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Katrina Evacuees Arrive in Los Angeles

Organizations Both Public and Private are Sending Aid to the Devastated Region

New Orleans was Site of Junior Olympics Competition 4 Weeks Ago

BY KAREN VILLALPANDO

One month ago, our family was in New Orleans for the Junior Olympics, where our daughter was competing. Over 20,000 athletes

Since 1840, Antoine's has survived natural disasters, the Great Depression and war.

and their families gathered in celebration, partaking in the sights and sounds of the Big Easy. Events were held in different parts of the city, with the jump rope competition being held at the new Ponchartrain Center, in Kenner, about 15 miles north west of the French Quarter. We stayed next door to the venue at the Hilton Garden Inn, located just on the other side of the levee from Lake Ponchartrain. The people who worked at the hotel were friendly and accommodating, and went out of their way to be helpful. Whether it was a request for extra towels, hair dryers or toiletries, the service was quick and courteous. When we wanted some fruit for breakfast instead of the buffet, they gave it to us. The chef himself handed out lunch menus as we all made our way back from the Ponchartrain Center. I don't remember their names, but I remember their faces. I hope and pray they all evacuated before hurricane Katrina ravaged their city.

This article started out as a travel story about our trip to New Orleans. While we were there for the Junior Olympics, we also made a vacation of it, and contacted the Visitors and Convention bureau prior to our trip. They were excited to show off their city and made reservations at different restaurants around town at some of their signature destinations. I was planning to write about the hospitality, the world-class food, and the wonderful time we had. Now, all I can think about are the faces, the people we met, and wonder if they are safe, or even alive.

I think about Fisherman's Cove Seafood in Kenner, just See New Orleans page 18



photo by Edwin Folven

Taisha Blackwell, 28, clutches her one-year-old daughter Tramine Cowart as she described fleeing from the city of New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. The pair, along with 10 members of her family, is being housed at the Los Angeles Dream Center in Echo Park. Up to 300 evacuees are expected at the center.

BY JANET TURLEY

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina's devastating destruction in Louisiana and Mississippi, the country has come together to aid the victims. Los Angeles is no exception, with organizations throughout the area donating time, money and supplies to help the victims of Katrina.

On Tuesday, more than 300 evacuees from New Orleans and the surrounding area arrived in Los Angeles, and are being housed at the Los Angeles Dream Center, which is located in the old Queen of Angels Hospital in Echo Park. Many of the hurricane victims had lost family members in the disaster, and have come to California with only a few belongings, and an uncertainty about their futures.

"People were trying to get food and water for their kids, but there wasn't anything left," said Taisha Blackwell, who fled last week from her home near

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Same Sex Marriage Legislation Passed by State Assembly

■ Governor Has Indicated He May Still Veto Initiative that Would Extend Rights of Marriage

BY JANET TURLEY

The California State Assembly passed legislation for same sex marriage on September 6, just four days after the bill was passed by the Senate.

Assembly Bill 849 removes the phrase "a man and a woman" from California's marriage laws and replaces it with "two persons", allowing gay and lesbian partners the same rights to a legally recognized marriage as heterosexual couples.

The legislation was history in the making, according to Senator Sheila Khuel.

"It's a real triumph for the gay community. The bill received a majority vote in both houses and it's the first time in history that this has ever happened," she said.

Lori Jean, C.E.O. of the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center, championed Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco), author of the bill, for his efforts.

"There's no question that history will regard Assemblymember Mark Leno and the elected officials who supported California's marriage equality legislation as civil rights champions who did not shy away from ensuring equal treatment for same-sex couples and their families," Jean said in a statement.

West Hollywood also considered it to be a momentous occasion.

"This is a historic day," said West Hollywood Mayor Abbe Land. "This bill will give same-sex partners the thousands of rights bestowed upon married couples, which have assumed added importance given the Hurricane Katrina disaster."

The bill, which was passed 41-35, now goes to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's desk for approval. He has not taken an official stance on the bill, but his office has hinted that he may veto AB 849.

