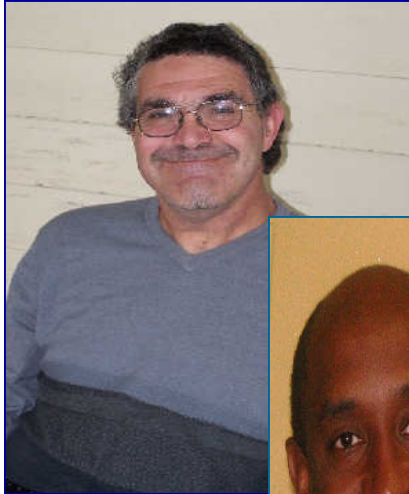


**CENTRAL & NORTH LOUISIANA'S
UNSUNG HEROES**

LOUISIANA



**Volunteers of America, Greater Baton Rouge
3949 North Boulevard ♦ Baton Rouge, Louisiana ♦ 70806**



Central & North Louisiana

August 29, 2005 is a date that will forever be etched in our memories. Hurricane Katrina brought to Southeast Louisiana devastation on a grand scale. Although the Gulf Coast landscape was changed forever, the hardest impact was felt by the families who called New Orleans home.

Thousands left New Orleans and surrounding Southeast parishes in a grand exodus to escape the path of Katrina. They fled to various parishes within Louisiana, as well as other states seeking refuge. Many left their homes with a few items, while others left with only the clothes on their backs. None of us new that this event would turn out to be a life-long change.

Evacuees, as they were called during the first few months after Katrina, were welcomed by residents of Central and North Louisiana with opened arms and hearts. They were provided with shelter, food, clothing, and other basic necessities, as well as emotional and spiritual support. Tragedy struck Louisiana once again on September 24, 2005 with the landfall of Hurricane Rita. Although our state experienced such overwhelming destruction and loss in a short period of time, everyday people stood out among the crowd and became a light of hope to so many in need. From the grandmother who washed hundreds of loads of clothes for survivors and volunteers, to the couple who spent countless hours on the phone locating missing family members, they gave unselfishly of their time, talent, and even money because of their compassion for their fellow man.

This book is a collect of stories gathered from people in Central and North Louisiana who made positive impacts into the lives of the survivors of Hurricane Katrina. Louisiana Spirit and Volunteers of America, Greater Baton Rouge have captured an account of the awesome efforts provided by the hands and hearts of these individuals we call "Unsung Heroes". They are the true essence of the Louisiana "Spirit" and forever a part of our history and recovery.

IN COMEMORATION OF HURRICANE KATRINA



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CHIEF JOE FRANK & The Bunkie Fire Department—Bunkie, LA



Avoyelles

On August 27th, 2005, under the command of Chief Joe Frank, the Bunkie Fire Department began preparations for Hurricane Katrina and the influx of evacuees that were expected to migrate to Avoyelles Parish and Bunkie. The shelter was stocked with cots, blankets, basic need items, food and water. These included fire fighters along with volunteer fire fighters who slept at the two fire stations and remained on standby for the storm. Within hours, the shelter had filled with nearly 120 survivors, and immediately the fire fighters began caring for them. They performed medical triage in the shelter which included care for the elderly, disabled and children. The Fire Department was instrumental in providing transportation, basic medical evaluations and assisted with completing over 5000 applications for Red Cross and distributed 4000 Red Cross debit cards. The Chief stated that survivors from other parishes came to Bunkie for assistance with filing for services. The trusting relationship that the Fire Department created with survivors was beneficial for survivors moving forward with the process.

The Chief and his staff assisted survivors with signing up for FEMA housing and worked with LA Spirit who provided first responder services to the members of their station. Chief Frank and the Bunkie Fire Department are held in high regard in Avoyelles Parish and surrounding parishes for their undying dedication to community service.

BISHOP LARRY L. BRANDON—Shreveport, LA



Caddo

Bishop Larry L. Brandon founded the Praise Temple Full Gospel Baptist Cathedral in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1992. Since its inception, Praise Temple has been instrumental in providing needed programs and services to underserved communities in the Shreveport-Bossier metropolitan and surrounding areas.

During Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Praise Temple reached out to help those affected. They opened to provide housing for displaced evacuees. Each temporary resident received three meals per day, daily showers, toiletry items, clothing, transportation to recovery lost/damaged identification, and onsite counseling services. A financial relief fund was established to assist eight pastors displaced from New Orleans, three students displaced from University of New Orleans, and thirteen students displaced from Dillard University. The organization also provided tuition assistance and uniforms to eleven displaced students and made monetary donations of more than \$500,000 toward hurricane relief efforts.

DR. MURPHY L. HUNT —Shreveport, LA



Caddo

Dr. Murphy L. Hunt is Pastor of Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church. Under Dr. Hunt's guidance and direction, the church demonstrated their love and compassion to many survivors of Katrina and Rita. Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church assisted more than 200 survivors for a period of time.

The church assisted by opening its doors to those in need and housed several families for more than 2 months in its family life center. During this time, survivors were also provided clothing, shelter, hot meals and lots of love and support. Later, the church took on a project of Samaritan's Purse and took care of five families for one year by providing them utilities, ministry, friendship and fellowship.

Caddo

MR. & MRS. JESSE PRELOW —Shreveport, LA



Hours before disaster struck in New Orleans, Jesse and Ethel Prelow opened their front door to find their son, Earnest, who was stationed in New Orleans while serving in the army. Earnest gathered his friends and four car-loads of people traveled to his parents' home in Shreveport, Louisiana.

Ethel remembers that she and husband, Jesse, were only expecting their son. When they invited everyone into their home, the couple immediately went into prayer to ask God to provide them strength and resources to house and feed the group of people who they would now be taking care of.

For three months, Jesse and Ethel housed 15 survivors in their small home. They cooked their meals, helped them connect to community resources such as housing, social services, employment, FEMA, and counseling. This couple gave of themselves relentlessly to help a number of people cope with their recovery during this tragedy.

Caddo

MRS. ETOIL LEWIS RAY —Shreveport, LA



Mrs. Etoil Ray has resided in the Shreveport area most of her adult life. Through the coordinated efforts of Mrs. Ray and her church, five survivor families were provided with furnished three-bedroom mobile homes for an entire year and were assisted with financial issues, food, clothing, medical issues and transportation.

After the one-year mark, Mrs. Ray developed a plan and her church assisted the families in obtaining low-interest loans to purchase their mobile homes. The church put up 1/10 of the money for collateral and then donated all of the furniture and appliances.

Etoil Ray acted in love and allowed herself to be an instrument of good-will for survivors.

Concordia

CLARK BROTHERS – Bill, Doug and Jerry, Vidalia, LA



In 1958, Clyde Clark sold his share of the family produce business and opened the Clark Brothers Trailer Park in Vidalia, LA. In the 1990's the brothers bought the business from their father and since then, they stated, "Nothing has truly compared in excitement to the influx of survivors from Hurricane Katrina".

FEMA contacted the brothers for assistance with housing needs for survivors living in shelters. In October 2005 a line of FEMA units arrived and soon the survivors began their migration to the park. The brothers soon realized survivors needed assistance with almost every facet of their lives, so they began prioritizing and coordinating efforts such as transportation, medical assistance, and propane supplies. It wasn't long before the Clark Brothers realized that some survivors were lacking funds, so they provided work opportunities for them to make extra money working in the trailer park.

The brothers opened their office as a resource center so social services agencies could complete applications for services for food stamps, employment benefits and other related services for survivors. Bill, Jerry and Doug Clark opened their trailer park and their hearts, and gave of their personal time and money for traumatized survivors who came to their park for refuge.

VIDALIA FIRE DEPARTMENT— Vidalia, LA



Concordia

On September 03, 2005 during morning check off and inventory at the Vidalia Fire Department, a gentleman walked in and simply stated that he needed some help. He was the Captain/Driver Operator with the New Orleans Fire Department and his brothers in New Orleans needed help. That was all the Vidalia Fire Department needed to hear. A brief statement was made over local radio waves of the need for water & food for firemen in New Orleans and soon the community responded. The brave men and women of the Vidalia Fire Department headed to New Orleans the following morning.

