

February 2, 2010

Earthquake Relief Update

Just like the other media, I've been writing less but for different reasons. Most of the news crews are rapidly departing Haiti as interest dwindles while those of us that live here are getting even busier. I suppose that is as it should be. The posturing of some people and organizations has started as everyone wants to appear to be making the best use of the donation dollar they've received. By and large, everyone has good intentions, but most foreigners don't want to hear that they cannot make the most efficient use of resources, and few of them really work to create equal partnerships with nationals. I'll repeat here what I tell everyone who asks me: Don't tire of doing good (see 2 Thess. 3: 13), but invest as wisely as possible in organizations and people you know. Ultimately, one can remember that there is a God in charge who cares and sees; He will make it all work out in the end. At least, that is what gives me peace.

What is going on here? Developing the camp to receive more and more folks as well as building structure to help all the refugees around us. Caleb also continues to coordinate receiving supplies from donors worldwide and getting them all over Haiti. (Yes, that really is Caleb pictured below, he actually was standing still long enough to photograph-smile) Today he was facilitating the visit of a former military hospital administrator/aid worker/physician who is working to help hospital administrators nationwide determine their greatest needs for the coming year. Caleb had accompanied him to the hospitals in the north (Cap Haitien, Milot) and was getting him to Port de Paix this afternoon. This fellow Rotarian from Grand Cayman is volunteering his time as well. It is encouraging to meet so many with varied skills offering of themselves.



Today we have a total of 105 people settled in for long term residence at Camp de la Grace. Most are in family units and continue to express their gratitude for finding a refuge. This past Sunday morning, Caleb went through all the boxes of clothing & shoes we had available so that all those who wanted to would feel comfortable attending church. Everyone got a ride into the town square to attend the denomination of their choice. Caleb feels it is very

important to get them integrated into the community. Another way this will happen is with the reopening of schools.

This past Sunday morning was another emotional one for all of us. Caleb shared at his Dad's church of what he had seen thus far on the trips into Port au Prince. Then he prayed for all of us as we move forward. A full one third of attendees that morning had been in Port au Prince during the earthquake. One announcement that was met with applause was Caleb's sharing that school would open next Monday on Feb. 8th. This date has been set by the Haitian gov't as well. In particular, he announced city wide that any student who was displaced by the earthquake destruction would be eligible for enrollment tuition free at our ministry school. Everyone who is advising us has confirmed that this is an important step forward to provide normalcy and healing. We've already taken the names of all the students staying at the camp and I just heard that as of today, there are two hundred and thirty refugee children signed up to start on Monday. Please be praying for all of us as we get this going. Francesca, pictured at left in her mom's lap, is excited to be able to go back to kindergarten. Today I found a group of young boys cutting each other's hair to prepare for school- they were glad to have some upcoming activities.



We want you to know that we continue to anticipate more and more opportunities to help in the coming months and we are preparing a schedule for volunteers/groups to come and help. The list will be available by mid-February and we will need folks who are willing to serve, especially build school desks and expand classrooms to welcome these kids. Other projects such as building long term shelters and rebuilding some schools in Port au Prince are in the planning stages. Again, please do not grow tired of praying or providing help. We are doing everything in our power to make sure it's getting to those in need.

Blessings from Haiti,

Debbie Lucien

www.hosean.org

Impromptu soccer game among refugee kids

