

Money and help move with agonizing slowness

Money and help pour with agonizing slowness into crumbled Haiti.

Imagine, if you will, a disaster even more immense than Hurricane Katrina smashing the Gulf Coast, swamping New Orleans, washing away 200 years of history.

Remember how long it took to restore order, stop looting, provide food and water, begin organized rescue efforts, bring in the Army, then re-establish civilian control.

Now, put this disaster in the middle of the world's poorest, most overcrowded, least-well-governed nations. Destroy the port, ruin roads and bridges, topple buildings into the streets, jam the only airport with relief and military flights. Wipe out the forces of law and order, the government, the international presence meant to keep things going.

And there you'd have Haiti today. Haiti is the poorest country in the Americas. Its government barely functions. (A United Nations peacekeeping force, run by a Canadian mountie, stood between the nation and lawlessness, little else.)

Some blame the United States. Some say we've done too little for Haiti. Some say we did too much. It matters little now; the millions of survivors fighting for food and water likely do not care.

To their credit, President Obama and world leaders moved quickly to move unprecedented aid to Haiti in the days following the quake Jan. 10. This is as it should be. The civilized world can and should give from its abundance when something like this happens.

Mr. Obama ordered six to eight U.S. ships carrying aid and work crews, at least 10,000

Army and Marine Corps troops to restore order and keep the peace, and huge amounts of food, water and medical supplies into motion.

Relief agencies, everything from church groups to the American and International Red Cross organizations, sprang into action. Nations around the world sent what they could, from a few rescue workers to military units.

The bloodied infrastructure of Haiti is hardly up to handling the influx of help. The one airport is jammed. Reports say it can take six to eight hours to unload a single plane. There are no ramps and stairs, no crews.

One International Red Cross/Red Crescent team landed in the nearby Dominican Republic and proceeded to attempt a border crossing by road. They estimated a 12-hour trip. (Haiti and the Dominican Republic share the island of Hispaniola.)

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met with Haitian President Rene Preval at the airport near Port-au-Prince and promised more help. Her husband Bill, heading a U.S. relief effort along with former President George W. Bush, was due any time.

The world response is impressive. It is an example of the best in humanity.

For many, it will be too little, too late, for the nature of disaster forecloses a truly prompt response. Nonetheless, it is our duty, the rest of the world, to do what we can. And we will.

Help is on the way. Little else can be done now, but pray for the survivors and move the mountains of rubble in the way.

— Steve Haynes



Pigs feet not to her liking

Man, it sounded like such a great idea at the time. Go to a real soul-food restaurant and order barbecue.

We were in Augusta, Ga., and the girls knew of this place, run by a church, that was popular with everyone from businessmen to housewives to teenagers.

My irreverent children called it I-Hop for Jesus and warned that the place was less ambiance than a high school cafeteria, the food was served cafeteria style and everybody sat at plastic tables on folding chairs.

But, they said, the food was pure soul.

Sounded like tasty fun.

The kids were pretty close on the name, as it turned out. The restaurant, which just serves lunch and is run by volunteers, is in a large room attached to the United House of Prayer for All People church — I Hop for Jesus, it is.

The menu is painted on the wall above the servers. You grab a tray and tell them what you want. The cost is \$6 per person for the main course, two vegetables, bread and tea.

This was Thursday and the offerings were barbecue, liver and



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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onions, fried chicken spaghetti or Salisbury steak with rice. Your choice of sides included mashed potatoes and gravy, lima beans, yams, turnips, green beans, black eyed peas, rice and gravy, cabbage or macaroni and cheese. Breads included corn bread, rolls or sliced bread.

Desserts were \$2 extra and included several puddings and cakes.

I was hungry for southern barbecue and didn't read any farther on the menu. The nice serving lady told me what kind of barbecue it was, but her accent was a little strong and it wasn't until I nodded and she put the barbecued pigs feet on my tray that I began to have some misgivings. I added yams, black eyed peas and corn bread to complete my soul food meal.

I stopped short of the sweet tea. I love sweet things, but sweet tea — a

southern staple — contains more sugar than water and would choke a hummingbird. I put in a special request for plain tea and it was graciously granted.

The barbecued pigs feet were interesting — inedible but interesting. There is almost no meat on them. You are supposed to eat the skin and fat, and there's lots of that.

Steve and the girls took pity on me and gave me part of their fried chicken. It was delicious, and so were my yams and black eyed peas.

I noticed a lot of people were getting the pigs feet, so I guess it's a popular item. I figured you have to try new things now and again.

But next time, I'm sticking to the fried chicken. That's about as southern as you can get this side of barbecued pigs feet, and I definitely think I'll stick this side of that particular delicacy from now on.

She's serving sawdust soup

You're all invited over for soup. As long as you don't mind a little sawdust in it.

Sawdust, Dirty '30s dirt and sheet rock dust is everywhere. Jim has been working on the front room of our house for more than a week.

He has finished re-wiring and insulating. I can't say "re"-insulating, because there never was any insulation. Just the dust that had blown in the cracks over the last 115 years. The sheet rock is mostly up, duct work is run and the frame for the tray ceiling is in.

