

Friend Ships February 2014 Activities Report

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Dear Friend Ships Family:

Thank you so much for your continued support in so many ways to our work here at Friend Ships. In a day and age when we hear so much about unscrupulous things that people do, we have the privilege to be exposed continually to the wonderful things that people do, simply for the love of God and to benefit others.

In addition to the selfless service of our full time crew and the dedication of the young Sea Hawk students, there are a network of people and companies that contribute regularly to our efforts. Everyday friends of Friend Ships do incredible things to help us to achieve our work. To give you an idea of just a few of these gifts given this year already (all without charge)- many local stores, food wholesalers and restaurants donate food every day; a company calls to offer three semi-loads of cleaning products; huge tugboats come to help us when we needed an assist; men who performed complex repairs to the operating system of one of our ships offer to bring their singing group to Port Mercy - just to bless us; Pastors Roger and Sallie Siratt take a whole week away from the church they pastor to drive hundreds of miles to instruct and uplift us spiritually; a man that puts in windshields installs ours for our many vehicles whenever we ask; a high end sportswear manufacturer who has provided our Friend Ships uniforms for 25 years tells us to make up a wish list and sends us printed shirts for every need we have; a local sign company says "Absolutely!" every time we call to request whatever signs we need, a widow donates her husband's 41' Hatteras fishing vessel; Lake Charles doctors and dentists treat our many crew and Sea Hawks whenever needed and finally people sit down and write out generous checks to help us pay our bills for no other reason than God moves them to do so. . . We could go on for many pages with the never ending, overwhelming generosity we receive as we live out the scriptures that tell us if we give to the poor, our needs will be supplied! (Proverbs 28:27). Winston Churchill said "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." And in the words of Jesus, "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap." Amen. We are witnesses to the truth of this.

As the first year Sea Hawks train and learn work and outreach skills, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th year Sea Hawks serve as instructors. squad leaders, food service directors, boat managers and Ready Response (disaster relief) coordinators.

This month a team completed our work in Honduras as Sea Hawks here in Lake Charles worked on preparing our equipment for the upcoming hurricane season. Teams went out into the community each weekend to help with charitable, educational and safety programs, and to minister spiritually to our neighbors. Mardi Gras is a big event here in Louisiana and our Sea Hawk teams attended events to offer prayer and good news! In addition, we donated medical supplies, food and clothing to a ministry in Mexico and organized supplies for a shipment to the Philippines. The StoreHouse One teams delivered fresh food to local ministries each week that help veterans, the homeless, elderly and families in need both in Los Angeles and in Lake Charles.

Because of current events in Russia, we are reminded of a day in August 1991 (as told in Jesus & Company Part 1) when our flag ship SPIRIT arrived at the Port of Riga, Latvia in the Soviet Union on the same day that President Gorbachev disappeared. He was on vacation in the Ukraine by the Black Sea and kidnapped by an extreme faction of the military who seized power with the intention to restore hard line communism. There sat Spirit and her crew, the first US ship that had entered that port (a Soviet nuclear submarine base) in 16 years. What an opportunity the Lord gave us all those years ago to minister the Gospel to people who had been kept from the Lord for 70 years, during a time of extreme fear and uncertainty. How awesome as we watched from a front row seat when the Soviet Union dissolved a few days later, allowing each country to regain their freedom. How fortunate we have been as over the years and now decades, the Lord has taken us places about which a man could only dream.

Once again, we thank you with the most heartfelt thanks, for your gifts, your love and your prayers as together we work to advance the Kingdom of our great and mighty God!

All our love,

Don and Sondra Tipton and the Friend Ships Teams