummeled Haiti this past summer and fall. Rather than retreat, we at Servants for Haiti are more motivated than ever. When friends suffer - and the people of Haiti are our friends - the only legitimate response is to work harder than ever on their behalf. You play a big role in that work. Without you, our supporters, we could do very little to fulfill our mission:

To provide an opportunity for Haiti's impoverished children to become outstanding leaders in their homes, churches, communities and nation by supplying them with the care they need to survive and thrive.

What are we talking about when we say we're moving forward? It means that progress is being made. For example:

- We recently sponsored our 100th student at College Jean Rigaud Antoine. This is a huge landmark... and the reason this is the "new century" edition of our newsletter.
- Our first college scholarship recipient continues in his progress toward a medical degree.
- Three teams traveled to Haiti under the auspices of SFH in 2008. (See inside this issue for trip reports.) Three more are already scheduled for 2009. (Another chance for you to be part of the movement!)
- More (and more creative) fundraising opportunities.

What's up for the future? We don't know, but we're sure of a few things. First, the needs in Haiti will be real and desperate for a long time to come. Second, Servants for Haiti will continue to work for change. Finally, you can be part of the solution by joining us. Let's make it a great future, together.



A tree felled by the high winds of hurricane Hannah obstructed the path of the medical team, but didn't prevent them from reaching remote Haitian villagers and treating their dental problems. Read the trip reports inside.

Do You Have Compassion Fatigue?

Some experts are predicting more difficult times for Haiti in 2009. Are they expecting further unrest or more hurricanes? No. They are saying that people are likely to suffer from "Haiti fatigue" or "Haiti impatience". This phenomenon, more generally known as "compassion fatigue", occurs when resources remain scarce and the need overwhelming for an extended length of time. That is certainly the case in Haiti.

When it comes to Servants for Haiti, not only are we *not* tired of helping our Haitian friends, we are always looking for new and innovative ways to increase people's awareness about the conditions in Haiti, as well as increase the funding for our work. You'll read about some of those in the pages of this newsletter as well as at our website, www.servantsforhaiti.org.

2008 Trip Reports

In our last issue, we had two reports from people who traveled to Haiti as part of our June 2008 team. We've had two more trips since then: one in late summer and another in the fall. Here are two reports from each

August/September 2008 Medical Team

This team worked with our friend, Dr. Ed Amos to bring medical and dental care to people who could not otherwise get such help.

A few minutes after midnight on August 30th, four people gathered in Keene, NH to begin a week of ministry in Haiti. We knew very little about each other, but when the Lord gathers a team to do His work, He grows those individuals into a unit to be used for His purposes.

Our assignment was to assist Dr. Ed Amos at medical clinics and meet some of the physical, emotional and spiritual burdens borne by the people of Haiti. Hurricanes battering the island added to the daily challenges of Haitian life. We arrived right after Gustav, worked while Hannah passed, and left just before Ike arrived. While there, Hannah threatened to change the plans Dr. Ed had in mind, but all the rain, downed trees, dangling power lines and muddy roads did not result in any significant changes. By the end of the week, we had treated over 200 people for various medical conditions, removed 3 small tumors, pulled hundreds of decayed teeth and repaired many others in Haitians of varying ages.

As Paul says in I Corinthians, "we see in a glass darkly, but then we will see face to face." I think the full effect of what we do in Haiti or anywhere else in the world will not be understood until it's all revealed when we get to heaven. Yes, we helped relieve some

of those trips. Enjoy reading these, but if you really want to know what a trip to Haiti is like, join one of our three 2009 teams. You can get complete details on those trips at www.servantsforhaiti.org.

November 2008 Team

November is a great time to travel to Haiti, with cooler weather and school in session. This first report is from Jake, a youth pastor.



Prevention and Treatment

Many Haitians need treatment of dental problems, as shown by the photo above. Better yet is teaching good dental hygiene, as shown below, so that problems don't occur in the first place. The medical team addressed both issues.



