

Navy Medicine

Spring 2010

Official Magazine of U.S. Navy Medicine

DESTINATION: **HAITI**

Saving Lives
And Providing
Hope In Haiti





Charter

NAVY MEDICINE is the professional magazine of the Navy Medical Department community. Its purpose is to educate its readers on Navy Medicine missions and programs. This magazine will also draw upon the medical department's rich historical legacy to instill a sense of pride and professionalism among the Navy Medical Department community and to enhance reader awareness of the increasing relevance of Navy Medicine in and for our nation's defense.

The opinions and assertions herein are the personal views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Navy.

The use of a name of any specific manufacturer, commercial product, commodity or service does not imply the endorsement by the Department of the Navy or the Bureau of medicine and Surgery.

Contributions and Feedback Welcome

Send articles, photographs (min 300 dpi electronic), and feedback to:
Managing Editor, NAVY MEDICINE Magazine
Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Rm 1219
Communications Directorate
2300 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20372-5300
E-Mail: janice.hores@med.navy.mil

Subscriptions are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents

Subscriptions may be ordered online, via phone, fax, or e-mail, or postal mail.

- To order online, visit the U.S. Government Printing Office bookstore at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>
- To order by phone, call toll-free (866) 512-1800 or, in the DC metro area, call (202) 512-1800
- Send e-mail orders to contactcenter@gpo.gov
- Send mail orders to:

U.S. Government printing Office

P.O. Box 979050

St. Louis, MO 63197-9000

Annual cost: \$23 U.S.; \$32.20 Foreign (4 issues/year).

Address Changes (Please include old address):

Managing Editor, NAVY MEDICINE Magazine

Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Rm 1219

Communications Directorate

2300 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20372-5300

E-Mail: janice.hores@med.navy.mil

NAVY MEDICINE, (ISSN 0895-8211 USPS 316-070) is published quarterly by the Department of the Navy, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Washington, DC 20372-5300. Periodical postage paid at Washington, DC.

Authorization

The Secretary of the Navy has determined that this publication is necessary in the transaction of business as required by law. NAVY MEDICINE is published from appropriated funds by authority of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery in accordance with Navy Publications and Printing Regulations P-35.

NAVY MEDICINE

Official Magazine of U.S. Navy Medicine

Surgeon General of the Navy

Chief, BUMED

Vice Adm. Adam M. Robinson, Jr., MC

Deputy Surgeon General

Deputy Chief, BUMED

Rear Adm. Thomas R. Cullison, MC

Force Master Chief

FORCM(FMF) Laura A. Martinez, USN

Public Affairs Officer

Cmdr. J.A. "Cappy" Surette, APR

Managing Editor

Janice Marie Hores

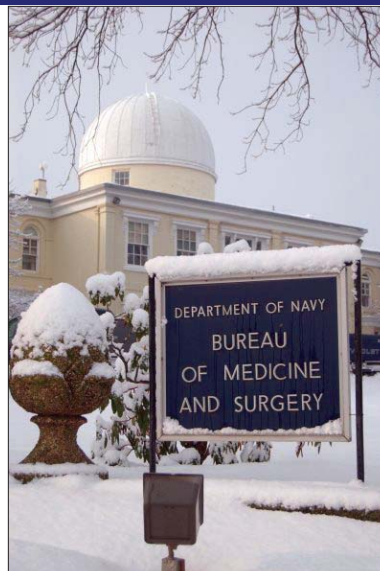
Join Us Online at:

BUMED: www.med.navy.mil

Twitter: twitter.com/NavyMedicine

Facebook:

U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery



The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery campus and the statue of Benjamin Rush successfully weathered the blizzard and gale force winds that swept the Washington DC area in January 2010. (Photos by Cmdr. Cappy Surette)

NAVY MEDICINE

Volume 102, No. 2, Spring 2010

In This Issue



ON THE COVER:



PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti. The U.S. Navy hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) is seen off the coast of Haiti. Comfort conducted humanitarian and disaster relief operations as part of Operation Unified Response after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake caused severe damage in Haiti Jan. 12. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Daniel Barker/Released)

- 4 Admiral's Call
- 6 Force Notes
- 8 Navy Medicine Steams To Assist Haiti
- 10 USS Carl Vinson's Medical Department Provide First Responder Care In Haiti
- 14 Comfort Amid The Chaos
- 20 Navy And Civilian Medical Teams Work Together To Provide Hope On Comfort
- 22 Bataan Medical Team Supports Haiti Relief
- 25 Navy Medicine Joins International Team At Haiti Field Hospital
- 27 Caring For The Littlest Earthquake Victims
- 28 Earthquake Returns Naval Officer To Homeland
- 29 NH Pensacola Surgeon Says "I Never Saw A More 'Professional' Team Than On Comfort"
- 30 "Navy Medicine Hits The Blogosphere"
- 32 USNS Comfort Crew Holds Ceremony For Haitians
- 33 Hospital Ship USNS Comfort Completes Mission
- 34 Comfort Sailors Host SECNAV
- 34 Navy Surgeon General Commends Comfort Team
- 35 JCS Mullen Praises Comfort Crew
- 36 Baltimore Welcomes Hospital Ship Home
- 40 U.S. Navy Participation In Operation Unified Response
- 44 A Look Back
A Brief History Of Navy Medicine In Haiti
- 46 Upcoming Training Events



NAVY AND CIVILIAN MEDICAL TEAMS WORK TOGETHER TO PROVIDE HOPE ON COMFORT

The Navy broke all records in getting its hospital ship, USNS Comfort underway to support U.S. Southern Command's relief efforts in Haiti following the devastating 7.0 earthquake in the country that left more than 230,000 dead. While the initial medical team onboard was comprised solely of Navy personnel due to the short-fused nature of the response, the ship soon began to welcome civilian medical professionals from throughout the United States who volunteered through a host of non-governmental organizations (NGO).

