



April 2003

News from Friends of the Children of Haiti

## First Mission of 2003 “most successful”

**CYVADIER, Haiti** - Desperate to live, Pierre Paul Ansion wheezed and lurched his way down the long dirt road that offers hope.



– Ansion

Ansion, a 26-year-old sign painter from the old seafaring town of Jacmel, had not slept for two days, since a pick-up soccer match triggered a full-blown asthma attack. His inhaler and billfold empty, Ansion had no options except to scrounge a few coins and grab a ride to nearby Cyvadier, a village known throughout the mountains as the home to visitors from another world, Friends of the Children of Haiti.

Gasping for breath in the long line outside the concrete clinic, the lean, hunched Ansion caught the eye of an American volunteer, who rushed him inside. Over the next several hours, he would undergo four breathing treatments, a shot of epinephrine and an intravenous line of lung-clearing drugs.

"If we weren't here today, he would've died," nurse Michelle McNeil, a first-time volunteer from Peoria, said in hushed tones, as not to alarm the patient.

Yet Ansion, his breathing eased a bit, fully realized the severity of his situation - and his last-minute good fortune. His eyes reflect admiration and awe as he glanced around the swirl of medical activity: doctors peering and shuddering at tuberculosis-blotted X-rays, technicians slathering babies with scabies-killing ointment, pharmacists doling out \$2 prescriptions that mean life or death.

*"This," he says in quiet wonder,  
"is the house  
of life."*

(Continued on back)



# Seeking volunteers for September and November

Anson was one of 2,264 patients who visited the FOTCOH clinic during the February 2003 Mission. The team of 25 volunteers and 28 Haitian staffers held clinic for 8 1/2 days in Cyvadier treating many patients who arrived with "rendezvous slips" from the previous mission (Nov. '02), indicating further success for FOTCOH in providing continuing patient care.

Enthusiastic praise for the mission effort came from FOTCOH CEO Dick Hammond after dinner on the team's final evening when he called the February '03 Mission FOTCOH's most successful (thus far) in the history of the organization. "I really mean it" he said.

Perhaps some of you would like to take Dick's words as a friendly challenge: FOTCOH is currently seeking volunteers for the Sept. and Nov. ('03) missions and the 2004 mission schedule will be announced soon. The success of each mission depends on medical and non-medical personnel coming forward to volunteer their skills in time to meet the needs of our Haitian patients - and their needs are so great. Please contact FOTCOH now for further information about volunteering. We're always looking for the next mission to be our best ever!

## CALENDAR

May 12-23, 2003  
**MEDICAL MISSION**  
Cyvadier, Haiti

June 1, 2003 at 2p.m.  
**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
Bartonville, IL

August 11, 2003 at noon  
**GOLF OUTING**  
Edelstein, IL

Sept. 15-26, 2003  
**MEDICAL MISSION**  
Cyvadier, Haiti

November 3-14, 2003  
**MEDICAL MISSION**  
Cyvadier, Haiti

## Just updated:

- May '03 Mission Team Leaders Ruth & Warren Smith and Sue Lang report that they have completed three training sessions and have consolidated medication with their team of 24 volunteers and that everyone is well prepared and excited about departing on May 12th.
- The Medical Advisory Committee met in early April to consider the latest medical developments since the Feb. Mission. New information from that meet will be made available in time to be included in the FOTCOH Medical Guidelines booklet before the May team's departure.
- FOTCOH Bingo continues to be a primary source of funding for purchase of medication and other essential mission supplies and the Board of Directors is currently considering new strategy to maximize the return on that effort. Look for further information on Bingo to become available soon.
- The Golf Outing Committee met recently and has great plans in store for the golf outing, FOTCOH's biggest single-day fund-raiser, set for Aug. 11th at Arrowhead C.C. Circle that important date now!

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