"The people spoke when they passed Proposition 22. The

See Couples page 22

New Garage Hopes to Ease Parking Woes

BY JANET TURLEY

The city of West Hollywood is working on easing the parking crunch with a new multi-story parking garage at West Hollywood Municipal Park.

"It's going to be a five-level structure and we're now in the early planning stages," said Ray Reynolds, West Hollywood's Economic Development Director. "We're anticipating 340 parking spaces."

The parking garage will be built where the tennis courts are currently located. The tennis courts will be rebuilt on the top level of the parking structure, in accordance with the Park Master Plan to reconfigure the park to create more open space, according to city councilmember Jeffrey Prang.



photo by Janet Turley

Officials are also concerned that new parking meters are causing confusion.

"The top level will have three tennis courts with a wind shield and they will be lit for night

See Parking page 22

INSIDE

■ Weekend Weather

Autumn-like weather hits the area this weekend with temperatures in the 60s and 70s.

■ On Screen

Dave reviews the film, "The Constant Gardener".

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New Orleans

From page 1

down the street from the Ponchartrain Center, where you could buy fresh fish, soft shell crab, oysters and crawfish and they would pack it in ice to take back to California. Next door, is the Cove's Harbor Seafood and Oyster Bar, a casual place packed with locals, where we had lunch one day. We sat at the bar, and a handsome, young man waited on us. Even my husband commented on his charm and good looks. He knew we were in a hurry to get back to the competition, and put a rush on our order. We chatted with him about jump rope and the Junior Olympics. He said, "How is jump rope a competitive, Olympic sport?" When we told him our daughter performed her personal best of 280 jumps in 60 seconds, he understood the kind of athlete it takes to accomplish that. He served up a delicious draft root beer, and smiled. We ate the best oyster po' boy and blackened calamari I've ever tasted. We gave him a nice tip and left for the competition. I can't help but wonder about that nice, handsome young man.

We traveled to other parts of the city, too. We were in uptown, on Carrollton Street one night at a restaurant named Chateaubriand. The owner, an elegant woman named Eveline Crozier, greeted us with a warm

smile, gentle voice and distinct Big Easy accent. She has short, carefully curled red hair, a small frame, and blue eyes. She wore a beaded white top and black skirt. Eveline runs the front of the house, while her husband, Gerard, is the chef. We had the signature dish, chateaubriand of course, and toasted to our daughter's success that day at the Olympics.

When we left, there was a New Orleans police officer standing outside. We struck up a conversation with him about this fine city, and told him why we were there. He watched us climb into our rental car and drive away, I believe more to make sure we were safe, rather than to check if I was breaking any law.

All these faces, these people who served us, greeted us, accommodated us, as part of their daily duties, where are they? Are their homes and businesses destroyed? How long will it take for them to find "home" and to rebuild their lives?

One afternoon, we went to world-renowned Antoine's for lunch. The great, great grand daughter of Antoine himself, Claudine Guste, sat at our table and told us about the history of the restaurant, and implored our waiter, Murphy, to give us a tour. In the corner, Claudine's aunt and uncle were drinking martinis and eating lunch. As I looked around the vast dining room, one of 15 dining rooms, I saw business people, tourists, and local families, enjoying their meal in this well air-conditioned restaurant on a very hot

summer day. 'The 3 martini business lunch is definitely alive and well here,' I thought. Now my thoughts are about that famed restaurant and the hundreds of people it employs. Since 1840, Antoine's has been in operation. It has survived natural disasters, the Great Depression, and war. Hopefully it will survive Katrina and its aftermath, too.

We drove through the historic Garden District, and admired the Victorian homes and the eclectic neighborhood. Tulane and Loyola Universities are located there. The kids marveled at the age of the red brick buildings, commenting that it reminded them of the classic architecture in Illinois, where grandma lives. We even witnessed a funeral procession at dusk on a Saturday night. As we toiled down St. Charles Avenue, I felt I was in the heart of the city, where the people live. Bourbon Street is for the tourists. This is for the locals.

