

New Year, New Decade
Edition



You *are* making a
difference!

An Economic Stimulus Package for Haiti

Many people here in the US bemoan the deplorable state of our economy. And with good reason. We've endured several quarters of slow or no growth, unemployment topping 10%, layoffs mounting, businesses closing, and seemingly endless bad economic news. This has resulted in much pain and suffering in American families.

Fortunately, our country offers safety nets for those in need: extended unemployment benefits, social security, and COBRA among them. Beyond those, there is the traditional American optimism that looks beyond our present trouble and sees the eventual end of this economic cycle just as we have seen so often in the past.

Unfortunately, there are few safety nets and little reason for optimism in Haiti. And the economic news is not just bad, it's horrendous. In comparison, you'll see that we in the US have little to complain about.

Accurate statistics for Haiti are notoriously difficult to ascertain, but the following will give you an idea of the desperate condition of Haiti's economy.

- Unemployment - 70-80%
- Per capita annual income - \$542
- Life expectancy - 61
- Infant mortality - 48.8 per 1000
- Literacy rate - 62%
- Sustained access to clean water - 54%

With numbers like these, it's tempting to want to throw up our hands and give up on Haiti. Your friends at Servants for Haiti will never do that and we know that you, our supporters, stand with us. You see, we know we can't change Haiti overnight. But we can change the life of one child, then another, then another, ...

Eventually, yes, we believe Haiti can and will change for the better. Maybe George Dorelien, the student SFH is supporting

through medical school, will help improve healthcare in his country. Maybe Emmanuel, one of our sponsored high school students, will start a business to employ many of his fellow citizens. Or could one of the orphans now living at Kingdom Kids be elected president and lead Haiti into the future?

If we have anything to say about it, the answer is yes!



Entrepreneurship - Haitian Style

November 2009 Trip Report

The most recent SFH trip to Haiti ran from November 9-17. Here's a trip report from a veteran who has been to Haiti on many of our teams.

This trip to Haiti was once more a study in contrasts. I saw the same poverty and suffering I've seen in previous trips - something to which I've never grown accustomed, nor do I wish to. But I also saw the joy and hope that somehow flourishes in the midst of it all.

There always seems to be a new experience, regardless of how many times I've been to Haiti. This time, I was asked to take the photographs that we send to sponsors of the students at College Jean Rigaud Antoine. It was such a joy to meet every one of those kids, even if only for a moment. Most had ready smiles for the camera, but a few had to be coaxed with a friendly request of *souri* (Creole for smile), especially the "cool" older kids!

Although we had a relatively small team and several first-timers, quite a bit of work was

accomplished just the same. A new roof was laid on the third floor of classrooms. A lot of the work was actually done by students who attend the school! It never ceases to amaze me when I see these teens and pre-teens gladly passing bricks and buckets of sand, stones, and cement. These kids have an ownership in their school that few American students will ever experience.

I had more time to spend with the kids in the orphanage than I ever have before. It's great getting to know them and their often tragic stories. The best part is that those stories keep getting better. Several children are in the process of being adopted. The rest are living under ever improving conditions. (See related story on page 3.)

All in all, this was another unforgettable trip. I got to know some great teammates, renewed acquaintances with old friends, both American and Haitian, and came away with a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment nearly unparalleled by any other experience.

EDITORIAL: Why YOU Should Go to Haiti with SFH

This article is an editorial commentary. We hope that you take it to heart.

In nearly every issue of this newsletter, we feature reports from individuals who have traveled to Haiti with one of our teams. (The latest can be found just above this article.) There is also usually a plea for our readers to consider joining a team.

Since you are reading this, we can assume that you have a heart for the people of Haiti, or at least for those less fortunate. Likely it also means that you are a person of compassion and generosity. All of this makes you a perfect candidate for a work trip to Haiti. Maybe the thought has even crossed your mind. We'd like you to think about why you should act on such a thought.

Here are five reasons you should travel to Haiti with Servants for Haiti:

- 1) The need is so great. There is so much that needs to be done, from building the school to upgrading the orphanage, from playing with children to encouraging the staff.
- 2) Your need is so great. We all need to be made aware of the way most of the world lives. Our lives are the exception, not the norm.
- 3) Your reward is even greater. The sense of satisfaction is above and beyond almost anything

else you will experience in your lifetime.

