



Photos courtesy Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections

A demolished Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office patrol car is only one of hundreds of thousands of vehicles destroyed in the hurricane-stricken Big Easy.

“Best in the Business”

Shine in the Wake of Hurricanes

By Michael Kelly

It bears repeating what Hurricane Katrina did to the Gulf Coast of the United States last year. On Aug. 29, the hurricane's 145 mph sustained winds and 28-foot storm surge brought death and destruction to parts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. The storm killed more than 1,000 people and forced more than 1 million residents to evacuate the region. Hundreds of thousands were left homeless.

In Mississippi, most of the buildings along the coast in Biloxi and Gulfport were damaged or destroyed. Huge casino barges and small fishing vessels alike littered the shore. Entire neighborhoods were wiped out, and many roads and bridges were impassable or completely washed away. In New Orleans, several levees broke open or collapsed, and water from Lake Pontchartrain and area canals flooded most of the city. In some areas, the water was 20 feet deep, stranding residents on rooftops.

The day before the storm, correctional staff in Mississippi evacuated 531 inmates near the coast and sent them to other facilities that were out of harm's way. In Louisiana, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DPSC) evacuated more than 900 inmates before Katrina hit. The subsequent flooding, such as that seen in New Orleans, forced the evacuation of 7,350 more inmates from various parishes of Louisiana. On top of that, DPSC staff provided security and food to emergency shelters and assisted the National Guard with law enforcement duties.

Correctional Workers Spearhead Massive Relief Effort

Correctional staff in Mississippi and Louisiana acted heroically in the face of widespread disaster. But with much of the region's population left without food, water

... volunteers from corrections departments around the country poured into the region, bringing food, water, emergency supplies and any other help they could offer.

and electricity, and with more than 1 million evacuees, they were stretched far beyond their means. Almost immediately, volunteers from corrections departments around the country poured into the region, bringing food, water, emergency supplies and any other help they could offer. Many assisted with specific professional duties such as security and law enforcement. Others pitched in wherever disaster relief was needed by managing food banks, distributing clothes, transporting supplies and easing victims' suffering any way they could. Relief volunteers also provided basic health care, counseling services and assistance with reuniting family members.

Volunteers from the New York City Department of Correction brought truckloads of supplies from warehouses on Rikers Island. Over a 46-day period, 130 New York City correctional officers went to work at seven Louisiana correctional facilities. In New Orleans, they helped set up a makeshift jail and courthouse in a Greyhound bus terminal. Some volunteers stayed for the entire 46 days.

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections sent 37 volunteers to Louisiana, including correctional officers and psychological staff. They worked 12-hour shifts for two weeks in 100-degree heat. For the first few days, there was no electricity. They lived in temporary dormitory-style quarters in a training building. Volunteers relieved the Louisiana employees, which allowed them some time to tend to their own pressing needs. Psychological staff helped counsel employees and inmates, many of whom were still trying to contact family members.

Mike Bobella, a psychological services specialist from Pennsylvania and a volunteer, said that the conditions were extremely stressful. "During the hurricane, the prison had to maintain security," he said. "Officers continued to work in the towers with 160

mph winds whipping all around them ... Many employees experienced great trauma, either while on the job or while off duty." Bobella met a mental health employee who had 16 people living in her house with no water and no electricity. She had to have a path cut with a chainsaw to get out of her house to get to work.

On the trip back to Pennsylvania, the volunteers' emergency assistance was unexpectedly needed again. While driving through Alabama, they came upon a car that had flipped over an embankment, ejecting the driver. They located the driver and provided first aid until medical crews arrived.

Evacuees from Louisiana who were brought to Texas were met by employees of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). Many of the evacuees were housed in Ford Park, an entertainment and sports event complex in Beaumont, where, safe for the moment, they received donated clothing, food and other supplies gathered and distributed by TDCJ volunteers from area correctional facilities. The volunteers kept children occupied by playing games and doing crafts. They organized meals, and tackled the mounting problem of cleaning laundry. TDCJ had a new set of problems when almost three weeks later, Hurricane Rita slammed into the Texas coast, forcing the evacuation of much of that region and inflicting heavy damage on Port Arthur and Beaumont. Many evacuees found themselves evacuating again.