We arrived at the Upperline Restaurant, located in a yellow, Victorian home, on Upperline Street. A woman of about 60, dressed in a black mu-mu type dress, her hair mounded on top of her head clasped by a big red flower, welcomed us into the room. JoAnn Clevenger, the owner, has a boisterous, infectious laugh, and a beautiful southern accent. Over the 25 years she has owned her restaurant, she has acquired an eclectic collection of artwork, all by Louisiana artists. Watercolors, acrylics, pottery, 3-D collages, of all shapes and sizes cover the walls of the main dining room.



The Palpitating Panthers Jump Rope team from La Canada, California, competed in the 2005 AAU Junior Olympics held in New Orleans, July 25 – August 12.

Modern, traditional, large paintings, small objects, you name it, adorn these walls. JoAnn is proud of her collection, and asks if we've picked out a favorite. When we arrived there were 7-8 tables seated. Midway through our meal, there was a line out the door of patient diners waiting for a table. There are 3 or 4 other dining rooms in the house, all with a different feel and ambience. I remember JoAnn bragging about her fried green tomatoes remoulade, saying she was the first to put the New Orleans twist on the classic southern dish, after the popular movie of the same name came out. I hope once again, JoAnn can open her restaurant and be

proud of it. I further hope her walls with one-of-a kind art from local Louisiana artists were spared.

Walking down Bourbon Street, even at 10am on a Monday morning, you hear live music. People are already parked on bar stools, and shoppers are abundant. We were headed to Brennan's for breakfast. I'm thinking, 'How can I possibly eat one more thing?' The maitre d' is a lanky fellow, with a quick step and a broad smile. He seated us at our table. I commented to the girls that he reminded me of a character Jim Carrey would play in one of his movies. Our servers and the

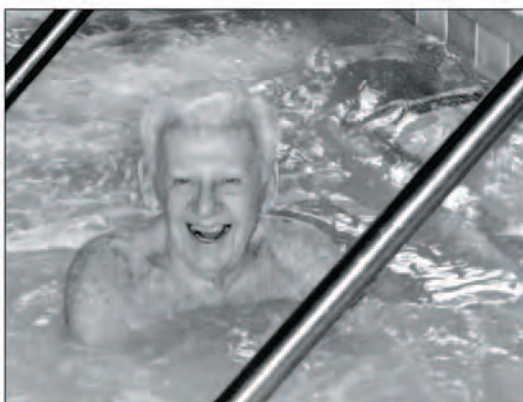
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Relief

From page 1

downtown New Orleans. "We walked to the interstate with whatever we had. We lost everything."

Blackwell was accompanied by 11 of her family members, including sister Trenise Thomas, who remained optimistic about the future, but is now concerned about living day to day.

"We can return and we can rebuild, but no one can give us lives back," Thomas said. "There were so many people who drowned and died. New Orleans was like a cereal bowl, and we're like the cereal floating around."

According to the Red Cross, the damage caused by Katrina has created the largest single mobilization of Red Cross workers in the organization's history. They have established relief efforts in 17 states, with over 145,000 people housed in over 580 shelters, in what is

looking to be a long-term effort, according to a statement from the organization.

The county of Los Angeles has mounted a fundraising drive appealing to all county employees to donate money to the relief efforts, said Joel Bellman, spokesman for county Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky. County officials expect a large sum of money to be raised by the 85,000 county employees through their aggressive fundraising.

"All of the donations go through the Los Angeles County Volunteer Fund. One hundred percent of the donations are given equally to the Red Cross and Salvation Army, there's no administrative overhead," Bellman said.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department has sent an 80-person Urban Search and Rescue Team, with over 6,000 pounds of equipment, to the devastated region, Bellman said.

"They will help search for survivors in heavy reinforced buildings," Bellman said.

The county has also sent their 14-person Swift Water Task Force to help rescue those trapped in the roof-top level waters. The task force has experience being deployed in both man-made and natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina, according to Bellman.

