Written by Adam Hicks
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More and more High Country residents have stepped to the plate to help the devastated country of Haiti after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck the country earlier this week.

Nancy Morrison of the Avery Journal-Times contacted High Country Radio with information about more opportunities to help the earthquake victims.

Morrison said Dr. Steve Cook of Banner Elk leads a medical team to Haiti on a regular basis to help Haitians suffering from poverty in the Western Hemisphere's poorest country. Cook's team takes supplies, toys, educational material, Bibles, and other items that can be carried or shipped. Cook is now using his medical expertise and his knowledge of the area to help with the Avery County part of the worldwide relief effort.

Morrison said Cook's team is affiliated with Florida-based Grace Mission. Cook told Morrison checks can be sent to Banner Elk Presbyterian Church in Banner Elk. Donors should also clearly mark checks with "Haitian Relief Fund."

Morrison said right now, monetary donations are needed more than anything, but when safe channels for goods are established, dry goods will be needed desperately. Officials are urging residents to donate white rice, dried beans, pasta, oatmeal, and other dried goods.

Residents can drop off dried goods at the Avery Journal-Times main office, Medi-Home Care in the old Newland Fire Department building, Dr. Steve Cook's Office in Banner Elk, and Dr. David Kimmel's Office in Banner Elk.