Upon arrival to the commandeered nursing home that was now the N.O.F.D headquarters, the Vidalia Fire Department immediately replenished various supplies. Everyone was fed, clothed, evaluated and deployed from this location. Police, Fire, and EMS workers had all been housed there.

Several days later, the Vidalia Fire Department made yet another trip bearing more supplies to New Orleans. The Vidalia community had once again shown their generosity with loads of clean clothes and more food and water.

Concordia

GRACE WOODS — Vidalia, LA



Who knew that when Grace Woods met a friend for lunch at the Vidalia Town Hall, the Mayor of Vidalia would ask her to spearhead the medical portion of a project to assist with the influx of survivors of Katrina into their small rural community. She stepped up to the plate and successfully setup a free clinic, receiving donated basic equipment from Riverland Hospital. By the following Monday, Grace said volunteers donated equipment, doctors and nurses reported for duty. Many volunteers migrated from out of state with doctors and nurses from Minnesota, Washington D.C., and New Jersey showing up with their own medicines and equipment. The ladies from the First Baptist Church of Vidalia also volunteered as receptionists for the free clinic.

Three weeks into the project Grace secured medicines from a FEMA medical supply warehouse in Baton Rouge. Armed with a small ice chest and the mayor's car, she made several trips. Through it all, Grace stated that the free clinic treated over 1,000 people in two months.

Grace Woods is a Hospice Ministries Nurse, RN and works in Natchez, Mississippi. Because of her heroic efforts she was awarded the Nightingale Award in January 2006. As proud of that award as she is, her true reward is the networking of volunteers and assistance from the community and the memories of the survivors that came through the clinic.

OSCAR EMELIEN – Simmsport, LA

LaSalle



Oscar Emelien is currently residing in Simmsport. He was a lifelong resident of New Orleans until Hurricane Katrina. Oscar resided in the Iberville Housing Development where he worked for Housing Authority of New Orleans. He remained in the city for seven days after the storm, then Oscar was brought to safety by boat.

Oscar was taken to the Magnaville Community where Louisiana Spirit regularly provides its services. There, various concepts are being implemented to encourage people to invest in where they live from organic farming to community development.

Magnaville offers several areas in which the residents are encouraged to work. Oscar chose to volunteer in an area where he could use his skills. Nearly every day for the past two years, Oscar has worked to maintain the gardens of older citizens who live in the community. He does this because he sees the need and steps up to address it. His tireless efforts has helped this community thrive.

LaSalle

MS. LISA JOHNSON – Simmsport, LA



Lisa Johnson is a wife and mother who has extended herself to so many. She is from the West Bank of New Orleans and was employed in the hotel and motel industry in New Orleans. She evacuated to LaSalle Parish and the Magnaville community.

“Mama Lisa,” as she is called by many of the residents, became “mama” to so many who did not understand the process that FEMA and the Red Cross had put in place after the storm. “Mama Lisa” willingly helped any and everyone in her community register for emergency assistance. She became the “saving grace” for many of her neighbors, and her selflessness became a wonderful example for everyone.

LINDA LEMOINE – Marksville, LA



LaSalle

During the chaotic time after the storm, local citizens volunteered their time to see to the needs of the survivors in Marksville. Linda Lemoine was busy providing services to the new population that was now in her small town. One day a friend, Marie “Weezie” Saucier was volunteering at the local Wal-Mart and met a couple from New Orleans who were homeless and sleeping in the parking lot. She called Linda and asked if she could help this couple get a hot shower and a good meal. Linda invited the couple into her home to eat, rest and clean up. She asked her daughter to assist and make sure the couple would be comfortable and eat a home cooked meal.

It wasn't long after Linda met the couple from New Orleans that she offered them the guest house located at the rear of the property. After some time, the couple accepted and moved in. With Linda's quiet and gracious nature, she and the couple became best of friends, calling themselves “Boudreaux and Thibodaux.” In the afternoons they would gather around the patio furniture in the backyard and tell stories, laughing and at times, crying. They cooked and shared meals together, solved problems and were able to provide safe, comfortable and warm surroundings to weather the aftermath of the storm. Soon Linda's family was now theirs. Now, every Christmas they visit and exchange gifts and stories about the time shared together.