When someone goes to Haiti, they inevitably bring a bit of Haiti back with them. Perhaps your first thought goes to the items made by Haitian hands and then bartered for, but that isn't what I am referring to. I am referring to the faces, the (good) smells, the people and their intoxicating personalities and their unignorable need.

I have to admit that I left Haiti with more questions than answers. The needs are astronomic and my pay checks are... well, not. What can I do? Even if I had a pile of money I swam through like Scrooge McDuck, where would I start? Do I stay and send, or go and give? Then it hit me, I'm asking the wrong questions. The right question is not how much you give, but how much you have left to give.

We are not living generously until we are sacrificing in order to give. I pose to you the question that has stuck with me like a rock in my shoe. Am I living generously? That is the bit of Haiti I brought back with me. The people there, or people whose bodies reside here, but

whose hearts reside there in Haiti, they personify living generously. Yes, we built a roof the week we were there, and that was supremely gratifying, but my soul was built into as well, which was all the more fulfilling.

Trip report continues on page 3...

Medical trip report continued from pg 3, column 1

ailments for a number of people, but we also established and grew relationships as a team and with the Lord. Each evening we gathered on Ed's veranda to debrief. During those times, it was evident to me that the Lord was working in each of us as we helped the Haitians.

Reflecting on the tremendous needs experienced daily by the Haitians can be overwhelming. Lord willing, I plan to return to Haiti again to make a difference one life at a time. Some of us go, some pray, some give and we can all have a part.

This is an excerpt from another medical trip report. The full report can be found on our web site.

Haiti. What an amazing culture shock. It was my first time visiting Haiti. I had heard many stories of others that had gone, but there is nothing compared to a personal experience. My main purpose for going was to assist Ed Amos in providing dental care to those in pain. We were a team of four flying down. Two providing dental care and two providing medical care.

Our first day we spent with hundreds of children teaching them how to brush their teeth and doing oral exams checking for decay. When we arrived, the children were behind a gate reaching their hands through in an attempt to touch our white skin. It's amazing how just a smile and a touch on a child's head lights up their little lives. Being my first time, I wasn't quite sure how to respond to the little girls reaching through the gates at me and speaking Creole, which I had no idea how to interpret. I sat and watched them for a minute until Ed said to me, "Well, what are you waiting for? Go get touched."

I walked up to the gate and reached my hands through. The tiny girls touched my hands and reached up to feel how different my hair is to theirs. Their smile and laughter was quite contagious. After entering the gates I made it a point to touch every child I passed on the head or shoulder, a big smile and a "Bonjou." The need is so great, not like I could have ever imagined. There were hundreds of children waiting to get their teeth brushed and so many more we were unable to see.

When we feel we have reached our limit as to what we are able to provide, God can do so much more. Prayer is so powerful & God is so great! I did what I was able to do and prayed for each of those people while I was working on them and made sure they knew that Jesus loves them.

This is an excerpt from another November trip report. For the full text, visit the trip reports page on our web site, www.servantsforhaiti.com

Many people ask me "How was Haiti?" "Haiti? Why did you go there...looks like you got some sun!" I reply that it was an interesting, fun and eye-opening experience. Even compared to my long ago Peace Corps days, Haiti was something else. But it's the details that stay with me....

Walking down the street it was common for a small child to approach me and simply touch my hand or arm, or take me by the hand and walk with me a while. It didn't matter that I spoke no Creole and offered nothing other than company, the kids seemed to want to do this very much. Some of the many adults who occupy themselves along the streets with very little would stare as we walked by. Offering for sale a variety of small items: oranges and limes stacked on the ground, meat covered in flies, brown red twisted lumps of fried pork rind on Saturday afternoon, soup base packs, matches and kindling, charcoal, bags of water, bottles of soda and wine, basic grains in bags and baskets, and the other stuff of the simple lives lived in the concrete and rebar. But for all the selling there seemed precious little buying of these things. I watched a woman sit inside a store doorway, day after day, and I never saw a customer. Some just stand around for hours with nothing to sell.