Within days of Hurricane Katrina, a team of employees from the Arkansas Department of Correction headed to Louisiana with generators, flashlights, batteries and other supplies. Some of the volunteers had family members in the area. During the trip, Industries Administrator Jerry Campbell asked Cpl. Michael Smith (whose son was serving in the military in Iraq) when his son was expected to return home. Smith said, "About 20 minutes ago." A stunned Campbell asked him why he did not mention his son's return before leaving for Louisiana. Smith simply said, "Boss, this had to be done." Campbell said his team's morale never wavered for an instant, even when they were severely exhausted. "I was totally impressed with the dedication of each of these employees," he said.

Private corporations also assisted greatly with hurricane relief. When Larry Pettey and Ray Wagoner, correctional officers with the West Virginia Division of Corrections, drove a truckload of donated supplies to Baton Rouge,



Louisiana State Penitentiary tactical team officers search and rescue as they patrol the city streets by flat-bottom boat.



Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections tactical teams guard and contain storm-weathered, weary inmates on a bridge.



An aerial view of thousands of stranded Orleans Parish prisoners as they line up to await transport by Department of Public Safety and Corrections staff.

La., the Correctional Peace Officers Foundation donated the truck rental fees and the costs of fuel, food and lodging. In addition, Wal-Mart donated a gift card, which was used to purchase drinking water, and a local bank and Kmart allowed Pettey and Wagoner to set up donation boxes at their locations. Vicki Lang, an administrative technician with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, helped load a truck with goods to be shipped to Louisiana. She also acted as a liaison to connect people with family and friends in the hurricane zone. To help with that, Cingular Wireless gave her 100 free daytime minutes on her cell phone.

Christopher Epps, commissioner of the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC), said that Katrina was a “historic natural disaster” that devastated parts of the state. He said it was “amazing to witness the love, compassion and devotion that correctional professionals from around the nation have offered.” Epps said, “I have talked to many of our fellow citizens on the coast, several of whom are still living in tents. They have told me that depression is widespread and some people have lost hope.” He would like to let them know that although Mississippians still face a difficult journey ahead, “we will not have to venture alone, as our friends in corrections from around the nation stand firmly beside us.”

Richard Stalder, secretary of the Louisiana DPSC, was also moved by the outpouring of emergency relief

that his state received during and after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. “We lost lives, homes, entire communities. We continue to grieve over lost memories and dreams,” he said. With the support of correctional communities around the nation, however, “we have realized as never before that we are not alone in confronting these challenges,” Stalder said. “I hope that no other agency will experience what we along the Gulf Coast have experienced and continue to deal with,” he said. But if it does, Stalder said, that agency will have the full support of his and many other correctional agencies.

In addition to the many volunteers and donations that correctional agencies across the country sent to Louisiana and other states affected by the hurricanes, the American Correctional Association, along with other correctional organizations such as the North American Association of Warden and Superintendents, and the Association of Women Executives in Corrections, organized relief funds for the hurricane victims. “Our profession is a family ... and I could not be prouder of our family and our response,” said James Gondles Jr., executive director of ACA.

... “we will not have to venture alone as our friends in corrections from around the country stand firmly beside us.”

ACA wishes to express sincere thanks to all those who rushed to the aid of their brothers and sisters in corrections in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, including the individuals named below. This list is by no means exhaustive, and we know that there are far more unsung heroes who selflessly put aside their own concerns to help people in need.

Arkansas

- James Bost
- Anthony Burton
- Jerry Campbell
- David Foote
- Anthony Johnson
- John Kleiner
- Robert Leggett
- Dennis Reap
- Robert Reed

- Michael Smith
- Leon Starks

Connecticut

- Alan Adams
- Mittie Bailey
- Noel Brown
- John Cassi
- Amy Cloutier
- Pam Connelly

Raymond Danner
Walter Edwards
Robert Enriquez
Robert Farmer
Gary Feldman
Seiji Funai
Harbert Furhman
Eric Gilchrist
Richard Gray
Nikkia Harakaly
Tracy Hartshom
Michael Hollis
Ronald Hylton
Bradford Lake
Sylvia Lorenzi
Kevin Macneal
William Melanson
Alan Olenick
Lee Oppert
Pat Ottolini
Melvinia Parker
Maria Pirro
Roddy Porter
William Pruyne
John Robbins
Jaime Shepard
Lawrence Sorensen
Donald Theriaque
Elizabeth Wagner
Beverly Washington
Barbara Williams
Gregory Yacovou