LaSalle

MARIE “WEEZIE” SAUCIER – Marksville, LA



The local citizens, town employees, law enforcement and volunteers in Marksville geared up for what was to be the largest influx of people the town had ever seen. One such citizen was Marie “Weezie” Saucier. A retired state employee who devotes her time to the City of Marksville, Weezie has an outgoing personality and an undeniable sense of humor.

Marksville is a designated evacuation route and thousands of people flocked to the town for assistance and temporary shelter. Marie kicked into high gear manning phones, locating resources and re-routing individuals to new shelters as they filled up in Marksville and the surrounding areas. Marie and other volunteers, dispensed clothing, food, diapers, and other personal items to help make the survivors’ stay as comfortable as possible.

Ms. Saucier triaged in the shelters attending to elderly, disabled and children. Transportation and laundry service was provided and survivors were referred to medical services and a free pharmacy for medication assistance. She even arranged ambulance services for specialized medical services.

Ms. Saucier worked non-stop from early morning to late night keeping up with the needs of the survivors. She gave of herself to those individuals who needed a multitude of services.

ATTORNEY Cloyd Benjamin, JR. – Natchitoches, LA

Natchitoches



Cloyd Benjamin, Jr, is an attorney and community activist whose law practice is located in Natchitoches. Benjamin would annually host a Christmas party to collect toys which he donated to Toys For Tots. However, that changed once survivors were relocated to the Natchitoches area and faced their first Christmas away from their homes in New Orleans.

Benjamin began a tradition that has continued since 2005. He hosts one of the largest Christmas parties in the city. The food and entertainment is provided by Benjamin and guests are asked to bring a new toy as their admission price for the party. The toys are then distributed to families referred by the Louisiana Spirit Volunteers of America counseling team in the area.

Many survivor children have received the toys collected by Benjamin.

REV. HERMAN and TAMER BRIGGS - Natchitoches, LA

Natchitoches



Rev. Herman and Mrs. Tamer Briggs felt a need to make a difference during the initial evacuation of individuals and their families from Hurricane Katrina. Rev. and Mrs. Briggs solicited donations, (Wal-Mart, Brookshire's, Almost Home Restaurant, Alliance Compressors, and local attorneys) and recruited individuals who were willing to make a difference by volunteering.

The fruit of their efforts was evident when the project successfully fed over 350 individuals. Rev. Briggs still felt that his mission wasn't quite complete so he then organized and conducted support meetings with the families at the shelters. By doing this he felt that this was truly what the Lord guided both he and his wife to do.

"When I was hungry you gave me food, when I was thirsty you gave me drink and when I was drowning you rescued me." This was the motto for Rev. and Mrs. Briggs. Rev. Briggs takes no personal credit for all that he accomplished. "I am an instrument for the Lord", is his response to praise given to him. Truly he exemplifies the qualities of an unsung hero.

MS. DANA CRAWFORD –Natchitoches, LA

Natchitoches



Dana Crawford is known throughout her hometown of Natchitoches for her compassion and unselfish giving to those in need. Crawford’s outreach to the less fortunate was birthed several years ago while watching television. After seeing the “Feed the Children” program, Crawford began emptying her closet donating clothes, appliances and food out of her pantry.

When Katrina hit New Orleans and survivors were housed at Northwestern State University, Crawford stepped up and shifted her attention and her compassion to the survivors housed on the campus. Single handedly, she began collecting donations of food and snacks, and began delivering and distributing them to the survivors. Next, she withdrew money from her personal savings and bought personal items such as undergarments, socks, and toys for survivors.

MAYOR JUDY DANIELS – Campti, LA

Natchitoches



Mayor Judy Daniels of Campti is known for her compassion and willingness to do whatever it takes to help those in need. Mayor Daniels not only did her civic duty by volunteering long hours at Northwestern State University Shelter for Katrina survivors, she, along with family members, opened their homes to survivor families who were trying to keep their families intact.

Mayor Daniels provided transportation for survivors so they were able to get around to take care of personal business. She has helped find housing for survivors referred by crisis counselors and helped get a handicap ramp built for a survivor who was isolated in her home because she was in a wheel chair.