This is not what is typically called the front room. I just called it that because it's on the front of the house. It's to be a library, complete with floor-to-ceiling bookcases and a reading nook. For two people who love books as much as we do, this is a dream come true.

For years, guests have had to follow the sign to "Go to the north door." Well, the sign came down last week and even though you will be entering a "hard hat" zone, you



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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can come into the house through that door. The bad news is now I'm going to have to do a better job of keeping my kitchen counters straightened up, because that is the first thing you see when you walk in the door.

— ob —

Jim does a lot of work on his computer. He writes tracts, prepares his sermons and writes the occasional letter. Because he prints so much, he refills the printer cartridges with an ink kit he gets from the office supply store.

Saturday night, he tried to refill the cartridge and had a terrible spill. I did not find out until Sunday morning. When I saw his hands,

they looked like he had just been "booked." You know, mug shots and finger prints. Anyway, there is nothing to do but wear it off.

Jim preaches during chapel services at the state prison every Sunday afternoon. He talks with his hands and was really "into" his sermon when one of the men came up the aisle with a wet paper towel in his hand. He wanted to help the preacher with his messy hands.

It didn't do any good, but we all had a good laugh because if anybody knows about being fingerprinted, it's those guys.

Write

The Oberlin Herald encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

Mail letters to 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan., 67749, or by e-mail

to oberlinherald@nwkansas.com.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

Legislature could raise taxes

The state budget will no doubt be the main topic of the 2010 legislative session. Will we raise taxes or make further cuts?

There is an opinion by some that further cuts will only make the hole deeper. I tend to agree with Winston Churchill's statement, "Taxing your way to prosperity is like standing in a bucket and lifting the handle."

Our business community is struggling and doesn't need higher taxes to slow the economy even more.

The governor's speech on Monday was delivered better than the last nine State of the State addresses. He was firm upfront and sometimes cautious as he spoke. I had hoped he would not ask for tax increases to solve to the current fiscal crisis. State receipts still have not leveled



Letter from Topeka

By Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer
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off, and we need to be cautious about raising taxes, adding further burdens on the people of Kansas. Businesses have no one to bail them out, and I hope we don't increase their burden this session.

I enjoyed meeting with the Stockton group visiting Topeka last week, and always appreciate their interest in the government process. As usual, they sent a mix of elected officials, business

leaders and citizens to encourage the Legislature to keep Kansas strong.

When we finish the 2010 session, I hope we have made policies that will serve Kansas best with the least harm.

I always appreciate the contacts from my 40th District. The office room number has changed this year to Room 225-East, however, we are still in the same room as before.

Annual listening tour completed

To the Editor:

I recently completed my 13th annual Big First Listening Tour, "From Washington to Home," holding town hall meetings in each of the 69 counties in the 1st Congressional District.

I appreciated meeting with all those who took time out of their day to share their ideas and concerns with me. As a representative for our state, it is essential that I understand the issues that concern Kansans. My annual listening tour helps me accomplish this goal.

My efforts in Washington remain much the same today as they were when I was first elected — to see that we have prosperity in the

communities we call home. This has become more difficult as President Obama pursues a big-government strategy, represented by bailouts, stimulus packages, cap-and-trade legislation, government intervention in health care, Cash for Clunkers and financial re-regulation.

I have voted against each of these damaging proposals because they threaten our way of life in Kansas and make it more difficult to leave things better for the next generation. I have heard Kansans' concerns about these issues and will make

sure those in our nation's capital understand them as well.

If there were any issues that we did not get to discuss or if you were unable to attend, please contact me through my website at www.jerrymoran.house.gov.

Based upon what I heard from Kansans at each town hall meeting, I will return to Washington committed fully to fighting for what I believe is right for America.

Jerry Moran, Hays
U.S. Representative

Letters to the Editor

Hospice Services provides support

To the Editor:

Dying, death and grief are subjects most people are apt to avoid until directly confronted with their profound reality. When that time comes, Hospice Services provides experienced support and guidance.

Hospice provides compassionate physical, emotional, and spiritual support to terminally ill people and their families. Hospice provides care and support for everyone who needs it, whether or not the person or family can pay for the services. Hospice covers the unpaid care for terminally ill patients who lack resources and also absorbs the gap between patients' insurance and the actual cost of care.

Included in the hospice mission is the commitment to guide and comfort the grieving. Hospice counselors are available for consult with individuals, schools, health-care facilities and organizations in communities we serve. We also provide grief support resources.

Because collaborating with other agencies creates synergy that benefits everyone involved, Hospice Services staff participates on local, state and national healthcare committees and boards.

A family member recently told us how grateful she was that the hospice staff not only cared for her mother but also about her. May it always be said that Hospice Services provides extraordinary care for terminally

ill patients and cares deeply about Hospice Services communities, helping to make them a better place to live, work, play and grow.

Julia Schemper
Hospice Services, Inc.
Phillipsburg

From the Bible

I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

1 Timothy 2:8

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