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From playmate to helping save children

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From staff reports
Madison Spirit

Susie Scott Krabacher has devoted her life to hungry Haitian kids

ATHENS - She grew up poor in Alabama to become a Playboy playmate, but now her life's work is to save poor, starving children in Haiti.

Susie Scott Krabacher co-founded a foundation that runs three schools, an abandoned baby unit at a hospital and three orphanages in the poor Caribbean country, and now she has written a book about life entitled "Angels of a Lower Flight, One Woman's Mission to Save a Country ... One Child at a Time."

Krabacher will make two appearances in Athens on Thursday. She will sign her book at Pablo's on Market at 216 Market St. from 3 to 5 p.m. and will speak at Athens State University at 7 p.m. in Classroom Building 104.

Krabacher and her husband, Joe, founded the Mercy & Sharing Foundation in Aspen, Colo., to give Haitian children a chance to live and thrive with education and love, she said on the foundation's Web site.

She said Haitian children are dying at an alarming rate from disease, starvation and dehydration.

"To save all of them would be impossible, but that is my goal," Krabacher said.

Krabacher, 44, who was featured in a 1983 Playboy centerfold spread, made her first visit to Haiti in 1994.

She writes in her book that she spent the 20 years before going to Haiti thinking of herself and her looks.

"My ambition had been to transform myself into someone who would be loved," she wrote.

Krabacher started helping Haitian children after watching a television commercial for a charity that wanted donations but not volunteers to help the children, said the Web site of Simon & Schuster Inc., which published her book.

"In this heartbreaking and inspiring memoir, Susie Scott Krabacher tells how the pain in her past caused her to doubt if God really loved and protected her," the Simon & Schuster Web site said.

"From her abusive childhood to her experiences as a Playboy centerfold during the 1980s, Susie details with frank honesty how she lost her faith along the way and how her experiences helping children in Haiti, an impoverished nation only five hundred miles from Florida, brought God back into her life.

"In a country where 10 percent of all children die before the age of 4, Susie mounted a brave effort to provide not just charity but opportunity. By treating the children she helps as individuals, Susie gives them the tools to save their own country.

"Although some of the children she's tirelessly worked to rescue do not survive, Susie will never again lose her faith."

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