KISHA COOPER—Monroe, LA



Ouachita

Kisha Cooper is the Director of Mental Health Services for Volunteers of America, Northeast Louisiana (VOA-NE). Kisha's encouragement and support for LA Spirit crisis counselors has been invaluable to the success of the program's mission in Monroe.

Within the VOA-NE and Louisiana Spirit partnership, many success stories and alliances have materialized. Kisha assisted the Louisiana Spirit team by involving the team in several community projects and offering the use of an office and office equipment.

In instances when survivors were in crisis and needed assistance, Kisha encouraged both the VOA-NE and the Louisiana Spirit teams to partner in problem solving. By working together we became part of the solution for many survivors.

Kisha's professionalism, compassion and her willingness to help others succeed are some of the reasons hundreds of survivors in North Louisiana are now on their road to recovery.

Ouachita

BILLY FOSTER, —Monroe, LA



A friend in need is a friend, indeed. A cliché, perhaps, but a true statement in the case of Billy Foster, LCSW. After Hurricane Katrina, several survivors with mental health issues were experiencing significant stress and dysfunction. The lack of mental health treatment facilities caused the mentally ill population to have no treatment at all in some cases.

Identifying this unfortunate dilemma, Foster offered a helping hand to those individuals that were without treatment. He selflessly provided free services at his agency providing recipients with individual and group counseling, and necessary prescriptions for medication.

On several occasions, Foster drove the streets of Monroe both day and night, in attempt to identify survivors who may need assistance...all in an effort to prevent situations of self-harm or even worse.

ERICKA KELLY —Monroe, LA

Ouachita



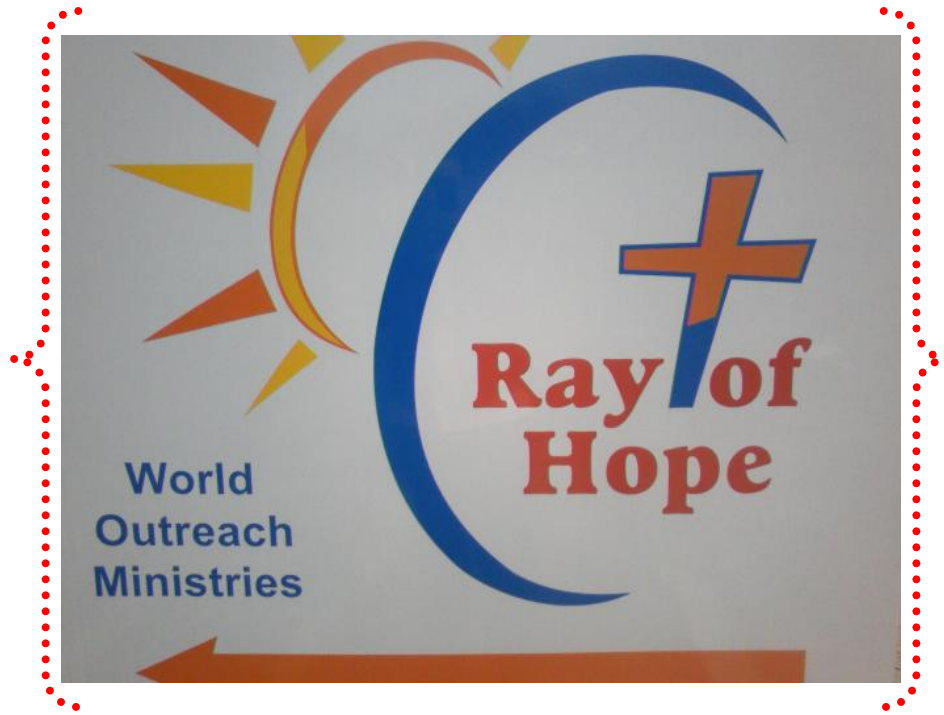
Ericka Kelly is the Director of Renewal, Inc., a program of The Lighthouse Church in Monroe. Her program helps the community through economic development programs including first-time homebuyers classes, financial planning, media training for teens, grant writing and entrepreneurship camps.

After Hurricane Katrina, Ericka helped families who survived Katrina to receive \$1,000 through a Kellogg's grant. In addition, she has gone above and beyond to personally assist with resource development and financial assistance.

