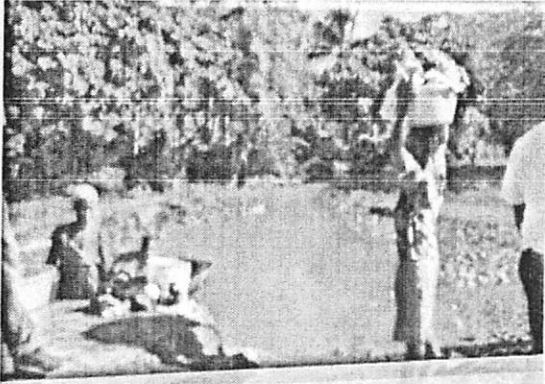


1st Haiti trip

Date? 1/2012

(3-A)



My Trip to Haiti: First Impressions

By Dr. Richline



Imagine stepping off of a plane in a tropical locale. You walk outside, and the only thing that meets your expectations is the heat that greets you. While the temperatures are beach worthy, you're immediately faced with other realities. The air is heavy with smoke and stench. Piles of garbage, some burning, are everywhere. There is no grass, and the anticipated palm trees are nowhere to be seen. Instead fallen buildings and junked cars line the streets.

"All of your senses are assaulted: the methane gas released from the burning rubbish irritates your eyes, nose, throat, and lungs. Crowds of people press in, and you are quickly aware that you are not safe. You were told that kidnapping was common, and now you feel the possibility engulfing you."



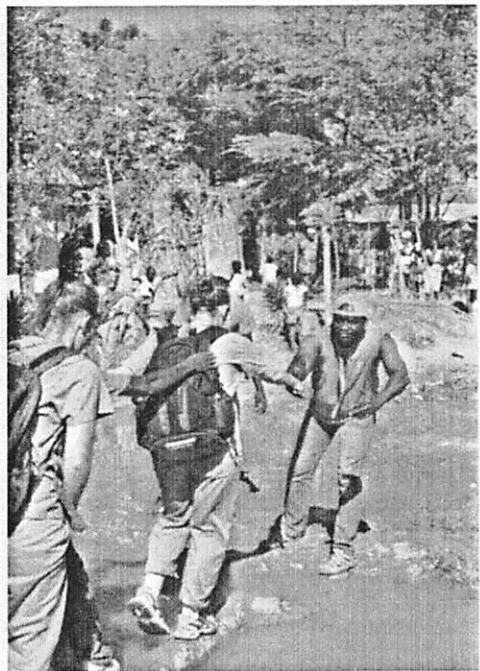
This scene plays out each day in Haiti. It is an island nation in the Caribbean, listed as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Travel to its capital, Port-au-Prince has become so dangerous that the US Travel Dept has issued a travel warning for the entire country due to the ongoing threat of murder, kidnapping and rape. While the turmoil is great, there are organizations trying to make a difference. International Medical Relief is one of those. It was an honor to serve with them during my recent trip to this seemingly forgotten place.



This is Frantz. An IMR volunteer from Haiti. Here, he is helping Dr Richline and the other Doctors cross a treacherous road to get to clinic. Sadly, Frantz recently passed way due to an illness that would have easily been treated in the US.



The line of patients to treat was endless, but each and every patient received excellent care.





International Medical Relief



This Police officer suffered a broken ankle while pursuing a felon. Dr. Richline casted him and crutch trained him.



Tuberculosis is very common in Haiti, unfortunately.



All smiles even though Dr. Richline and these other Doctors are going into another long and exhausting work day.

Since there is no waste management, fires burn trash piles randomly, emitting dangerous gasses, causing a burning in your eyes and lungs all day.



Far too many babies and children suffer from illness and malnourishment.



Dr. Richline and a child from the orphanage she visited to help. This child is lucky to be here, as all of the orphanages are full. Many children don't have the benefit of living here.

Next month, read more about Dr. Richline's invitation to Cambodia and her plans to return to Haiti in March.