



# HAPPENINGS

THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF JAMAICA, INC. NEWSLETTER

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HURRICANE DEAN SPECIAL EDITION:  
**A THOUSAND ROOFS OF LOVE**



*A Thousand Roofs of Love*  
Rebuilding homes damaged in Hurricane Dean

Dear Friends:



The American Friends of Jamaica sends our sympathy for our friends, brothers and sisters in Jamaica who have been affected by Hurricane Dean. In partnership with the Missionaries of the Poor led by Father Richard Ho Lung, we are responding by providing roofing materials to many individuals who had damage to their homes. We have set a goal of 1000 homes and hope that you will join us in improving the living conditions for these families.

We are already in motion and have already shipped containers of Roof building materials to Jamaica.

Please do all you can in donations and try to get others to donate also.

God Bless you all,  
Glen Holden, AFJ President

## Background

Hurricane Dean, a Category 4 hurricane, passed along the south coast of Jamaica on Sunday, August 19, 2007, creating serious damage and wreaking destruction. The eye of the storm passed just south of Kingston, and caused serious damage there, especially to structures that were marginal to begin with. Many of the inner-city poor of downtown Kingston live in ramshackle wooden one room houses and shacks, often with up to 6 or 8 persons sleeping, eating and living in one room. Many of these structures collapsed, or lost their zinc roofs, in the storm. The most vulnerable – the elderly, handicapped persons and children - were especially hard hit and are incapable of reconstructing their homes and their lives without assistance.



As they walked through downtown Kingston distributing food and water after Hurricane Dean, the [Missionaries of the Poor](#), a 140 person relief organization located in downtown Kingston and led by Father Richard Ho Lung, found people sleeping on the streets and/or in structures without roofs. In response to the needs of these destitute residents of downtown Kingston, the Missionaries of

the Poor created a rebuilding project designed to assist the inner-city victims of Hurricane Dean to reconstruct their homes and their lives.

In support of this rebuilding project, The American Friends of Jamaica has opened a designated fund, "[A Thousand Roofs of Love](#)".



used for supplies. These supplies largely consist of 10 foot zinc sheets to be used as roofing material, plywood sheets to be used as supporting walls, and wooden boards for support of the roof and wall structures. The estimated **average cost per home of the reconstruction project is US\$250**, and the aim of the fund is to pay for reconstruction of 1,000 homes.

**Project Summary**

The goal of the project is to repair or replace roofs for **1,000 homes of the most needy in poverty-stricken areas of downtown Kingston**. Given the crowded living conditions in this target area, where up to 6 and 8 people can be found living in one room, it is clear that the reconstruction of 1,000 roofs will have a significant social impact, affecting many more than 1,000 people, and in particular, children, women, the elderly and infirm.

“ I was deeply touched and hurt by the damage and feeling of hopelessness among the people.

-- FATHER RICHARD HO LUNG

The AFJ fund was opened on August 24 by U.S. Ambassadors Sue and Chuck Cobb who seeded the fund with an initial contribution of US\$20,000. Their contribution has in turn been matched by the current United States Ambassador to Jamaica Brenda LaGrange Johnson and her husband Howard Johnson, as well as former U.S. Ambassador and current AFJ President Glen Holden and his wife Gloria.

The AFJ Thousand Roofs Fund will remain open to receive contributions until **October 31, 2007**.

**Needs Assessment and Prioritization:**

The Missionaries of the Poor have done and continue to conduct a needs assessment survey in the downtown Kingston area. They have undertaken neighborhood and house visits, and they have also benefited from neighborhood referrals. In many cases, they have found community consensus as to those persons most in need. Prioritization is based on the extent of damage suffered, the ability (or lack thereof) of the people to help themselves, and the number and nature of persons affected by the damage.

On August 28, Ambassadors Sue and Chuck Cobb and the current U.S.



Ambassador to Jamaica Brenda LaGrange Johnson met with Father Ho Lung and his team from Missionaries of the Poor. They toured some of the badly affected residents of downtown Kingston, and saw some of the reconstruction activities.

**AFJ Fund**

The AFJ's "Thousand Roofs of Love Fund" aims to raise **US\$250,000** to support the reconstruction project.

The "Thousand Roofs of Love Fund" will be managed and disbursed by the AFJ to the Missionaries of the Poor to be



**HOW TO CONTRIBUTE**

**We need your support!** Help us achieve the set target of US\$250,000. No gift is too small.

All contributions are tax-deductible. For more information or to make a contribution, please use one of the following methods:

**CHECK**

Please send check payable to 'The American Friends of Jamaica' In memo line, write: A Thousand Roofs of Love and mail to: The American Friends of Jamaica ATTN: Keisha Phipps, Executive Director 1120 Avenue of the Americas, 4th Floor New York, NY 10036 Tel: 212-626-6883

**CREDIT CARD**

Visit the AFJ Website at [www.theafj.org/HurricaneDean](http://www.theafj.org/HurricaneDean) to make a contribution or call 1-212-626-6883 to provide credit card information.

**About the American Friends of Jamaica**

The American Friends of Jamaica is a U.S. non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to supporting Jamaican charitable organizations and social initiatives targeted at improving the lives of Jamaicans through systemic development in the areas of education, healthcare and economic development. For more information, visit [www.theafj.org](http://www.theafj.org)

The American Friends of Jamaica 1120 Avenue of the Americas, 4th Floor New York NY 10036 212-626-6883 | [info@theAFJ.org](mailto:info@theAFJ.org)

**About Missionaries of the Poor**

The Missionaries of the Poor (MOP), is an international catholic organization that serves the poorest of the poor. It operates homes for the sick and destitute. The backbone of the mission of MOP is the brothers and priests of this religious community. For more info., visit [www.missionariesofthepoor.org](http://www.missionariesofthepoor.org)

**JOIN US**

THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF JAMAICA 26th Annual Jamaica Benefit Auction and Gala Tuesday, October 9, 2007, 6:30 p.m. Cipriani 23rd St. 200 Fifth Avenue, New York

honoring **LOUISE and EDGAR CULLMAN** Individual International Humanitarian Award

Visit [www.theAFJ.org/gala](http://www.theAFJ.org/gala)