

The Jamaica Gleaner
Tuesday, May 22, 2000



CONTRIBUTED

From left: honouree Tony Hart with Consul-General Ricardo Allicock and honouree Robin Mahfood of Food For the Poor at the American Friends of Jamaica Peacock Ball in South Florida on Saturday, May 19. The annual black tie gala and auction was held at the Ritz-Carlton, Coconut Grove, in Miami, Florida.

SOCIETY

June 4, 2007

Food For The Poor receives award from American Friends of Jamaica

BROWARD



Glen A. Holden, left, and Robin G. Mahfood

The distinguished International Humanitarian Award was presented by The American Friends of Jamaica (AFJ) to Food For The Poor and Tony Hart. Robin G. Mahfood, president/CEO of Food For The Poor, received the award. Hart was honored for his years of dedicated leadership in Jamaica's business sector, particularly in Montego Bay. The Peacock Ball award ceremony and banquet took place on May 19.

Honored guests in attendance included Brenda LaGrange Johnson, ambassador of the United States to Jamaica, Glen A. Holden, AFJ president, Lady Yvonne Richardson, from St. Andrew Preparatory in Jamaica, C.P. Ricardo Allicock, Jamaica's consul general to the Southern United States and Florida's former Secretary of State Sue M. Cobb.

Ranked by the "Chronicle of Philanthropy" as the third largest international charity in the U.S. and the largest charity in Florida, Food For The Poor has consistently

been named by *Forbes Magazine* for its exemplary charitable commitment and fundraising efficiency ratios. Under the leadership of Robin Mahfood, the organization has experienced explosive growth while maintaining an operating expense ratio under four percent.

"Food For The Poor maintains a long-term, ongoing commitment to aiding the destitute of Jamaica," said Mahfood, Food For The Poor president/CEO. "It is amazing what can be accomplished when God's love is at work in people. What once seemed impossible becomes real. Hope replaces despair."

Food For The Poor has reached into every aspect of Jamaican life - feeding programs serve the children in hundreds of schools, the elderly and the homeless, medical aid affects many hospitals and clinics in the country, skills training programs teach everything from auto repair to computer technology. Nearly every school in Jamaica has been provided school furniture, textbooks and educational materials,

hospice care is provided in Kingston and Montego Bay, street feeding for the homeless is done daily in partnership with the Salvation Army. Food For The Poor feeds, clothes and cares for both the physically and mentally handicapped children who have been abandoned, as well as the elderly senile and infirm adults at the Golden Age Home.

Housing has been a major priority for Food For The Poor with more than 25,000 families in Jamaica receiving a new home, free of charge. And, to an island vulnerable to the ravages of hurricanes, Food For The Poor has been at the forefront of emergency relief efforts.

The American Friends of Jamaica is a nonprofit 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, health care and economic development.

For more information visit www.foodforthepoor.org or www.TheAFJ.org. ■

Last updated: Tuesday, June 5,

Search
GIVE FEEDBACK

Advanced Search

- Front Page
- News
- Sports
- Editorial
- Columns
- Letters
- Lifestyle
- Western News
- Contact Us

Epaper Login

Email Address

Password

[Register](#) | [Forgot Password ?](#)



Columns

Moving and exciting times

Jean Lowrie-Chin
Monday, May 28, 2007

Our politicians have been grabbing the spotlight, but in Miami recently, we were reminded that this little country is less about "spin" and more about a stronger four-letter word: love. We basked in the reflected glory of Food for the Poor, led by Robin Mahfood and Montego Bay philanthropist Tony Hart, honoured for their inspiring benevolence.



Jean Lowrie-Chin

We were at the annual American Friends of Jamaica (AFJ) Awards at the Ritz Carlton in Coral Gables, graced by the presence of three US ambassadors to Jamaica: the incumbent Brenda La Grange Johnson, the phenomenal Sue Cobb who is now Florida's secretary of state and Glen Holden.

We listened to a stirring report from Robin Mahfood, under whose leadership Food For The Poor has experienced "explosive growth". The organisation is now the third largest international charity, empowering millions throughout the Caribbean and Latin America. Robin is credible, down to earth and the kind of Christian that we are all called to be: compassionate and proactive.