Indiana

Dixie Brooks
Jermaine Brown
Tim Brown
Brad Browning
Joshua Cantu
Robert Clavert
Brad Cox
Mick Craig
Randy Crawford
Roberta Creamer
Ryan Darschewski
William Denny
Doug Evans
Cherie Fox
Joe Garrison
Larry Girdler
Virgil Gray
Patrick Harless
Steve Harless
Petri Hayes
Brian Knauff
Randy Koester
Steven Large
Larry Lazart
Bruce Lemmon
Larry Machin
Daniel Martin

Robert McCammon
Michael Moore
Michael Newton
Scott Netzley
Eric P. Niccum
Mark Olsen
Michael Osburn
Thomas Parrish
Euripides Perez
Michael Pollard
Ora Sue Provines
Cory Riley
Donn Sherwood
Randy Silk
Michael Spurgin
John Tetidrick
Ted Vaughn
Bradley Vestal
David Walker
Aaron Watson
Dia White
David Wire
Andrew Witherell

Iowa

Elizabeth "Lisa" Baker
David Bell
Tony Buffington
Randy Cole
Toni Linville
Amy Neisen

Kentucky

Randy Adkins
Gene Arnold
Robert Baize
Fred Basham
Alicia Bloyd
David Burns
Randy Calkins
Spring Callis
Tim Cronen
James Dunn
Darime Ellis
Danny Epley
Michael Gilliam
Billy Hale
Lorry Hansen
Mary Hargis
Justen Hayden
Janet Herrell
David Higgs
Paul Hileman
Brian Hillman
Jeffery Hope
Felicia Howard
George Hubbard
Keith Hunter
Michael Hutchinson
Steve Ingram
Hardie Johnson
Travis Jolley

Ryan Kirby
Lee Kjeseth
Tim Loy
Linda Lyle
Elaine Mahaffey
William Mahuron
Mike Manning
Bruce Mason
James Maxberry
Kevin Mazza
Judd McCowan
Paige McGuire
Allison Medley
Lisa Meece
Lonnie Melton
Liggett Morris
Patricia Murphy
Lenn Neal
Brandon Nelson
Daryl Partin
Larry Pennington
Peggy Penrose
Sheila Phillips
Scott Powers
Phillip Renfro
Jody Roberts
Regina Robertson
Michael Robinson
Danny Sanders
Tim Schenk
Bill Searcy
John Shawn
Steve Simpson
Greg Smith
Terry Sutton
Michael Turnley
Terry Underwood
Sharon Veech
Darrel R. Wheeler
Ricky Whitmer
Beth Wigginton
Brandon Wright

Mississippi

Charles Bunnell
Jo Burton
Betsy Chandler
Wayne Drexler
A.B. "Sonny" Edwards
Russell Frazier
Todd King
Jacqueline LaFontaine
Adam Lee
Jimmy McIntyre
Lee McTeer
Daryl Neely
Ken North
Ronnie Odom
Keith Roberts
Sean Smith

Missouri

Valerie Axtell
Robert Beck
Troy Blank
Greg Borske
Anthony Brinton
Mario Campa
Wanda Carver
John Charlton
Gary Cox
Doug Cress
Aaron Edman
Matthew Eustace
Francis Flansburg
James Frazier
James Graham
Anita Hearn
Dan Hendren
Mitchell Hubbard
Mark Jenkins
Gary Jobe
Harold Johnston
Lonnie Landrum
Stephen McLane
John Meadows
David Nelson
Pete Oetting
Ed Packer
Bryan Ruddy
Dennis Saxton
Thomas Schmidt
Carolyn Schupp
Phyllis Stanley
Joseph Suchland
Travis Troy
Rhonda Vaughn
Mark Walker
Ralph Wallace
Christopher Watkins
John Webber
Scott Williams
Ronald Wright
Leslie Young

New York City

Harry Ahl
Angel Baer
Emmanuel Bailey
Rodney Banks
Budnarine Behari
Candida Bonilla
Donna Boven
Toussaint Boyd
Lawrence Bradford
Edwin Brea
Tyrone Breedan
Anthony Bulluck
Edwin Caban
Jose Camacho
Tasha Capers
James Coyle