Louisiana Spirit has referred a number of survivors to Renewal, Inc. for assistance. The care, compassion, and concern Ericka has demonstrated have been wonderful models of service for all of us.

MICHAEL & KAREN SAMMOUS— West Monroe, LA

Ouachita



Ray of Hope, a Christian-based nonprofit organization, is a resource that many survivors utilized after Hurricane Katrina. Directors Michael and Karen Sammous gave of themselves during a great time of need. From donating their personal clothing to offering gifts of new shoes, baby supplies and more, this couple gave survivors with food and goods.

Ray of Hope gave 2.5 tons of food a week to survivors and people that live in the community who qualify for their services. Individuals come every Monday and Wednesday for food and clothes. They also give furniture, books, toys, baby clothes and toiletries.

Michael and Karen Sammous are still giving, still being kind, and still ministering to Katrina survivors and people in the community.

Ouachita

BISHOP ALVIN WALKER—Monroe, LA



Bishop Alvin Walker is pastor of the Lighthouse Church in Monroe and Founder and President of the board for Renewal Inc., a non-profit organization in North-east Louisiana. When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, Bishop Walker immediately began to raise funds to assist the survivors who evacuated to his area. His church and organization were able to grant between \$200—\$1,000 to more than 200 hurricane survivors.

Bishop Walker established a regional summer flag football league which offers a medium for positive male mentoring to area youth—a need the Bishop recognized as a necessity. Louisiana Spirit referred young boys who were displaced by Hurricane Katrina as a means of engaging in an enriching and enjoyable summer activity.

Rapides

MARJORIE COOKS – Alexandria, La.



During the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, thousands of displaced survivors were scattered across Central Louisiana and found refuge in the city of Alexandria. Hundreds were homeless, hungry and feeling hopeless with no place to turn for help.

In the midst of this turmoil, one act of compassion and love by a single woman was the lifeline to many New Orleans residents. Majorie Cooks of Alexandria brought seventeen men, women and children survivors into her home and gave them free room and board for five months.

She sought out and received donations of food, blankets, bath towels, pillows and furniture.

Mrs. Cook did not do it for money or accolades. She did it out of compassion for her fellow man who was hurting and in need of a helping hand.

Rapides

REV. and MRS. JOSEPH DUPREE— Alexandria, LA



Reverend & Mrs. Joseph Dupree of Alexandria extended their compassion to Hurricane Katrina survivors without being asked. They made their church facilities available for evacuees which was used as a distribution center. Rev. and Mrs. Dupree encouraged their friends to get involved by showing support in any way possible. This small gesture escalated to individuals donating, sorting and delivering clothes, as well as preparing and delivering food. This support was extended to other survivors being housed on the campus of Northwestern State University (N.S.U.) and the surrounding areas.

Rev. and Mrs. Dupree helped survivors relieve some of their anxiety and pressures through counseling sessions along with administering bible study and holding church services on the N. S. U. campus. The Dupree's love, compassion and generosity blessed many.

Rapides

DR. JOE GREEN – Alexandria, LA



Under the leadership of Dr. Joe Green, St. Matthew Baptist Church became an official American Red Cross shelter to Hurricane Katrina and Rita survivors. The church provided shelter, food, clothing, transportation, telephone services, and financial assistance to storm evacuees.

Housing nearly 350 evacuees, the church still managed to provide assistance to those who were not housed at the church, which allowed them to help more than 6,000 survivors. Although the shelter officially closed November 11, 2005, the church continued to provide transportation and support services to those who were housed at the church for several months after the shelter officially closed.

