Friend Ships July 2014 Activities Report

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Dear Friends

Thank you for your faithful support and other assistance to the Friend Ships work. We appreciate it more than you could know!

This month an amazing Hawks ofSea team completed their first year and graduated with honors. We had an exciting graduation week as Dr. Roger and Sallie Siratt came to minister, teach and encourage us leading up to the big event. The students have spent the past eleven months in fitness training, scriptural studies, prayer, learning a variety of work skills (including a mission off the coast of Mexico to rescue sailboat Divine



Wind) and weekly outreaches to the community. All have excelled and we are so proud of them. Some will return for a second year as others go on to fulfill what they believe the Lord is calling them to. They each progress to the next step with more knowledge and discipline in the Lord to help them carry on in strength. For those returning to Friend Ships, many exciting assignments await us. One of those missions is to train and mentor our team of new Sea Hawks arriving in August.

This month we handed over responsibility for our facility in Roatan, Honduras (where we have operated since 1996) to the Honduran owners of the property. They will carry on with the work we have started by continuing to host Pastor's conferences and utilize the buildings we constructed to house special law enforcement personnel brought in to help with security aspects of the island. In the process of closing out our ministry there, we were able to donate many truckloads of roofing materials, heavy duty tarp material, household goods, food, hygiene supplies and building materials to a network of the local churches and outreach ministries. Two of our young Sea Hawk men also joined up with a ministry team going to Haiti to help with a program that cares for homeless Haitian children.

Here in the U.S., we conducted a large etiquette class with children attending the New Life International Church summer outreach in Lake Charles; donated soccer uniforms to a local correctional center and distributed more than 45,000 pounds of food (plus flowers, plants and donuts) to local organizations in Lake Charles and the South Bay area of Los Angeles, California.

Here at home base and at this time of the year in particular, we prepare for disaster relief. This means readying equipment, training our teams and standing by to respond to the devastating effects of hurricanes. Hurricane season in the Atlantic starts in June and ends in November. When a storm makes landfall in our hemisphere, either overseas or on the U.S. coast, we pray and evaluate the damage to see if we believe that there is something we can do to help and if the Lord is sending us to do so. If we think we may want to respond, we will generally send a small advance team to continue the evaluation. If there is a significant need that is not being met and that we think we can help fill, we'll dispatch a team and equipment to respond. This sometimes means sending one or more ships or a convoy of trucks loaded with tents, generators, mobile food service equipment and commodities.

Usually, in an area that is affected by a serious hurricane, there will be a very widespread area that has no power, where all stores are closed down, damaged or destroyed and where there are thousands of people who are struggling to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives. They need to eat, of course, and yet have no way to cook, no usable water source, refrigeration is down and there are no restaurants or stores open for business within driving distance. Once the victims have depleted the food they have on hand, they are completely dependent on others to help them with their food needs. This is one way that Friend Ships comes in to help, setting up an inviting, outdoor café that can provide home-cooked, tasty meals for hundreds, even thousands of people every day and where people can relax for a time and visit with neighbors and friends. In addition, we have chaplains available at each table for spiritual support and encouragement. When appropriate we are ready to assist with search and rescue, send teams house to house to deliver food and commodities and help with home clean-up. We may provide medical aid or distribute goods such as roofing tarp, bottled water, hygiene supplies and dry stores. When the day comes that power is restored, stores and restaurants prepare to reopen and people are able to start cooking at home, the Friend Ships team packs up and returns to Port Mercy to await the next disaster or other need.

Thank you for making it possible for us to reach out to the community and to the world. Thank you for helping us to demonstrate God's love to people who are hurting. Thank you for helping us to touch and impact the lives of young Christian men and women, seeking a solid relationship with the Lord. We couldn't do any of it without you!

Together in Christ,

Don and Sondra Tipton and the Friend Ships Teams