

Dear Rotarians and Friends of Rotary:

To Zone and District Leaders in Zones 28 and 29:

Yesterday at work we celebrated someone's birthday. At one in the afternoon there was cake. Just then my Blackberry beeped – another “incoming”. It was word from my closest friend in Haiti, Hervé Denis. Past President and incoming President of the Delmas Club and owner of the Visa Lodge. Hervé represents much of what is good with Rotary.

Early in his career, Hervé, a foreign- service dignitary for Haiti, served as Ambassador to Switzerland and Canada. When our Safe Water Plus Project began, Hervé stepped up and his club joined with us to sponsor our first TRF matching grant – safe water for the central plateau in Haiti. Hervé met with District 5950 and World Vision representatives; he traveled repeatedly to Hinche and Pignon; and he was the reliable local to whom funds could be directed because we knew they would be handled properly. In 2004, Hervé spoke at our District Conference and when we tried to compensate him for the travel expenses, he refused and asked that the money be given to help on a club project in his community. In 2007 I surprised him at his club and awarded to him a Paul Harris Fellowship. Just 2 months ago we dined together at the Visa Lodge with four of the DGsE from Zones 28 and 29: He bought – you got to love that!

On Tuesday, Hervé lost his mother and younger brother as her home collapsed on top of the two of them.

If you want to join me in putting down the fork, you can help Hervé and others. Here are some very good reliable options:

1. For long term recovery efforts a TRF donor advised fund has been created and is posted at www.rotary.org/haiti. For more info contact Annie Palubicki, 847-866-3488; annie.palubicki@rptary.org. 501c3 qualified, US tax receipts will be given.

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2. If you want to help with short term emergency relief two good options are available;

a. You can give to District 7020 which includes in its territory the Rotary Clubs of Haiti. Contact PDG Richard McCombe at rmccombe@qussiema.org.

b. World Vision is offering a 100% match of any funds contributed by Rotarians. These will be used for emergency relief including food delivery Contact Rynell Freeland with World Vision at rfeelan@worldvision.org. 501c3 qualified, US tax receipts will be given.

3. If you want to give to a fund that will go directly to Hervé's club for use in his community give to my District's Foundation. District 5950 Foundation - Haiti Relief Fund. Contributions can be sent to: PDG Holly Callen, Foundation Treasurer; 7903 Wyoming Court, Bloomington, MN 55438. 501c3 qualified, US tax receipts will be given.

Sincerely,

Tom Thorfinnson

Thomas M. Thorfinnson (Tom)

Director Rotary International 2009-2011

13270 Melody Court

Eden Prairie MN USA 55346

Office: 952-935-3515

Home: 952-937-2297

Mobile: 612-850-2597

Fax: 952:746-5010

tthorf@comcast.net