



Gloomy weather couldn't keep our dedicated volunteer teams away, on the last weekend of November, in the port of Antibes. Christelle and Marijane arrived in a donated van filled to the brim with many bags labeled "clothing", "toys" and relief supplies for the Caribbean island of Dominica. Both Christelle and Marijane were in St. Martin during hurricane Irma, a devastating and traumatic event which also left one of the women without a job, since the store where she previously worked was

destroyed: *"We had no other choice but to return home."*

Particularly affected by hurricane Irma are the lives of children, which is why Christelle and Marijane decided to mobilize the community on their return to the main land. Together, they went to schools, organized many collection campaigns and gathered a large amount of donations... which led to the loaned van pulling into the Harbor Master's office in front of the "Yachts with Heart" flying banners. Shortly thereafter, Ed, the local marine carpenter arrives and shows off his contribution: 3 cubic meters of wooden cleats, a brand new generator, tools and more. Meanwhile, other volunteers have arrived to help, some with donations, others with a smile and helping hands: Fidel - a young Philippine sailor-, SNSM life boat crews, Antibes port staff, mobilized by Franck Dosne - their Director - who generously made a collection area available to this cause in the port of Antibes, as well as helped us to communicate with yachts crews as it takes a lot of people to load all the donated equipment in the vans! To the sound of bagpipes, a human chain is formed, made up of people of all ages and nationalities. This chain perfectly illustrates what is at the core of Yachts with Heart, whose objective is threefold: to help people in need, to counteract waste and to demonstrate seafarers solidarity, both at sea and on land. *"Our operation creates a lot of good and serves everyone ranging from beneficiaries, to donors, crews and our partners who find an ecological and humanitarian way to reuse goods that would otherwise be thrown away."*, says Jean-Luc Annone, President of the Association Ecomer as he kicks off his collection event. It is barely 11 o'clock, but with so many donations and volunteers, it's already clear what a success this event will be. What an extraordinary journey it



has been, since it all began in 2010! In seven years, the Yachts with Heart have collected

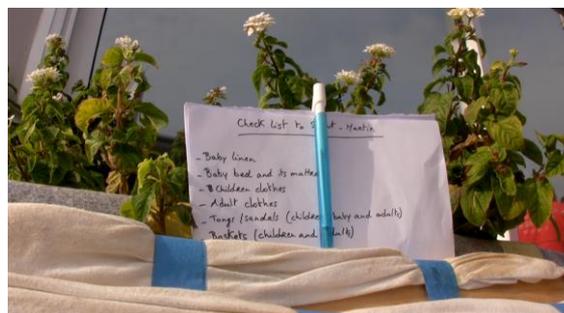
over 22 tons of non-perishable food and drinks, the equivalent of 44,000 meals distributed to over 25,000 people in need. "We are in constant contact with the stewards of many yachts. We now recover linen, towels, uniforms, non-perishable products, one ton of food and 30m3 of donations of all kinds for this year 2017 alone! By now the crews know about us, they know how to find us and contribute.", says Jean -Luc Annone, happy to be able to redistribute these high-end products. His involvement was based on a magnificent text written by a Seafarers Chaplain of the Basque Country: *"The sailors remind all the inhabitants of the planet that we are embarked on the same ship called "earth", and that the sea is an integral part of the earth. At sea, solidarity is seen as a natural duty. The mission is also (...) the fight for safety, so that the crew come back home safe and sound."* For Jean-Luc - himself sailor from a long line of fishermen - these words set the tone and sparked the



creation of Ecomer, whose operation "Yachts du Coeur" perfectly reflects this global solidarity. "All sailors know that on a ship, we can only save ourselves together!", Jean-Luc reminds us. France has the second largest maritime territory in the world and with it's global reach, yachting and all its services, crews, ports, shipyards...is a significant pillar of our economy. Maritime activities finances large R & D programs and must remain a model of sustainable development. Ecomer also promotes a maritime ecology via a number of outreach programs including beach cleanings, support to sailors in need, educational programs on positive ecological opportunities on board yachts, scientific partnerships to reduce pollution of ports. Ecomer also supports issues such as the elimination of PCBs, Arsenic, Cadmium, Chromium, Copper, Nickel, and Lead contained in port sludge which creates many constructive exchanges between consumers, professionals, and administrators.



Right now, on this 25th November 2017, at the port of Antibes, the objective is to load donations slated for the hurricane-devastated Dominica, which makes this 19th edition of "Yachts du Coeur" unique. Since 2010, food and other donations have been collected to be distributed mainly to local associations (French Food Bank, French Red Cross etc) but this time donations are going aboard the 60 meter super yacht Slipstream, which is at the center of this mission aimed at providing relief for Hurricane Irma survivors. What an exemplary initiative by the crew of M/Y Slipstream! The yacht, came from Palma where she had already loaded 12m3 of donations from Palma yachts crews. Slipstream recently arrived in Marseille, where the yacht was in dry dock getting ready for her Caribbean winter season, when her crew contacted Ecomer and expressed a





who reminds us that generosity transcends borders...It is universal, just like the diverse crews of yachts. Especially since most sailors know the Caribbean and often spend winters there making friends and memories, this initiative was received and supported enthusiastically.



desire to deliver aid to the Caribbean. To complete the supply chain of this mission, YachtAid Global (YAG) joined the mission to provide essential support at the arrival port in Dominica. In association with the local government and other ground organizations, YAG coordinates port entry and the distribution of goods to those in need. "We collected goods from Marseille to Monaco, but thanks to our partnership with YachtAid Global and the SuperyachtAid Coalition, our actions have taken on international dimensions.", says Jean-Luc who reminds us that generosity transcends borders...It is universal, just like the diverse crews of yachts. Especially since most sailors know the Caribbean and often spend winters there making friends and memories, this initiative was received and supported enthusiastically. Some of the involved sailors are even present on this morning to load the last donations in the van. It is midday when the two vehicles belonging to M/Y Slipstream are full with 18 m3 of donations, which then got offloaded onto the yacht by it's crew. Since then, M/Y Slipstream has left Marseille, it is expected by YachtAid Global on December 13 in the Caribbean, where the construction equipment, generators, tools and more will help in the reconstruction of the island, while the toys of Christelle and Marijane will bring Christmas cheer to the children.

Marion Fantin

While Slipstream has not yet arrived at destination, we'd like to share that the 20th Yacht with Heart has already been announced and the following message is being sent to all crews:

M/Y Mary Jean II is in La Ciotat and will take relief aid to Antigua when she leaves mid-December. We will be collecting your donations as usual with YachtAid Global managing distribution upon her arrival in Antigua. Please contact Jean-Luc Annone with donations or for more details at tel + 33 684 76 84 53 mail info@eco-mer.org

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