The first wave of NGO medical volunteers boarded Comfort Jan. 27 and began working side by side with the embarked Navy medical team to provide critical care for Haitian patients who were hurt during the Jan. 12 earthquake.

Project HOPE had 76 volunteer doctors, nurses and other health professionals representing 18 states and the District of Columbia during Operation Unified Response. Volunteers included medical professionals with experience in surgery, neonatal intensive care, pediatrics, post anesthesia care, intensive care and physical therapy. In total, The Navy team onboard Comfort welcomed 244 volunteers from numerous NGOs throughout the mission.

"We worked closely with NGOs like Project HOPE to bring in volunteer support to sustain the long-term mission of care for the people of Haiti," said CDR Brad Hartgerink, Director for NGO Coordination at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. "There were a number of outstanding NGOs eager to participate in the global outreach to help all those in need in Haiti."



Project Hope volunteer pediatricians Dr. Curran (left) and Dr. Wu take care of the youngest earthquake survivors onboard the USNS Comfort now off the coast of Haiti. (Photo by Astrid Riecken)

The Department of the Navy has become increasingly involved with other U.S. government agencies and NGOs since it adopted a new maritime strategy in 2007 that elevated stability missions to the same priority as combat operations and committed itself to working more closely with its civilian partners. Project HOPE has worked side by side with Navy during 15 other humanitarian missions including the Indonesian tsunami relief, Pacific Partnership, African Partnership Station, Hurricane Katrina and was quick to send credentialed volunteers from their database who were already experienced in working side by side with their Navy counterparts.

According to Cmdr Tim Donahue, the Comfort's Director of Surgery, the pace of providing medical care in the face of such devastation was challenging.

"The first day wasn't really a day in the truest sense of the word," said Donahue. "The first day lasted about 40 hours. That was when many of the crew members got their first break. It

only lasted about 4 hours and we had another 40 hour day receiving casualties.

Over the first four days, the team on Comfort received helicopters delivering patients every six to nine minutes. "All beds in our casualty receiving bay were filled by the early afternoon of the first day and remained filled for days as we cycled critically injured patients aboard the ship for care," said Donahue.

Non-Governmental Organizations Supporting Operation Unified Response

American Red Cross: 104

Operation Smile: 13

UCLA: 6

Johns Hopkins: 6

Project Hope: 87

Orthopaedic Trauma Assn: 11

University of Michigan: 8

United Nations Nurses: 9



Project HOPE volunteer Paul Firth, a pediatric anesthesiologist from Massachusetts General Hospital works onboard the USNS Comfort off the coast of Haiti. (Photo by Astrid Riecken)

Given the magnitude of the job, the civilian volunteers also found no shortage of work. Dr. Paul Firth, a pediatric anesthesiologist from Massachusetts General Hospital remembers being woken from a deep sleep at 4:30 am one morning by an announcement of a 'Code Blue in ICU 3' on the ship's sound system that caused him concern. Knowing that this announcement meant someone was dying in the Intensive Care Unit, Firth decided to see if he could help.

"I realized that my colleagues had been working flat out for days and were probably exhausted," said Firth. "I rolled out of bed, put on my shoes, sprinted up eight flights of stairs and pounded along the length of the ship to the ICU."

Firth found a baby who was struggling to breathe and the staff was having difficulty getting a breathing tube into his throat to assist his breathing. He was able to put in the tube and revive the child's blood oxygen levels.

"It was a long run from the lower deck at the back of the ship to the ICU at the stern," said Firth. "I've run about 25 marathons and ultra-mar-

athons in the past, but probably this was one of the more important races in my life."

"Project HOPE and the U.S. Navy together bring an unyielding and selfless spirit of care and compassion to the people of Haiti," said John P. Howe, III, M.D., President and CEO of Project HOPE. "I cannot think of a

more powerful partnership for health and goodwill for the Haitian people than the partnership formed between Project HOPE and the Navy."

USNS Comfort provides long-term support because it is self-sustaining. The safe environment and technology on Comfort make it a perfect asset to conduct training and as a base for DOD and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) enduring support.

"Responses such as our work in Haiti require an unprecedented level of integration among our military forces and enhanced cooperation with the other instruments of national power, as well as the capabilities of non-governmental agencies and others." said Vice Adm. Adam Robinson, the Navy's Surgeon General. "Our sister services and NGOs are valued partners in providing medical care to those in need during this critical mission and will be for many years to come."

Approximately 1,500 Navy medical and non-medical support teams were involved in the humanitarian relief mission in Haiti including those embarked on the hospital ship, USNS Comfort, and other Navy ships providing needed medical assistance throughout the region.✈



Dr. Jose Irazusta practices pediatric critical care medicine and pediatrics in Jacksonville, Florida. He joined the Project HOPE volunteer staff onboard the USNS Comfort on January 27th to care for children injured in the January 12 earthquake in Haiti. (Photo by Astrid Riecken)