Yaroslavsky has sent a link to www.networkforgood.com through a special e-bulletin newsletter, urging people to donate money through a reputable charity.

Los Angeles City Councilman Jack Weiss, 5th District, attended a send-off meeting last week for teams of firefighters from Los Angeles who left for New Orleans. He also encouraged anyone with the means to help to do so.

"Ten years ago, the country sent help to Los Angeles following the earthquake," Weiss said. "Los Angeles needs to return the favor and step up to do whatever else we can."

Networkforgood.com lists recognized charities that are accepting donations to aid vic-

tims of Hurricane Katrina. People looking to donate can also choose a charity that will offer relief in specific areas, such as Habitat for Humanity to rebuild houses, American Humane Association to help rescue displaced animals, or Water Missions International, which aids in purifying the region's water.

The Jewish Federation is also reaching out to the thousands of hurricane victims, including nearly 10,000 Jewish residents in New Orleans, according to the organization.

"The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles has donated \$100,000, and in addition,

has begun soliciting additional funds," said Jason Greenwald, spokesman for the Jewish Federation.

As of September 7, they had received an over \$500,000 in donations, according to Greenwald.

"Given the incredible destruction caused by this disaster, we feel compelled to help in any way we can," said Harriet Hochman, Chair of the Board of The Jewish Federation, in a released statement.

Los Angeles has also reached out to victims of the hurricane by offering them a place to temporarily call home. The first

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Disaster

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busboy are at our service. These are the working people of New Orleans, perhaps some of whom fled to the Superdome for shelter and safety. These servers, dishwashers, busboys and others are the working backbone of New Orleans, those who live in the city, don't have cars and take public transportation. Those who don't have money saved to get out of town and stay in a hotel. Those who stayed behind

to endure hurricane Katrina. These are the people who need our help. They may be separated from their families, hungry, sick and in despair. It's hard to imagine what it must have been like inside the Superdome and Convention Center, enduring those awful conditions.

Just four weeks ago, over 20,000 participants marched into the Superdome for the Celebration of Athletes of the 2005 Junior Olympics. With great pomp and circumstance, every sport was represented with the best of the best per-

forming their skills. Music and entertainment thrilled the audience, while vendors sold hot-dogs and cold drinks.

Again, the faces flash in my mind. Where are they now? Isn't there something we can do? How did we let this happen? I imagine I will not write a travel story about New Orleans for a while. But I believe that the people of this great city will come together and rebuild. It's their duty, and they will gladly accept it, just as they do every day in "New Orleans, the Big Easy."

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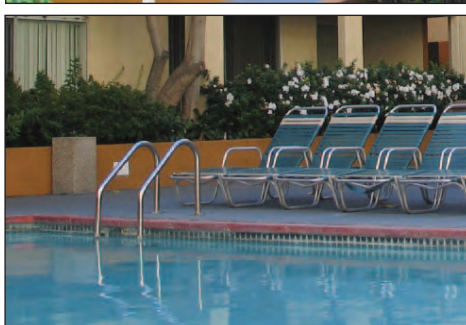


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CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Community Development Department of the City of West Hollywood has prepared a Negative Declaration concerning:

Development Permit 2005-032, Conditional Use Permits 2005-013 and 2005-04, Minor Conditional Use Permits 2005-016 and 2005-017, Specific Plan Amendment 2005-002, and Extension Request 2005-003 for the project known as James Hotel.

The project involves the modification to the layout, design, and number of guestrooms of a previously approved six-story hotel located at 8950 Sunset Boulevard, West Hollywood, California. The approved project included: 189 guest rooms, four dwelling units, three restaurants, on-site alcohol sales, an alternative plan to adjust the distribution of allowable heights across the site, and a specific plan amendment to increase the allowable height on a portion of the site. The proposed project includes: 196 guest rooms, four dwelling units, two restaurants, on-site alcohol sales, an alternative plan to adjust the distribution of allowable heights across the site, a specific plan amendment to increase the allowable height on a portion of the site, and an extension of the previously approved project entitlements.

