

HAITI EARTHQUAKE RELIEF EFFORTS UP-DATE FEBRUARY 26, 2010

JOHN L. KACHELMAN, JR.

As we continue to be involved in the relief efforts in Haiti I am very pleased to report that our first container arrived in Port-au-Prince and was unloaded last night. It was delivered to the Son Light Children's Home that is overseen by the Estes congregation. Estes is scheduling a regular rotation of workers into the compound and about ten from their group were present and involved in the unloading. They are presently putting the rice into smaller bags and will begin distribution to thousands tomorrow. This first container had 15,000 pounds of rice and 30,000 pounds of pinto beans plus some of the family buckets and personal hygiene bags. It was loaded out of Columbus, MS by Kathy Cadden and those working with her.



Frankie unloading rice Thursday night

There was concern about the arrival of the container because there is just so much going wrong with relief efforts in Haiti at this point. Chaos and confusion are the norms. Ordered structure was never a strong point in Haitian society and such is even less now. Factor in the efforts of the Haitian government to begin reviving its control, especially Customs, and there is even less stability. Into such disorder has gone many efforts to relieve the suffering brought on by the earthquake but, sadly, most efforts have not reached their destinations. Some had rushed and pushed to get commodities into Haiti only to see them arrive and remain where they were delivered. There are reports of mountains of water and containers of food that have been delivered but sit and hopes of their distribution are dim.

And so into this uncertainty we began shipping relief items. We had a plan and a scheme that was worked out in the first weeks following the earthquake. The arrival of our first container was a most

anxious moment. Just as the container reached the border we were told that Haitian Customs had been revived and was requiring a number of documents and there overshadowed the constant specter of corruption from Customs officers.

Kathy and Roberta began working on the documents and then went to the border to meet the truck and escort it back to the Son Light compound. All day yesterday we were in constant communication. Here is just a brief summary of communication...

- At 1:20 am...I will call in the morning. I have not heard anything today but will make a check in the morning. Maybe we will have an ETA by tomorrow. Thank you for your prayers and assistance. Everyone, I have made copies of documents and will be in the customs office early in the A.M. Keep praying!!! Praising Him, Roberta
- At 10:42 am...John, A few new developments. Truck driver already arrived to the border. He is there now. I just talked to him (Saturnino is his name) and he only speaks Spanish (no English). I talked to Roberta and Kathy and understand that they don't speak Spanish. I agreed to call Roberta and the driver every



Navigating Haiti's roads

hour to facilitate communication. Roberta and Kathy were on their way to the broker. I hope we will get the Haitian government approval soon!!!! Rang Hee

- At 12:10 am...Roberta and Kathy are on their way to the border. Approximately 40 minutes away. Rang Hee
- At 2:33 pm...I just talked with Kathy Cadden. They have the container cleared and are crossing the border. She should send me some initial pics tonight so will pass it on to you. John
- At 5:45 pm...Kathy just called me. The first Columbus container has reached PAP. Kathy asks all to pray because there is a gathering mob that is hungry. They are trying to get the truck in and unload it. John
- At 8:00 pm....Police officers arrived at the compound to provide security and the unloading began.
- At 10:30 pm....Kathy called saying the first container was all unloaded and the trucker was on his way back to the Dominican Republic!

Thus far we have made a total of 6 shipments into Haiti to help our brethren offer assistance to those struggling with the earthquake relief efforts. So far the total amount of relief items shipped into Haiti are summarized below:

Total weight of food shipped—182,000 pounds

- Rice—84,000 pounds
- Beans—32,000 pounds
- Canned foods 20 pallets—50,000 pounds
- Infant Formula & Baby Buckets 8 pallets—16,000 pounds

Other relief commodities shipped—7,982

- Family Buckets—3,920
- Personal Hygiene Bags—3,896
- Personal Hygiene Boxes (large full boxes of assorted wipes; bandages; first aid cream; etc)—34
- Empty Buckets—98
- New mattresses for Son Light Children's Home—34

Assisted by the Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines

Recently Harding University students wanted to raise funds to help those suffering because of the Haitian earthquake. They decided to raise funds to purchase tents. Amazingly they were able to gain the agreement of Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines to ship the tents into Haiti. Coordinating this was Andrew Baker and Brandon Tittle. They contacted us asking if we had anything that we could ship and we agreed to ship 10-12 pallets of canned foods that brethren from around the Nashville, AR area had sent to us with Bill Farris and Billy Golden. We loaded the truck last Wednesday morning and the items were taken to Ocala, FL where they were prepared for transport by the cruise lines for Haiti. Here is some of the communication regarding this project. I know it will encourage you as you see just how so many are responding to help in so many different ways!

What we have been told as of now is that we do not have to worry about Haitian customs. We are going on a cruise ship that already has arrangements with the government, and the entire boat is cleared through customs. If this changes, I will be sure and let you know. I hope to hear back on details for getting this picked up by tomorrow at the latest.

The supplies will go out from Miami on Saturday and will arrive in Haiti on Monday. The ship is arriving March 1. As long as there are no weather problems, it will arrive over night and be unloaded sometime in the morning of the 1st. I will have more specifics as far as where to meet and when this week. I do know that the cruise line will offload it straight to our trucks so there should be minimal waiting upon arrival.

The 10-12 pallets of canned goods include canned meats, tuna, infant formula, and baby bottles. Hopefully our brethren in Gonaives, Haiti will have the food loaded and transport it back to their area where distribution will begin.

And at times you are left speechless...

There have been a number of astonishing developments in our efforts but here is one that is remarkable. For a number of years I have been working with a detective on the Chicago Police force named Roberto Garcia. Bob and I have worked a number of projects. Bob is a Lieutenant Colonel and we first met when he was in Iraq. Bob has worked in getting the replaced emergency vehicles from Chicago donated to a number of nations. He has secured me a fire engine.

As I reported in the last update the Fire Fighter's Union in north Alabama (Local 270) is directing a special project for Haiti Relief in collecting diapers and baby items. These will be collected in Florence, Huntsville, and Decatur and then shipped into our locations for distribution in Haiti. When I heard about the fire engine being donated by Chicago I called the fire fighters in Alabama asking if they would be interested in being a part of that project as well. They eagerly agreed and will be able to supply various items for the fire engine and will send some firemen to conduct training on the emergency vehicle. When I called Terry today he said, "You are on the radio!" He said that meant the Florence Fire Department has already begun running PSAs about the diaper/baby items for Haiti and those in the Shoals area can hear these. There soon should be PSAs heard in Huntsville and Decatur as well as other north Alabama areas. We are planning to work this project in with a special concert that Lee Greenwood is providing for the Fire Fighters and maximize the opportunities. When you factor in the donation of the fire engine this is amazing!

Here is communication with Bob on this amazing opportunity...

From: Garcia, Roberto L LTC RES USAR USARC
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2010 12:09 PM
To: John L. Kachelman, Jr

John, The fire truck you requested is coming up for vote in the Chicago City Council. Say a prayer. If it does get approved it will be going to be delivered through what kind of transportation...Will it be Denton? I think it is great idea. Can you get the Alabama fire department to donate fire hose, and training for the Haitian fire department? The fire truck comes with everything except the hoses and ladders...It is a beautiful truck. As soon as I get approval on March 4th...We should get Denton energized. I just spoke to the Chicago City Council Representative to get your fire truck. What I need is a short synopsis of where the Fire truck is going, who it's going to help, and number of civilians. Basically the 5 W's. I will then testify in front of the city council and will get resolution passed to get your fire truck. If you can send a picture of the town or fire department. Lets paint a picture...Have a great day. Bob

