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PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT PAGE 3

Curtis E. Margo, MD, MPH

ON ROUNDS

Exploring American Medicine

From Colonial Times to Present Day, Tampa Doctor Authors Compelling Informal History

Curtis E. Margo, MD, wrote *Glass Half Full: An Informal History of American Medicine*, with a mission in mind: "to unravel, and to some extent celebrate, the convoluted history of the medical profession in the



Help for Haiti

Tampa Medical Mission Team Brings Hope to Survivors

By LYNNE JETER AND MARCEA NEITMAN

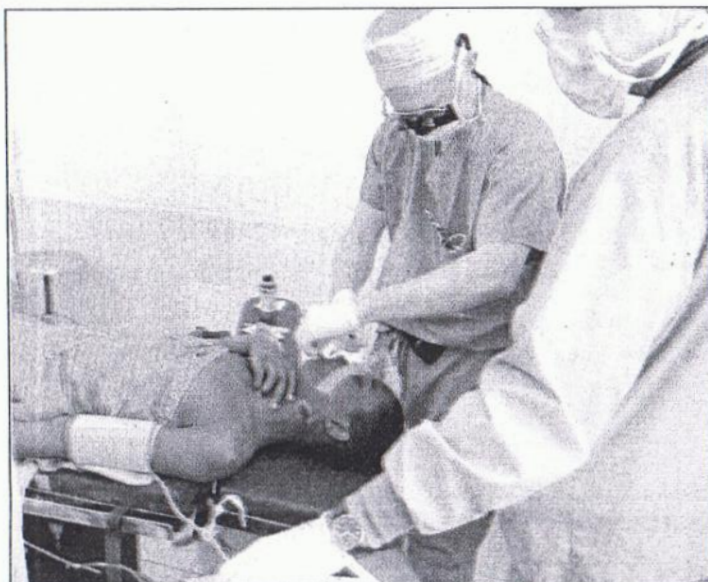
Less than two weeks after the Jan. 12 earthquake shattered Haiti, hitting the heart of the country's very densely populated, poverty-stricken capital of Port-au-Prince, a medical mission team from Tampa arrived to lend support.

The devastation—none like it seen in more than two centuries on the Caribbean island—took representatives of Help Brings Hope for Haiti Inc. by surprise.

"I was on one of the first medical teams in to respond to the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew, but the magnitude of disaster and death that I saw in Haiti was far greater than anything I've seen before," said Patrick J. Horan, MD, orthopedic chief of staff for Town & Country Hospital, and medical director of Westchase Orthopedics and Rehabilitation in Tampa. After five days back home, Horan said he could "still smell the smell of death that filled the air."

More than 230,000 people perished in the quake and week-later aftershocks measuring 5.9 and 5.5 on the Richter scale.

"The people of Haiti are the most resilient people I've ever



Dr. Patrick Horan performs jaw reconstruction on young boy.

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met," he said. "They're living in ruins and yet still have the will to survive."

The volunteer team from Tampa consisted of Horan; Scott Gargas, MD, a hand and plastic surgeon from the Advanced Hand and Plastic Surgery Center in Tampa; Stephen Kimmel, MD, chief of pediatric surgery for Nemours Children's Clinic; Michael O'Laughlin, MD, from Bay Area Anesthesia; internist Joel Laborde, MD; and critical care nurse Marie Eugene.

Getting to Port-au-Prince was an adventure in itself, Horan reported.

The group traveled by private plane to Port-au-Prince, arriving at the city airport at nightfall. The U.S. Air Force, which had taken control of the airport, directed the team to Miragoane, a town outside Port-au-Prince, urging them not to travel until daylight for security reasons. Team members slept on the tarmac—no tent, no blankets, no pillows—until there was enough light to begin the journey inland.

When the team arrived at the Hospital Sainte-Therese de Miragoane, hundreds of Haitians were lined up anticipating their arrival. The majority of patients traveled several hours by foot, transporting injured family members by any means possible.

Without delay, the team began to administer care in primitive conditions with only a mobile x-ray machine. From dawn to sunset for seven consecutive days, the team continued care. Nine of 10 patients had broken and/or dislocated bones. Horan treated and performed surgery on more than 400 patients, setting bones the old-fashioned way: lining up the bones, putting half the cast on, realigning the bones, and then completing the remainder of the cast.

"You have one shot at doing this right the first time," said Horan. "There are no second chances."

Even though patients were offered Percocet, many refused the medication, even though it was at no cost to them.

Horan's most memorable patient: a 16-year-old boy with a broken jaw.



The Presidential Palace suffered the same fate as most other buildings in Port-au-Prince.

"We repaired his jaw, wired him up, and allowed an opening for him to be able to drink through a straw," said Horan, adding that successful reconstructive surgery will allow the teenager to make a full recovery and return to a normal life. Without it, he would have been destined to a lifetime of liquid diets.

When returning to Port-au-Prince to head for home, the team had a closer look at the widespread destruction. The quake had leveled many sections of the city, destroying government buildings, foreign aid offices, and countless other establishments.

Horan snapped as many photographs as possible to chronicle the rubble, under which many Haitians were buried alive. In the Presidential Palace, all but the Haitian president perished. In a 15-story building that housed the country's Internal Revenue Service, an estimated 7,000 people were inside at the time of the collapse, Horan said.

"The university had an estimated 400 students in the building at the time of the earthquake ... and are now all gone," he said. "There are literally thousands of people roaming the streets of Port-Au-Prince ... the only word to describe them is lost. The marketplaces are conducting business in the middle of raw running sewage."

The U.S. Special Relief and Reconstruction team is providing Haitian families with a thick sheet of plastic to construct a makeshift home. The goal: to supply 250,000 families with this means of housing through May 1.