

The Aletheia

VOL. 12

NO. 3

MONTREAT-ANDERSON

NOVEMBER 4, 1988

THE JAMAICAN SCOOP

JIM PRITCHARD

So, you must be wondering what the Jamaica trip was like. Well for starters, some of the people we met were quite rude and obnoxious. The food was not too good and there never seemed to be enough of it. We found ourselves having trouble breathing at times, since we were all cramped together like sardines. There was a lot of turbulence and it became impossible to sleep... then we got off the plane. But seriously, I can testify that the trip was a tremendous success and an awesome experience.

As you may know, 12 students-- Janet Grogan, Paula Johnson, Tracy Sauls, Ann Travis, Michelle Thomas, Jeremy Jones, Todd Holtet, Jim Pritchard, Guy Bishop, Jimmy Smith, Tim Valesco, Mickey McKinney, and Resident Director Doug Belden were chosen to assist the Jamaicans in recovering from Hurricane Gilbert, which struck the island nation on Sept. 22, 1988. As well as the construction work, we were also involved with the distribution of food, clothing, soap, and Bibles to those in need.

Speaking as someone with a few years of construction experience, I honestly thought that we would roof about 3 or 4 houses at the most, with just 5 working days (actually, we only had 4 working days, since there was a delay in getting materials). But our efforts and your prayers were greatly blessed, as the group's accomplishments show.

The first area we worked at (Mt. Salem) exposed us to a level of poverty that most of us had never experienced before. It was located in a mountain valley; where an acre might contain an average of several hundred houses (more like shacks). There was one home, no bigger than my room in McGregor dorm, which housed 21 people. Although the situation was overwhelming (where do you start?), we tried to assess which families were most needy and focused on doing our best for them. In the first 2 working days, we completely reroofed a house; rebuilt a destroyed room of a home which housed 4 adults and 8 children; reframed and partially roofed a completely destroyed home; leveled a home and rebuilt part of the porch; and patched the roof of a home.

On Thursday, we worked in the rural area of Bounty Hall in the parish of Trelawny. I think I can speak for the whole group when I say that it was here where we experienced the greatest sense of accomplishment as far as our construction efforts. When we arrived, we found ourselves looking at a pile of trash which we soon learned was at one time a man's house (7 family members). By the end of the day his house was completely rebuilt from the foundation to the roof, and he even allowed us to hang a makeshift "MONTREAT" sign over the front door as an act of gratitude toward our help. During the van ride home that evening we sang several Vespers songs, including a version of "We built a house in just one day" (sung to the tune of "Sing Hallelujah to the Lord").

The last working day's accomplishments included the painting of a building at the St. James Infirmary (home for the elderly), and the cutting and removal of fallen trees from around the Montigo Bay Home for Girls.

As those who went will tell you, we were very fortunate to reside in more than adequate living quarters. This provided a change of environment from the poverty conditions in which we worked. Our Jamaican hosts, including Rev. Ed Chambers of Anderson, S.C., were so concerned with our comfort and well-being that we felt greatly privileged to be a part of helping their people.

The Jamaican people-- how can I describe them? If mere words could, you might say they were loving, sensitive, friendly, caring, open-minded, unprejudiced, funny, interesting... the list could go on. It being my first time outside the U.S., I couldn't help but to expect to feel like a minority, but it was almost the total opposite. I can't think of one bad experience with any of the people, even within the crowded city. When we would tell people why we were in the country, they no longer viewed us as tourists but as fellow Christians who were willing to serve them. Practically everybody we met, rich or poor, offered us a place to stay if (when) we decide to return. I think the following poem written by Tracy Sauls sums up our experience with the Jamaican people:



Physically my body
is placed in a chair
but my mind is not here
mentally I am there
Every beat of my heart
takes me away
and forces out tears
in remembrance of that place
I see faces blurry
but eyes clear - so clear
staring into mine
nothing equals it here
Those deep sunken eyes
with longing yet love
in them I see hope
and sweet Jesus above

I feel their hands
clinging to mine
losing a friend
they were happy to find
I long to feel the warmth
their appreciation spreads
I want to see them clothed
and heartily fed
I look at what I have
and all that they lack
I remember as I left

ADMISSIONS OFFICE SEES DRASTIC CHANGES

GREG FERRELL

Did you know that the admissions office has been turned upside down this semester?

Well not literally. But the changes have been rather drastic. This should have us all wondering if the changes will be for better or for worse.

It all started with the termination of the admission's director. In other words-- the director was given his walking papers. The reason was that he had not fulfilled the quota that was set forth in his contract. I understand, from inside sources, that he knew from this contract that he was under obligation to bring to M-AC two hundred new students. He and his crew failed to carry out this objective and he was fired. His services to the college ended on September the first of this year.

The director's position was left in the lurch. It was necessary to appoint a temporary director. The college administration asked Rick Hughes (the Basketball coach) to head

up that branch of the college. We should all appreciate his willingness to take on this added responsibility on short notice.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the school administration decided to hire out the admissions department to a private consulting firm. The contract was given to D. H. Dagley and Associates. The contract began on November the first. The man in charge is Ken Doake. He is a full time employee of Dagley and is not responsible to anyone at the college, but answers to his boss at Dagley.

Just what this change means for the students and college is not established. Many of the folks that I spoke with are somewhat skeptical. Yet, if the changes benefit the college I suppose we would all agree that the change was a much needed one. However, the previous admissions office was in the middle of implementing a new program to increase enrollment when the changes took place. *Continued p.3*