Rapides

MR. JACK HENTON – Alexandria, LA

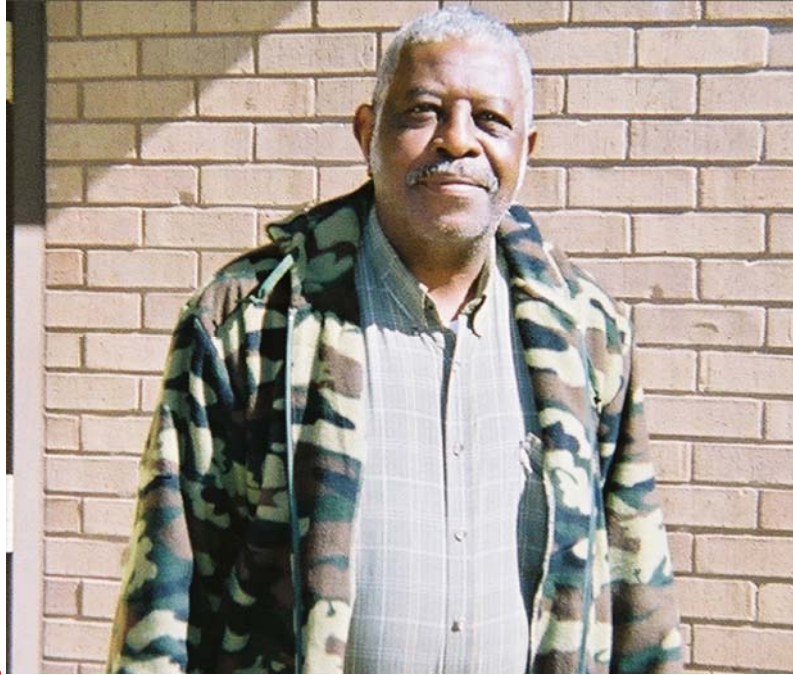


In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, thousands of displaced people were scattered across Central Louisiana. Many were displaced to Alexandria. Many elderly citizens of New Orleans were left with no place to live. That is where Jack Henton felt he was able to help.

With his larger than life smile and deep compassion for people, Henton offered one of his rental properties to a homeless elderly couple affected by Hurricane Katrina. He asked for no rent, and to this day the couple continues to reside in the house rent free. The couple continues to have challenges and struggle with financial pressures, but concern about rental payments is not a worry to them because of the generosity of Henton.

Rapides

REV. LYNELL SMITH—Alexandria, LA



Under the leadership of Rev. Lynell Smith, New Scott Olly Baptist Church of Alexandria, Louisiana opened its doors to Hurricane Katrina evacuees. Members of the church drove to Baton Rouge and gathered evacuees' families and drove them back to Alexandria. Once in Alexandria, the church provided shelter, food and support to the displaced evacuees.

Later, more evacuees arrived until the number reached more than 100. They remained housed at the church for six weeks.

EDWIN BRITT — Newellton, LA

Tensas



In the heart of Tensas Parish lives a caring man who is the local pharmacist. His name, Edwin Britt. Edwin has helped survivors of Hurricane Katrina and their recovery efforts by becoming a link of hope and help.

Edwin owns a community pharmacy in Newellton. Edwin is a citizen who has shown true concern and compassion for the survivors of Hurricane Katrina and the residents who relocated to the area. He made it his personal goal to seek out survivors throughout the parish and aid them in any way that he could.

Edwin assisted survivors and recovery workers with any medical need they had. He gave guidance and advice, all with a warm hello and compassionate smile. He quickly became a friend to many survivors in need. He is a true inspiration of compassion and commitment. Edwin is a treasure in Tensas Parish and a hero to all.

Webster

JAY BURKHART— Minden, LA



Under the leadership of administrator Jay Burkhardt, the staff of Meadowview Nursing Home in Minden opened their doors and hearts to the survivors in hurricane-affected nursing homes.

Adjustment for survivors was not easy. Jay made sure immediate needs such as medical attention and emotional support were addressed, which was not easy since little paperwork arrived with survivors. Countless phone calls were made to obtain information as Jay, his staff, and volunteers connected survivors with their families. Many hours were spent providing clothing, personal hygiene items, writing letters, reading, bringing special treats, and contacting clergy to provide spiritual comfort. After the initial trauma had somewhat decreased, Jay would continue to visit each survivor daily. A welcome party was organized and attended by Meadowview staff and local leaders, which included the mayor and state representative.

Many of these survivors have returned to their previous homes, but not before writing personal messages of love and thanks to Jay. As one Katrina survivor and Meadowview resident stated, "God bless you for the love and care you gave. Not all places are like this."