Pursuant to the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act, the Lead Agency has analyzed the project and determined that the project will NOT have a significant impact on the environment. Based on this finding the Lead Agency has prepared this NEGATIVE DECLARATION.

A period of 20 days from the date of publication of this NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be provided to enable public review of the project specifications, the Initial Study and this document prior to final adoption of the NEGATIVE DECLARATION by the Lead Agency.

On or after September 29, 2005, the West Hollywood Planning Commission will make a decision regarding this application. The Negative Declaration will be available for public review at the Community Development Department at 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA 90069, beginning **Thursday September 8, 2005**. For further information, please call the Planning Division at (323) 848 - 6475.

ALL INTERESTED PERSONS are invited to review the Negative Declaration and to submit opinions or evidence for or against the Negative Declaration.

Tom West,
City Clerk

Gaucher Disease

From page 3

proper diagnosis and appropriate care.”

Rosenbloom said recognizing the symptoms of Gaucher is the key. They include chronic fatigue, soreness of joints, increased tendency for bleeding and bruising, skeletal pain, and easily fractured bones. If the disease progresses, symptoms may include a swelling of the spleen and liver, as well as loss of bone marrow. People with Gaucher generally have abnormal blood cell counts, similar to symptoms found in people who are anemic.

“Sometimes people come in and just tell us they are not feeling well, and we test their blood and find the indications that Gaucher may be present,” Rosenbloom said. “If it is not Gaucher Disease, then we can take other actions. But it can

at least be eliminated.”

Rosenbloom said Gaucher Disease is treatable with a medication that has been available since the early 1990s. The drug, known as Zerezyme, is an enzyme-replacement therapy, that replaces a portion of damaged cells. When the enzyme is injected into the blood, it targets the cells that are afflicted, helping them to replenish. Oftentimes, the drug can reverse the manifestation

of Gaucher Disease, allowing people who are afflicted to live healthy lives.

The National Gaucher Foundation is involved in research and fundraising programs for the disease, and offers a variety of services, including critical care and financial assistance.

For more information about the NGF, call (800)925-8885, or visit the website at www.gaucherdisease.org.

Arrests Made in Youth's Murder

Los Angeles Police Department Homicide Detectives have arrested two suspects in the murder of Samuel Salas, a North Hollywood youth who was shot in what police believe was a gang-related incident. On August 13, 2005, Samuel Salas was shot to death when he attempted to help his disabled friend who was being

attacked by a group of gang members.

On August 25, a United States Marshals' Task Force arrested 29-year-old Enrique Diaz, at his home on Angelino Street in the City of Burbank. A second suspect, 22-year-old Job Popolo, was already in custody in Van Nuys Jail when he was re-booked for murder on August 26.