John Daguet
Darryl Davis
Latricia Davis
Saul Dejesus
Giuseppe DiFilippi
Michael Dudley
David Dueno
Gilbert Ellison
Daniel Fabre
Michelle Feldra
Joseph Ferramosca
Janett Francis
Michael Freeman
John Gadson
Conal Gallagher
Verladesh Gilles
Carla Gittens
Joseph Goodheart
William Green
Charles Hall
Yvette Hamilton
Jerome Han
Prescott Harris
Demosthenes Hatzoglou
Jason Hawkins
Jose Hernandez
Nicholas Hershewe
Antonio Irizarry
Arthur Johannes
Karl Johnson'
Tyson Jones
Robert Kauer
Dennis Kelly
William Kwasnicki
James Lam
Philip Lee
William Levy
Daniel Lowe
Caroline Lowery
James Maikisch
Victor Maldonado
Ruby Malofsky
Peter Mandeville
Clifford Marquis
Antonio Martinez
Henry Martinez
Rosario Matos
Eric Matteredo
Gerald Maynard
Anthony Mazzo
Willie McAlpine
Veronica McLeod
Chemene McLeod-Quinones
Edward McNamara
Shahid Mehmood
Jeffrey Miller
Ramon Miller
Robert Mitchell
Samuel Morgan
Anthony Mormando
Charles Myers
Richard O'Connor

Craig Oliver
Monica Olmos
James Parker
Cheryl Patterson
Tony Pedro
Michael Peluso
Ivan Penaherrera
Sheldon Powell
John Purcell
Eugenio Ramos
Alfonso Reyes
Dale Reyes
Asha Richardson
Freddy Richardson
Wayne Ridley
Edward Ritchie
Philip Rizzo
Damaris Robles
James Robinson
Jasmine Romero
Marilyn Rucker
Stephen Ryan
David Saladdlacuna
George Salazar
Mark Scott
Marilyn Scrubb
Edward Shanley
Gilbert Sherman
Joseph Silecchia
Howard Simmons
Nigel Smith
Michael Sorrentino
Joseph Soto
Anthony Spence
Edward Sperring
Paulette Steele
Devindra Sukhu
Michael Swetokos
Anton Taylor
Trevor Thomas
Scott Thompson
Kwame Tolliver
Anthony Vaughn
Norberto Velez
Timothy Vorhies
Regina Washington
Roy Wayson
Keturah Webb
Andre White
Michael White
James Wolters
Eevie Wooten
Lynell Wright
Mitchell Yablonsky

Ohio

Andrea Haffner

Oklahoma

Diane Adams
Ralph Anderson
Connie Barwick

Daniel Beats
Steve Beck
Ron Duty
Jeremy Fitzgerald
Joyce Golding
Jay Goodwin
Randall Gowdy
Larry Hagelberg
Trevor Hall
Nancy Holder
Muriel Irwin
Dillon Jones
William Jones
Cindy Kincaid
Timothy Kirkpatrick
Vicki Lang
Kyle Leatherwood
James Mason
Wayne McClure
Matthew McKeown
Chansey McMillan
Jaime Means
Brad Morris
David Morrison
Shelley Parris
Todd Peck
Jason Robertson
Shaan Robinson
Vernon Sanders
Michael Shelite
Dearyl Shields
Chris Sisto
Cody Snow
Matt Speers
Richard Solis
Brandy Toth
Aaron Tyler
Julie Walker
Tommy Williams
Dallas Wilson

Pennsylvania

George Allen
John Antalosky
John Antalosky Jr.
Michael Bobella
Scott Buchanan
Denise Bunner
Larry Burlile
Kimberly Byers
John Colyer
Lance Couturier
James Croft
Lynn Fischer
Charles Fix
Joshua Fogelman
Gregory Gunderman
Trevor Hardy
Sean Hersey
Deena Martinez Ketner
Mark Knopsnyder
Christopher Lekka

Gerard Long
Roy McElroy
Michael McGarry
Robert Miller
James Morton
Roy Nelson
Kathleen Parsons
Christopher Scicchitano
Thomas Siket
Edward Smith
David Snyder
Jose Soto
Mike Stine
Christopher Symons
Larry Wolfgang

South Carolina

Greg Cornell
Barbara Hartt
Theresa Holland
George Jackson
Tony Legette
Belinda McEachern
Connie Mitchell
Greg Moore
Craig Williams

Texas

Seterria Anderson
Robert Chance
Jewel Courville
Melissa Cui
Reginald Goings
Patricia Hebert
Quida LeBeouff
Kin Lewis
Aaron Tyler
Debbie Nagle
Nathaniel Quarterman
Howard Relford
Jennifer Sawyer
Joe Smith
Nadria Turner
Sadie Vincent
Lori Walker
Dawn Williamson
Don Young

West Virginia

Larry Pettey
Ray Wagoner

Wisconsin

Patrick Owen ♦