

between



FRIENDS

March 2004

News from Friends of the Children of Haiti

## February team succeeds, concern expressed about embargo and uprising



A successful FOTCOH mission concluded in February just two days before the U.S. State Department warned all Americans to vacate Haiti because of escalating political violence in the central and northern provinces of the country and around the capital of Port-au-Prince. The February Mission team, consisting of 21 American and 24 Haitian volunteers, had just finished treating more than 2100 patients at the FOTCOH medical clinic in Cyadier.

Still, even as U.S. Marines and the international community work to stabilize Haiti, many relief organizations, especially food-providers, have been experiencing trouble in serving Haitians long-since the international community imposed a crushing embargo on aid following flawed legislative elections in 2000. Friends of the Children of Haiti is concerned about the medical fall-out from the embargo and the current political uprising.

— Amos Jean-Baptiste

Already in February, the mission saw evidence of severe hunger, triggering life-threatening health problems. Clinic workers recall two stark images: a 21-month-old who weighed 7 pounds and an 11-year-old boy, Amos Jean-Baptiste, who weighed just 19 pounds.

“I saw patients who were basically starving to death,” says Dr. Garron Lukas of Champaign, a second-time clinic volunteer. “Malnutrition is common, but starvation is the extreme.” As often is the case, the malnourished children were orphans living with extended families in total poverty. “There just was no food,” Lukas says.

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Working with Lukas was Gina Mooney, a registered nurse from Peoria, IL on her first mission. She said the prognosis for the starving patients would be known only after time, “you can’t quick-fix them.” Mooney and others at the clinic offered to sponsor the emaciated children through Friend’s child-sponsorship program to ensure their future food supply. “It’s so hard to imagine this could happen to a county that’s just 600 miles from Florida,” said Mooney.

Go to: <http://www.fotcoh.org/gallery.html> to view a photograph of FOTCOH’s February 2004 Mission Team!

# Need never greater for May,

*Team Leaders named, Founder's Reception announced*

"It certainly is our intent to go, we have no feelings contrary to that," says Dick Hammond, CEO of FOTCOH about the upcoming mission schedule. By cell phone, Hammond has kept in regular contact with FOTCOH's Haitian staff. So far, in keeping with its peaceful past, the Jacmel/Cyvadier area has experienced little upheaval. Just before Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide fled the country, a spate of looting hit the seaport. However, when calm returned, public officials took to the radio to ask the looters to return the belongings -- and the looters complied. "Where else do you see that?" Hammond says.

Hammond says his staff will continue to monitor the situation in Haiti and he hopes for continued stabilization there (as peacekeeping troops build-up) and that sufficient security will be in place to allow the May Mission to proceed. "Volunteer safety is always the most important factor for every mission," he says. "At this point, we'll keep planning for the next (May) mission. We are very positive about that."

Many chronic and countless acutely ill Haitian patients will be waiting for the FOTCOH team to arrive at the clinic again in May. The need has never been greater for skilled volunteers who want to ensure continuing care for the Haitian people.

**Please call: 309-699-3707 or contact, [email@fotcoh.org](mailto:email@fotcoh.org) for details about volunteering in May.**

## Just updated:

- FOTCOH has named Kent & Linda Bryan and Anne Hramec to lead the September '04 Mission team and Bob Hoy has been named to lead the November '04 Mission team. All those interested in participating in the Sept. or Nov. missions should contact these team leaders soon for information about possible volunteer opportunities (**[Bryans1381@aol.com](mailto:Bryans1381@aol.com)**), (**[BobHHoy@aol.com](mailto:BobHHoy@aol.com)**).
- FOTCOH will host a Founder's Reception at the Contemporary Art Center in Peoria, IL on Friday April 23, at 5-8pm. On that evening we will honor FOTCOH founders Richard & Barbara Hammond and celebrate the hundreds of dedicated volunteers who continue to serve our patients in Haiti - now since 1985. The Hammonds will be present to receive guests - and drinks, hors d'oeuvres, and music will be provided on the occasion. All proceeds from this event will help us continue to bring medicine and essential healthcare to our Haitian patients. **Contact Founder's Reception Chairpersons Jane Gray & Barbara Sumner at 309-691-0604 or at: [email@fotcoh.org](mailto:email@fotcoh.org) for further details. Please mark this important date on your calendar now!**

FRIENDS OF THE  
  
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OF HAITI

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**BETWEEN FRIENDS** is distributed quarterly to inform supporters about the Friends of the Children of Haiti (FOTCOH) medical missions. Submissions for BETWEEN FRIENDS are welcomed for consideration and should be sent to: [email@fotcoh.org](mailto:email@fotcoh.org)

If you would like this newsletter emailed to you please send your email address to: [email@fotcoh.org](mailto:email@fotcoh.org)

The Friends of the Children of Haiti is a non-profit organization.

## CALENDAR

April 23, 2004

### **FOUNDER'S RECEPTION**

Contemporary Art Center  
Peoria, IL

May 10-21, 2004

### **MEDICAL MISSION**

Cyvadier, Haiti

August 9, 2004

### **GOLF OUTING**

Arrowhead C.C.  
Edelstein, IL

Sept. 13-24, 2004

### **MEDICAL MISSION**

Cyvadier, Haiti

November 1-12, 2004

### **MEDICAL MISSION**

Cyvadier, Haiti