Katrina

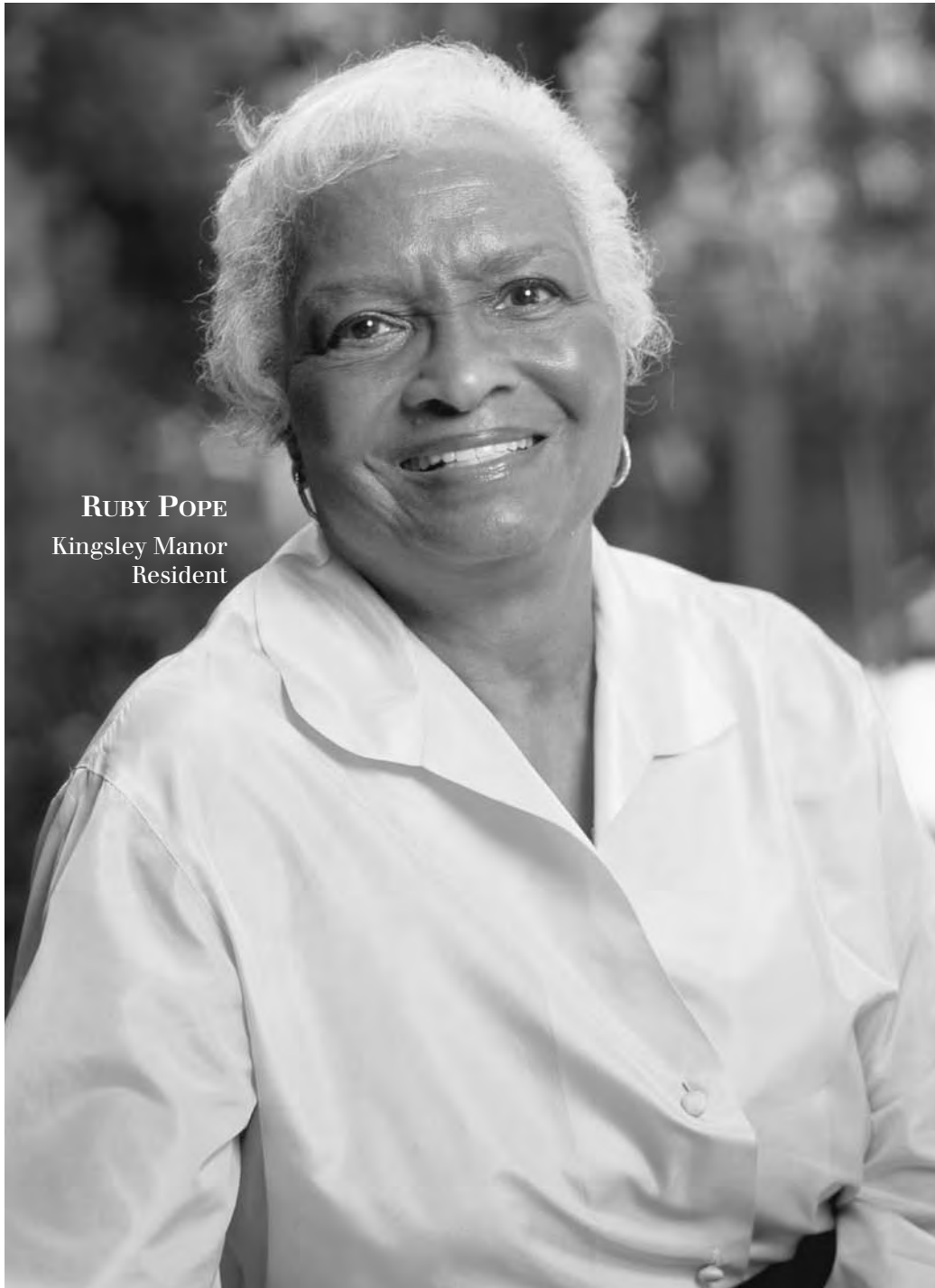
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group of evacuees from Baton Rouge, LA arrived in Los Angeles over Labor Day weekend, with 300 total evacuees expected. They will be housed at the Los Angeles Dream Center for up to six months, according to a recent report.

West Hollywood is spearheading local relief efforts by urging local businesses and residents to donate whatever they can. The city has set up a “West Hollywood Responds” program to help with relief efforts, encouraging the public to donate to the Red Cross and Operation USA, a West Hollywood-based relief organization that also offered help to tsunami victims early this year, according to a city statement. City officials also plan to accept donations at the West Hollywood city hall on behalf of the Red Cross and Operation USA, as well as allowing city employees to cash out unused vacation days as donations to the two organizations. Donations to the charities can also be made online at www.weho.org.

99 Cents Only Stores are also accepting donations for hurricane relief, and plan to donate a minimum \$99,999.99 to the American red Cross, in addition to several

truckloads of relief supplies. Several telethons also collected donations to aid Hurricane Katrina victims, including NBC, BET, a joint effort between MTV, VH1 and CMT, and the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Association telethon. Lewis' annual Labor Day telethon to aid children with the muscular disease dedicated eight hours to hurricane relief. The MDA also made a separate \$1 million dollar donation to victims of the hurricane.



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