

April, 2005

News from Friends of the Children of Haiti

Friends first dental team provides care

Steve Roehm went to Haiti to fix teeth. He found a dental nightmare.

In February, Friends of the Children of Haiti took a big step in our fledgling efforts to establish ongoing dental care for patients at the clinic in Cyvadier. Friends' first-ever dental team was comprised of three rookie volunteers: Roehm, a Peoria, Illinois orthodontist; East Peoria dentist Viktor Maister; and dental hygienist Kathy Roehm, Steve's wife.



Steve Roehm, D.D.S.

“The population has chronic dental issues that have never been addressed.”

Aided by American and Haitian support staff, the team provided cleaning and fluoride treatments for Haitian children from 6 to 15 years of age. However, care for adult patients provided much more daunting, as the team tackled oral horrors wrought by years of dental and medical neglect.

Many patients required oral surgery. Of 300 patients, 456 teeth were extracted.

One 14-year-old girl had an abscessed tooth with extreme infection and swelling. The abscess had eaten a hole through her cheek and drained continuously down her face.

“In the United States you just don’t see that, because it doesn’t get that bad,” Roehm said. “This girl should’ve been seen years ago. She lived for years in misery, and it could’ve been cured.”

The dental team pulled the tooth, stitched the hole and prescribed antibiotics. The patient will recovered fully.

The team didn't have as many options with a 47-year-old woman who had lost all but one of her teeth. Her lone remaining molar had been so overworked, it had been pushed and pounded completely sideways.

“It was moved 90 degrees,” said an incredulous Roehm. “I had never seen a tooth horizontal.”

Roehm plans not only to return for further missions, but recruit more volunteers. His orthodontics partner, Lori Fulk, offered Friends' first dental care effort in February 2004, and Roehm hopes to solicit the aid of other dentists, orthodontists and hygienists.

“It would be nice to set up ongoing dental care with every mission,” Roehm said. “And that is my goal.”

February sees more pediatric patients

May team popular, Sept. accepting volunteers, 20th Anniversary event set

The Friends dental team worked along with 23 other American volunteers and 35 Haitian interpreters and assistants in February, who combined to provide medical care for 2301 patients over 8.5 clinical days.

“Our team saw a significant increase in pediatric patients this February (when compared to February '04) with children comprising 36% of our overall patient population” said February Team Leaders Eric & Sue Behrens. “The children in Southern Haiti are just besieged by parasites and skin diseases, so it's good to know that we are reaching more of them than ever for treatment.”

“Excellent care was provided for the children and their families and the providers were also able to capture important data on 100% of the patient population in February,” said Eric Behrens. “That data will help determine an accurate medication resupply and will be essential in helping Friends provide the best care possible for our patients in the future.”

Go to: <http://www.fotcoh.org/gallery.html> to view a photograph of Friends' February 2005 Mission Team.

Just updated:

- **May 2005 Team Leader Bob Hoy** reports that the “May Medical Mission has become very popular” with 24 volunteers going to Haiti from May 16-27, 2005. Team members include three physicians, four nurses, two pharmacists, one laboratory technician, one physical therapist and one paramedic. Many of the other volunteers have training in the medical sciences or have been to the FOTCOH clinic on previous visits. “We look forward to seeing Dick & Barb Hammond and all our Haitian friends soon and ask for your prayers for safe travel to and from the Clinic”.
- **September 2005 Team Leaders Kent & Linda Bryan** say that they currently have eleven volunteers committed to participating their Sept. 5-16 mission and up to eight additional volunteers who have expressed interest. All who are interested in going with the Sept. team should contact the Bryans now (bryans1381@aol.com) for information about possible volunteer opportunities with their team.
- **Friends 20th Anniversary Celebration**
Friends will host a 20th Anniversary Celebration at the Contemporary Arts Center in Peoria, IL on Sat. April 30th, 6-9pm. That evening we will honor our dedicated volunteers who continue to serve our patients in Haiti - now since 1985. Drinks, hors d'oeuvres and music will be provided on the occasion and all proceeds from this event will help Friends continue to bring essential medicine and healthcare to thousands of impoverished Haitian patients. Contact 20th Anniversary Celebration Chairpersons Jane Gray & Mary Hedges at: 309-691-0604 or at: email@fotcoh.org for further details. Please mark this important date on your calendar now!

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

If you would like this newsletter emailed to you please send your email address to: email@fotcoh.org

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

CALENDAR

April 30, 2005 6:00 to 9:00 pm
20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Contemporary Art Center
Peoria, IL

June 5, 2005 2:00 to 4:00 pm
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Rhythm Kitchen
Peoria, IL

August 8, 2005
GOLF OUTING

Arrowhead C.C.
Edelstein, IL

May 16-27, 2005
MEDICAL MISSION

Cyvadier, Haiti

September 5-16, 2005
MEDICAL MISSION

Cyvadier, Haiti

November 7-18, 2005
MEDICAL MISSION

Cyvadier, Haiti

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