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Note card sales in Madison to bolster Red Cross efforts *Original artwork put to work for Haitian relief*

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MADISON – Madison’s “HeartsforHaiti2010” fund-raising program had an official launch on Thursday evening, Feb. 11, at the Chocolate Rose Shoppe at 7 Waverly Place. The program seeks to raise funds for Haiti disaster relief in the wake of the Jan. 12 earthquake through the sale of note cards with original artwork by artists from the area, in a first phase of the program.

Nearly 100 people stopped by during the evening to sample wines provided by Main Street Wine Cellar of 306 Main St., enjoy fine chocolate provided by Susan and Ronald Waksman, owners of the Chocolate Rose Shoppe, and to admire the one-of-a-kind art designs. Original artwork was on display and attendees were able to purchase single cards for \$1 or a package of 20 different designs for \$15. A number of the artists were on hand to discuss the inspiration for their work, including Madison residents Evelyn Cucchiara, Nino Tsereteli, Dan Fenelon and Alexis and Greg Egan of Gallery MacEgan in Morristown. The cards will be on sale in Madison stores, including the Chocolate Rose Shoppe, Sages Pages at 300 Main St. in the Madison Plaza, d torr clothing and accessories of 36 Main St., and the Rocking Horse at 40B Main St. For a complete list of where to purchase “HeartsforHaiti2010” merchandise, visit www.heartsforhaiti2010.com and check the “how you can help” tab.



The “HeartsforHaiti2010” fund-raising campaign to help the earthquake victims of Haiti had its kick-off Feb. 11 at the Chocolate Rose Shoppe in Madison, as nearly 100 guests perused the one-of-a-kind card designs on sale, designed especially for the fund drive by artists from the area. From left, Web designer Scott Farbman; Christy Hodde, executive director of the Colonial Crossroads Chapter of the American Red Cross, and Melanie Tomaszewski, a graphic designer and owner of Tivoli Creative Design Studio in Madison admire some of the note cards on sale for Haitian relief.

“HeartsforHaiti2010” founder Lauren Cantor said, “We were thrilled with the attendance at this launch event. I think it is an indication of how enthusiastic the Madison community is about the program and the real desire to raise funds to support the critical disaster relief effort in Haiti.”

All proceeds from the fund-raising program, which is expected to last until the last “HeartsforHaiti2010” product is sold, will benefit the American Red Cross disaster relief effort for Haiti. The check will be presented to the Colonial Crossroads Chapter of the American Red Cross. The goal is to raise \$50,000 over the next few months.

‘Delighted And Grateful’ “We are delighted and grateful that the Red Cross was chosen as the beneficiary of this fund-raising event,” said Colonial Crossroads Chapter Executive Director Christy Hodde.

"The Red Cross has already spent or committed more than \$80 million in the long-term effort to help the Haitian people get back on their feet," Hodde said. "Currently, the Red Cross is producing more than 1.2 million liters of water per day, enough for 300,000 people, and we are distributing food and relief items daily like blankets, kitchen sets, hygiene kits and mosquito nets that have reached more than 185,000 people. This will be a long-term effort - much like the 2004 tsunami - for our organization. Every dollar counts."

A special moment in the evening came when poet Vanice Brown of Morristown stepped to the middle of the room to read her poem, "Cry of a Bluebird." Brown has donated the use of her poem to the "HeartsforHaiti 2010" project. A video of Brown's reading is available at www.heartsforhaiti2010.com.

Cantor said the idea for the program originated in a conversation she had with her 8-year-old daughter, Elle.

"Like many families we were watching the news coverage of the Haiti earthquake. Elle kept asking what we could do to help," Cantor noted. She said she approached Torey J. Sabatini School Principal Michael Post with the idea of a note card and T-shirt fund-raising drive at the school, using designs from local artists. Post was enthusiastic about a school-wide program, and after discussions with other principals and Madison Superintendent of Schools Richard Noonan, the concept evolved into a community-wide effort.

Idea ResonatesAn early supporter and partner was Melanie Tomaszewski, a graphic designer and owner of Tivoli Creative Design Studio at 4 Cook Plaza. Tomaszewski, who attended the Feb. 11 event with her family, said she had been exploring ideas on her own for helping the people of Haiti, and when she learned about Cantor's efforts she decided to lend her support both professionally and personally.

While discussing the program at Tivoli Studio, Cantor and Tomaszewski met Scott Farbman, who stopped in for a logo design. Farbman, a Morris Township Web developer, immediately offered to design and launch a Web site for "HeartsforHaiti2010." It was up and running within a week.

Madison resident and local Red Cross Communications Manager Mary Schaenen noted, "When Lauren first called me about this program, it was a small fund-raiser for the Torey J. Sabatini elementary school. Literally within two weeks it had become a community-wide event in which everyone wanted to participate.

"I think many folks wanted to do something to help the Haitian people, and Lauren provided a unique and inspiring vehicle in which they could make a difference."

For information about the program, visit www.heartsforhaiti2010.com. To become a sponsor, call Lauren Cantor at (973) 845-2318. For information about the Red Cross Haiti disaster relief effort, visit www.redcross.org.