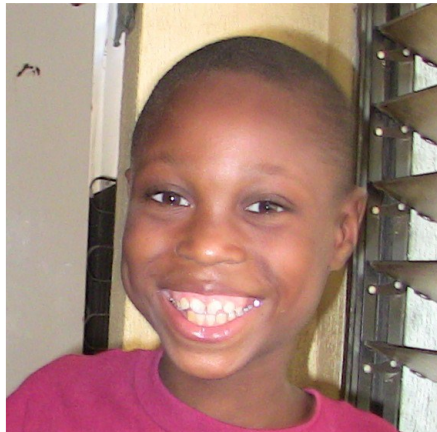
4) Sending a check alone isn't enough. Without question, the children of Haiti need financial help. Buying food, clothing, education, medical care, and more requires money, and lots of it. We will never refuse your presents, but your presence is also critical. Orphans can't hug your picture. And you can't hug theirs.

5) You will have the time of your life. In fact, you may feel alive in a way that you never have before. Standing on the roof of the third floor of the school passing buckets and bricks to teenagers under a Caribbean sun is an activity that few people in this world will experience. You will never forget it.

One more note directed specifically to those of our supporters who, like the members of the board, are followers of Jesus Christ. If you count yourself among those, you have even greater motivation. Simply put, in the words of the late Keith Green, "Jesus commands us to go." We would contend that, unless He has specifically commanded you to stay home, he wants to send you somewhere. If you are waiting to hear from God, consider this your call to travel with us to Haiti. He wants you to meet the ones He called "the least of these", and minister to them face to face.

☺ *Why Are These Children Smiling?* ☺

Improvements in the Works at Kingdom Kids Orphanage



These three fellows are living at Kingdom Kids Orphanage. There are always plenty of reasons for the kids at the orphanage to be smiling. They are being fed, sent to school, and given medical care. They are cared for by a skilled and loving staff. Considering where some of them came from - abandoned, starving, and/or orphaned - that's a lot to be thankful for.

On top of all that, there are a number of improvements being made to their home. SFH recently upgraded the electrical system with a new inverter and upgraded batteries. This will allow the orphanage to have electricity more consistently.

On the horizon is yet another utility improvement. In the past, the already overburdened caregivers were forced to carry water in buckets to toilets and baths. Life will become a lot easier on them in the near future. We have purchased a new water pump and are about to upgrade the plumbing throughout the building. As a nice side benefit, this will also improve the conditions for teams that stay at the house while visiting Haiti.

These changes are badly needed because more children have been coming into our care lately. As of this writing, there are 41 children staying at KKO, an increase from the 30 or so that were there just over a year ago. To deal with the influx, we have hired more caregivers and are looking to hire still more. Additionally, we are purchasing more and newer mattresses for the children to sleep on.

We would love to do more and widen the smiles on these boys and girls, but we need your help.

You can make a donation or hold a fundraiser to help fund these and other improvements. For ideas, check our web site at www.servantsforhaiti.org. There you'll find lots of ways to help, including some unique ideas for holding fundraising events. We'll even help you with planning your event. Contact us today.

How much is an orphan's smile worth to you?



Kingdom
Kids
Now On
Facebook

The world is getting interesting indeed when Haitian orphans have a social networking presence, but that is exactly what has happened. Kingdom Kids Orphanage is now on Facebook. Become a fan of...

"Kingdom Of Kids Orphanage"

Who knows what may come of this? Join in and find out.

CJRA from Space!

Here's a fun exercise. Would you like to see College Jean Rigaud Antoine, SFH's supported school? You can! If you run Google Earth, just fly to the following coordinates:

Latitude: 18°33'43.16"N

Longitude: 72°19'19.92"W

That U-shaped building it points to is CJRA school.

Isn't technology great?

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!

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!

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!

Contacting Servants for Haiti

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

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

Secretary

Natalie Decker

Pastoral Advisor

Steve McClelland

Communications

Rick Conti

General

Ruthellen Davison

Kristin Scott

SFH Board Update

Last issue, we introduced Natalie Decker as a new board member. Today we welcome yet another new member.

Kristin Scott has worked in development for a number of other non-profit organizations, planning and executing fundraising events. She currently works for the American Cancer Society. Her practical expertise will be a great asset to Servants for Haiti. Although she is new to the area and to service in Haiti, her enthusiasm, passion, and energy have already made a huge difference to our organization.

Kristin and her husband Jake - a youth pastor - have both traveled to and fallen in love with Haiti. In fact, they fell in love with one particular orphan at Kingdom Kids and are in the process of adopting him.

Welcome, Kristin!



New board member Kristin Scott takes a stroll on the roof of CJRA