

Haiti Update January 16th

A great day, I am wrong, an EXTRA ORDINARY day !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We were able to communicate by phone with a couple of our Team in Haiti today, but our Satellite phones did not work. It did not matter we knew what we had to do.

Claude Surena who has been one of our Primary Contacts in the Haiti disasters has been designated as the National Coordinator of the Health Commission they are putting in place. That is a huge responsibility that he accepted at the insistence of the President Preval. Congratulations are due to him.

Our priorities Remain:

Money

Medical Supplies

Blankets, clothes, and Shelter

Food

Water

The Bahamas Clubs today collected in excess of 50,000 lbs of medical supplies, blankets and food. We sent out 5 twin engine flights to Cap Haitien, of which 2 were scheduled to go on to Les Cayes. They were turned back to Cap due to rain.

Tomorrow we have 10 twin engine flights and 1 DC-3 leaving loaded with medical Supplies to be dropped in Cap Haitien and Les Cayes. We are working closely with the Methodist Ministries and they are bringing back departing missionaries on the return flights. We have another 6 flights schedule Monday

The Jamaica Clubs together with their military connections are flying in supplies and returning with Jamaican nationals. Their proximity and the availability of these resources makes them extremely effective. They are coordinating the flights with inbound supplies and staffing with Claude Surina as well. Thanks Claude

Many of the regions have raised large sums of money. As I said yesterday I have not had a chance to confirm these amounts but hope to do so for you soon. I hope that the note below clarifies the need and importance of the fundraising by all of you across the District

These fund raising initiatives are VERY important. While everyone wants to get or collect something to send, it becomes painfully clear very quickly that the challenge to get the stuff to where it needs to go on the ground is impossible. The benefit to the most needy diminishes by the day. Many Rotarians can beg the supplies necessary but many more must do what they do in the fund raising department because that's what gets the job done.

We will probably sent \$150,000 to \$200,000 worth of goods down to Haiti in the next 2 days, but it will cost us close to \$50,000 to do so. The \$50,000 will get the goodwill on the ground where the needy will actually benefit and they will do so while the need is still there. Without it, we would have \$200,000 sitting in a warehouse. A point to remember! Goods in a warehouse while they rebuild the port or arrange for shipping after commercial shipping opens will be to late for anybody.

Our container of medical supplies in Atlanta that was going to be transferred to a DC-3 tomorrow has hit a snag and further details will follow. Our 3 Beechcraft from North Carolina are ready to go and we will coordinate that tomorrow.

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