JUDY DODSON — Minden, LA



Webster

Judy Dodson of Minden was volunteering at First United Methodist Church on a day when her pastor made an important announcement. He reported that a bus carrying approximately 200 Hurricane Katrina evacuees was on its way to the Caney Camp & Conference Centre, which is operated under the Louisiana Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Judy was asked to "handle it," so she did. She organized a group of volunteers to man the church office and Caney Camp. Once the evacuees arrived at the church, they were checked in and referred to the camp. In the meanwhile, Judy and the volunteers cleaned rooms, gathered linens, organized food service, and prepared Caney Camp for its new visitors. They placed 8-10 people in each cabin and tried to keep families together. Over a period of 3 months,

Judy and the volunteers worked 10-12 hours each day to do all that was possible to make the evacuees as comfortable as possible. They coordinated transportation, helped reunite displaced loved ones, offered assistance with job placement and housing, and tried to meet any special needs that arose. More than 500 people were served by Caney Camp during this time.

Webster

KAREN BLAGG — Minden, LA



As a volunteer, Karen Blagg acted as a liaison between Minden Medical Center and the Caney Camp & Conference Centre. Many people had arrived at the facility with no medicine and some even needed medical attention. Karen was employed by the local hospital and was able to use her connections to have medical staff visit the camp and assist with medical needs.

Additionally, Karen utilized the Internet to log on to "Craig's List" everyday. There she listed the needs of the camp and asked for donations. People from all over the U.S. responded. Those desiring to help in the relief efforts made donations of money and gift cards, which in turn went toward the purchase of food, clothing, gas and other necessities. Karen worked tirelessly to see that needs were met, no matter how small or large.

Webster

DAVID GOODMAN — Minden, LA



David, of Evergreen Presbyterian Ministries' supported living program, spent countless hours at the Northwest Louisiana Hurricane Relief Center in Minden. When the Relief Center opened its doors in September 2005, David was one of the first volunteers to answer the call. His duties were to sort through a "mountain" of donated clothing and other items and organize them according to department. He was willing to do whatever was necessary to help the Relief Center. David cannot drive due to his disability, so he relied on others to get him to and from the Relief Center each day.

David is no stranger to volunteerism, having served Webster Parish Habitat for Humanity for several years. Habitat named David "Co-Volunteer of the Year" in 2006 for all of his efforts in collecting recycled cans. He has been the point person for more than 20,000 pounds of aluminum, with the money from recycling going directly toward building materials for Habitat homes. "My favorite thing is helping people," said Goodman. "It makes me feel good."

SCOTT HARNDEN & STEVE McCORMICK — Minden, LA



Two Wal-Mart managers went above and beyond the call of duty following Hurricane Katrina. Scott Harnden and Steve McCormick worked with Wal-Mart corporate headquarters to allow a group of volunteers to utilize an empty Wal-Mart building in Minden as a regional Hurricane Relief Center. Not only did these managers provide full access to the facility, but they also worked with Wal-Mart to cover the cost of utilities.

Scott and Steve provided the Northwest Louisiana Hurricane Relief Center use of Wal-Mart shopping carts, provided food from the deli to feed inmates working at the center, offered Wal-Mart employees incentives for volunteering after-hours, posted notices in the Wal-Mart Supercenter with daily updated lists of needs and supplies, collected and delivered the donated goods daily and worked collaboratively with Louisiana Spirit in bringing counseling services to survivors in the Relief Center. Steve, his wife and two children came and volunteered their skills on a regular basis.

For the Relief Center's 2005 Thanksgiving Community Supper, both Scott and Steve along with their families joined more than 200 Katrina evacuees that evening and brought pot-luck dishes to share.

REV. TERRELL AND MRS. EVELYN LOWE — Minden, LA



Webster

The generosity of Rev. Terrell and Mrs. Evelyn Lowe knows no boundaries. As former Directors of the Caney Camp & Conference Centre, the Lowes stepped back up to the plate and manned the kitchen at Caney Camp for more than three months. They prepared three meals a day for hundreds of Hurricane Katrina evacuees, which often meant they spent 13 or more hours there each day. Mrs. Lowe said she looks back on her time following the hurricane as special since it was one of the last big volunteer projects she was able to complete with her husband, who passed away from cancer in October 2006.

Mrs. Lowe said that FEMA actually paid them for their duties at Caney Camp; however, they gave it right back to the camp to support its various Christian programs for all ages.

