

# Friend Ships May 2005 Activities Report

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Greetings friends. Plans are in full swing for the next exciting mission to Israel. We already have 95% of our load committed and a little more than half of the fuel! The ship carries the equivalent of 200 twenty-foot sea containers so we are talking about tons and tons of goods. The beautiful cargo includes hundreds of pieces of top quality furniture, clothing, paper products, medical supplies, architectural fabric, computers, household goods, blankets, linens and school supplies. It is so amazing to see the Lord fill our ships time after time with wonderful top quality cargo.

Directors Don and Sondra Tipton recently returned from a planning trip to Israel where they were able to meet with representatives of many organizations and several government officials including the Chairman of the Port



of Ashdod, the former Los Angeles Israeli Consul General, officials from the Ministry of Science and Technology, Ran Ichay from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

former Prime Minister and current Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Knesset speaker Reuven Rivlin and Knesset member Danny Benloulou, all of whom are helping to make arrangements for *Spirit of Grace's* upcoming mission. Many exciting opportunities are on the horizon (see the letter from Don Tipton on the next page for more details).

**PORT MERCY:** Other developments at Port Mercy include the welcoming of a new ship given to us by a generous man who wants her to be used for the work of the Lord. We have named her *Shalom*, which in Hebrew means peace of mind and heart. The ship is an extraordinary vessel that has an abundance of housing and will soon provide accommodations for Friend Ships crew, eventually freeing up *Spirit* for missions.

The team has been busy collecting and preparing cargo and readying the ship for the mission to Israel but has also found time to construct a beautiful new hanger for the helicopter.

**ROATAN, HONDURAS:** The Friend Ships Village in Roatán is in its second session of Art Academy classes teaching single mothers to make souvenir art objects for sale to the island's tourists. In the words of the Village Facility Director, the program is "...up and running beautifully. God has been very faithfully sending such a wonderful group of ladies from the village of Punta Gorda. The school has between ten and fourteen ladies (and about 10 children and sometimes a dog) showing up everyday. They have very sweet characters and joyful hearts. Not only is it school, but it is also like an extended family. The Lord is opening so many doors for us, giving us the opportunity to minister to them in such good and unique ways, reminding us that art is just a tool to teach and show God's love. Teaching English to the ladies is yet another tool God has provided us. Teachers Jen and Monica are getting better and better every class making the learning process fun."

The team has also been planting and harvesting food to support their needs and share with the local orphanage,



including honeydew melons, water melons, cantaloupes, green beans, radishes, papayas, spaghetti squash,

lemons, chili peppers, yucca, spinach, mustard greens, onion tails, basil, thyme, sage, parsley, and cilantro. Here at Port Mercy we were given a beautiful truck for Roatán from a great friend of the ministry. This is something that is very much needed.

**MISSION TO HAITI:** An initial distribution report has come in from the mission to Haiti. Grace International is diligently distributing throughout Haiti the food,



clothing, medicine, furniture and personal care items delivered in February by *Spirit of Grace*. More than forty churches and orphanages and five disaster zones have received aid so far. One mountain village was given antibiotics for its sick and reports:

“From standing in faith and taking the medication, all (70 people) report themselves to be completely well!”

**FEARLESS:** Many people responded to our request last month for funds to move *Fearless* from Stockton and about 1/3 of the funds needed were contributed. The Lord made that stretch to meet our need through a unique solution to the problem. Our friends at Canvasback Ministry based in Northern California, who use ships to provide medical aid to Micronesia have an exact sister ship to *Fearless* that is located in the nearby state of Texas, in the Houston area. Our two organizations have agreed that it would be mutually beneficial for us to trade ships. Therefore, we will move *Fearless* to a different dock and turn it over to its new owners. Then we have only to activate and bring home the sister ship. The money given to us for *Fearless* will be enough to help with the expenses to bring this new ship into dock. Only God can come up with these great solutions to our problems!

**LOS ANGELES:** Storehouse One continues to collect food and distribute it locally. In addition, the team gathers up cargo for international distribution and this month, completed a major project of replacing the windows in our 40,000 square foot, three story warehouse building in Wilmington.

*If you would like to be involved with supporting Friend Ships programs, we have ongoing needs for:*

**Crew** - long and short term individuals and teams.

**Finances** - to support general operations and/or the Mission to Israel.

**Cargo** - see website or request a brochure on how you can pack boxes of supplies to be shipped.

**Prayer** - Join “Special Forces”, our team of prayer warriors.

## **LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR:**

*Dear Friends,*

*How can Sondra and I express to you how appreciated and needed you are? Your interest, love, prayers and support are the “holding up of our hands” here at Friend Ships. Like Aaron and Hur held up Moses’ hands in battle when he was exhausted, so you are there for us when we need you most. In our recent crisis with the life threatening illness of our crewmember, so many of you faithfully prayed and helped him be brought back to health. When we needed cargo for Haiti, you were there, flooding us with beautiful gifts for the Haitian people. When we needed funds to move Fearless, you responded. Thank you for your obedience to God. Your donations that pay our monthly bills are so important to our work. Your notes, encouragement, your generous financial gifts are overwhelming. Please take heart in every accomplishment of Friend Ships because they are your accomplishments too, and we could not carry on without your love. Proverbs says those who help the poor honor God. Your gifts to the poor could only be motivated by your love for the Lord.*

*Today, we stand in awe as God opens a door before us in the nation of Israel. In addition to the large humanitarian aid mission, we are pursuing opportunities to support the Arab Christian church in the region. The first step will be to hold a medical outreach, working with these churches to invite Palestinians in need. We plan to have our medical staff consist of American, Israeli and Arab medical providers. When this event happens, it will be unprecedented. We are hoping to be able to coordinate this for the voyage of Spirit of Grace that is coming up in the next few months.*

*We love you. We appreciate you. We are so grateful that you believe in us. On behalf of our team here at Friend Ships, we **THANK YOU!***

*Love, Don Tipton*