Here is an excerpt from Robin's acceptance: "In 2006, we shipped 4,054 containers of aid. The total value of aid raised was US\$858 million. And we built 7,003 houses for the poor. 20 tilapia ponds were built. In water - we drilled and installed 73 wells. We brought water to over 450,000 people. We are feeding 4 million people a day. We sponsor 2,806 children in orphanages. We built 17 fishing villages."

Robin explained that his mammoth organisation still manages to pay only 3.8 per cent of contributions towards administration, a credit to its CEO Angel Aloma. Indeed, the citation read, "Food For The Poor has consistently been named by Forbes magazine for its exemplary charitable commitment and fundraising efficiency ratios."

"Some may ask: Why we do what we do? The answer is: Because of Christ who lives in the poor," emphasised Robin. "Our mission is to turn the face of the church in the United States to the Third World and for all to see Christ in the face of the poor."

And so, a great deal of effort is being put into the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti. "Last week we opened three fishing villages in the north coast of Cap Haitian, Bordermer and Fort Liberte, which is by the border of the Dominican Republic," said Robin, whose organisation runs orphanages, clinics and supports schools throughout the country.



AFJ award winners Tony Hart (left), MoBay businessman and philanthropist and Robin Mahfood (right), chairman of Food for the Poor International with Ricardo Allcock, Jamaica's consul general in Miami.

After he received his Award, Tony Hart offered a beautiful episode. He and a friend visiting Montego Bay were standing on a balcony in the evening, looking at the moon casting its rays on the shimmering surface of the Caribbean Sea. They wondered aloud, "Where else in the world?" Where else, indeed.?

Tony Hart's passion for his country and in particular for the parish of St James where his family has lived for eight generations, has inspired his ambitious forays. He led the expansion and upgrading of the Montego Bay Freeport, dredging and filling up 350 acres of mangrove land to produce a port so capacious that the largest cruise ship in the world, the Freedom of the Seas could dock comfortably

last week.

He spoke almost casually of the extensive renovation of Doctor's Cave Beach, a well-run attraction that my overseas friends and family can't stop advertising, and he is now turning his attention to the yacht club. Moreover, Tony Hart and his family are heavily involved in social and community work. The citation reads: "Education and children are of great importance to Mr Hart as he aids in the financial well-being of disabled children and fundraising for an Anglican school as well as one for underprivileged children."

"Because of his background in sports," it continued, "Hart is especially active in youth development in the parish of St James. Hart's company has been the lead sponsor for sports such as cricket, football and netball competitions. He also oversaw the construction of a number of facilities. served as the president of the Montego Bay Chamber of Commerce, where he spearheaded the redevelopment of the Doctor's Cave buildings and the Montego Bay Yacht Club. These developments are now recognised as a vital addition to Montego Bay's landscape."

This dedicated family man became quite misty as he in turn paid tribute to his wife of 47 years, Sheila Hart.
What happens if there is a dead-heat?

Well, the pollsters are "in their ackee" and the public in confusion, wondering who is on the right track. The faithfuls on either side seem equally sure that their party will sweep the elections, not just squeak through. Level-headed, clear-eyed politicians should ignore their fanatics and use the polls judiciously to inform their campaigns.

Between Bill Johnson and Don Anderson, we see a significant number of "undecideds" or "don't knows" within the 12 per cent to 20 per cent range. The parties should zoom in on the burning issues to influence the "neutrals" in "finding a gear". Bill Johnson's survey shows that a staggering 32 per cent, believe that neither party can do a good job to reduce crime and violence. Any party that can do the tough job of convincing a jaundiced electorate that they have a strategic, zero-tolerance crime-fighting plan, would sweep the polls.

With Don Anderson currently declaring a dead heat, I checked with Takeese Gilpin-Allen of the Electoral Office of Jamaica to see what constitutional provisions were in place to address a stalemate. In such an event, she said, the governor general is empowered to cast the deciding vote.

These are tense times - "uneasy lies the head".

lowriechin@aim.com

Talk Back

Related Articles

No comments have been posted

[Post your comments](#)

No related articles were found

[Back to Top](#)

[News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Editorial](#) | [Columns](#) | [Lifestyle](#) | [Western News](#) | [All Woman](#) | [2004 Olympics](#) | [TeenAge](#) | [Education](#) | [Food](#) | [Business](#) | [Health](#)

Copyright© 2000-2001 Jamaica Observer. All Rights Reserved. Terms under which this service is provided to you.

e-Business Solutions by **info-exchange**