Still, there is joyousness about simply living, in Haiti. People seemed to smile a lot and laugh easily and chatter openly and fearlessly. Even the driving reflected this level of intimate and wild engagement with life and the community. The streets are filled with buses and pickup trucks extravagantly painted with stripes and colors and images of Jesus or celebrities or both, bible quotes and citations. Horns honking swerving fast moving traffic would come to standstill to allow a woman and a child to cross a busy street.

I still don't understand Creole but it really didn't matter. I was able to feel people and through their spirit understand them, by looking at the yellow light on the wall in the little rooms, by feeling their dry palms in my hand and hearing their voices in prayer and song, by feeling the sweaty touch of the children, smelling the offal, the diesel smoke and burning trash in the streets, tasting the incredibly delicious food prepared for us at the orphanage and guzzling the cool sweet Coca Cola and drinking in the smiles and laughter, I came to know Haiti and its people.

Is Haiti Becoming Trendy?

It seems like more and more well known people are becoming interested in the situation in Haiti. Look who's been doing their part:

Hip hop and rock star Wyclef Jean has returned to his native Haiti on many occasions. Although he has become a multimillionaire during his musical career, he has not forgotten his past. He feels a call from God to make a difference in Haiti. He has even formed his own organization, Yéle Haiti. In January, "60 Minutes" featured Wyclef Jean and his work in Haiti. The entire episode can be viewed online.

Actor Matt Damon has jumped on the bandwagon, joining Wyclef during one of his trips, visiting areas affected by the hurricanes and distributing food. In January, he also appeared at a seminar entitled "Change Haiti Can Believe In" led by Paul Farmer of Partners in Health at the JFK Library in Boston.

Canadian Governor General Michaëlle Jean is also a native of Haiti. She spent several days in January touring the country. On more than one occasion, she was reduced to tears as she observed the devastation of her native land.

It's encouraging to us that such high profile people are taking an interest in the plight of Haiti.

Did You Know??

Servants for Haiti is an officially recognized 501(3)(c) non-profit organization under the Internal Revenue Code. You or your group can deduct donations to SFH at tax time!

Fundraising Flash!!

Use goodsearch.com as your search engine and they will donate money to SFH. Just specify "Servants for Haiti" as your charity of choice. For complete up-to-date details see our web site. Meanwhile, search and give!

Servants for Haiti Board of Directors

SFH is staffed by a volunteer board of directors.

President
Laurae Richards

Vice President
Howard Richards

Program Director
Judy Evans

Treasurer
John Haven

Pastoral Advisor
Steve McClelland

Communications
Rick Conti

General
Ruthellen Davidson

Contacting Servants for Haiti

Email:
info@servantsforhaiti.org
U.S. Mail:
P.O. Box 1214
Westford, MA 01886
Phone: (978) 692-2294

News and Notes

Lots of things are happening in the world of Servants for Haiti. Here are some items you might be interested in:

Fall of 2008 saw a new program started at Kingdom Kids orphanage. SFH purchased two new sewing machines to be used to help children at the orphanage learn to sew. A woman has been hired to teach them this skill that can serve as a trade for the future or just to help themselves and their families. We are excited to make this investment in the future of these little ones.

In spring 2008, the Westford National Honor Society held a dance that raised \$1200 for SFH. If you've raised money for SFH, please tell us about it. Sharing your ideas might motivate other supporters to take a similar initiative. Check our web site for stories about what some have done to raise money. If you would like to hold a fundraising event of any kind, contact us so that we can support you.

SFH held a "teacher appreciation lunch" for the teachers at CJRA school. We truly appreciate the investments these professionals make in the lives of the Haitian children, many of whom are sponsored by you!

Pastor Rigaud will be in New Hampshire in March 2009. See the "News and Events" section of our web site for his up-to-date schedule.

You can help us lower our costs even more by sending us your email address so that we can keep you posted with the latest updates from SFH without paying postage!