

## REPORT FROM THE GULF (Week of October 21-30, 2005):

*The following is part of an October 2005 update on the situation in Gulfport from FCPO member David Greenhalgh. David is a 36 year career law enforcement officer from the Vancouver, BC (Canada) area. David is part of the relief effort and has volunteered the next 4-6 months to help coordinate things for the Gulfport Police Department, freeing up one of their members to go back on the road. This liaison position is now part of the management team and crucial to the recovery of the PD's lives, homes and family.*

Why do we want to make a difference in Gulfport and the surrounding area one may ask? Sit back, relax in your favourite chair and think of a peace officer, firefighter or emergency services member that you know being in the following situation:

*Ofc. Raymond Brooks, Gulfport Police Department, sent his family away for Katrina. After the storm he worked 18 hour days for about 21 days without a day off. He was found by his school's principal to be sleeping in his car outside the ruins of his former home. Raymond was invited to stay with the principal and his wife. His oldest daughter age 14 remains in Florida. He has a son about 10, daughter about 8 and his wife is expecting in January 2006. They have just moved into a 60ft mobile home on a friend's property. Raymond was not in a flood zone so has no flood insurance but his mortgage remains. His house is off it's foundations due to the seawater surge and if you look carefully you may see the "debris line" or tide-line. This was formed by the remains of the three houses that used to be between his house and the waterfront Hwy. Raymond's house is well over 1000 feet from the high tide line and probably 20 feet higher in elevation.*

We appear to be completing the "**recovery**" phase and moving into the "**repair**" phase. Our partners at YFC and their volunteers have completed about 16 of 26 recovery jobs related to GPD and what a magnificent demonstration of the seamless working of the body of Christ they have been to the entire staff of GPD. I cannot speak highly enough of their service, their cooperation and commitment to bless a hurting and needy community.

In the "repair" phase we have five work orders begun, many more to go and have arranged to phase those through more skilled volunteers available through David Brand of Samaritans purse based in Biloxi. Pastor Steve Brown of Calvary church Biloxi has begun working through the list of GPD FCPO members and his available skill sets include sheetrock installation and roofing.

One of our civilian staff ("T.H."), a very gracious lady, was both a flood and wind damage victim, was underinsured and to top it off, her husband is incapacitated by a lengthy illness. Knowing others were worse off than her, "T.H." would not ask for help. A Youth For Christ team from PEPC was properly dispatched and promptly dealt with some immediate needs. Scouting the place out carefully, the team discovered numerous Katrina related issues and began promptly pulled baseboards and carpet strips, returning for two more days to repair/replace the broken fence.....(at their expense). "T.H." used to look like she had the weight of the world on her shoulders.....now when I see her each day her face lights up with a lovely smile and her face is alight her shoulders straight.

All weekend Youth For Christ volunteers mostly from Parker Colorado had been toiling at ruined houses and damaged properties of at least 5 GPD employees. They were a total blessing to my new community of officers and civilians. These were the homes of some of those most grievously damaged by the Katrina storm. Owned by people who worked 18 hours daily for 21 straight days to save and minister to their City, and who thought of the community first. YFC/PEPC volunteers also delivered a freezer to the Deputy Chief GPD, veterinarian antibiotics to the homeless Chief of the Pass Christian Police Department (who had lost everything but his sick dog), and courtesy of a YFC donor, a complete

computer system with a sophisticated training management programme to the devastated Waveland Police Dept. All of these gifts targeted to specific needs identified during the week. All across this destroyed belt of land the body of Christ is working seamlessly to heal a damaged community.

The third and final phase is the "**reconstruction**" phase for employees whose homes are a total loss. In terms of **reconstruction**, the final and longest phase, Leonard & I have reached the conclusion that we are limited only by our vision. There are homeless police and fire employees from Pascagoula to Waveland with Gulfport in the centre. We believe the Lord is leading us into a sustained attack on this problem, starting in Gulfport, but that this work will not cease when every Gulfport employee is back in their home. Leonard also believes that sometime during the next phase we will be moving offsite at GPD particularly to avoid any conflict with the Mayor by use of city facilities.

As I write, members of the California FCPO and police departments in that area are getting geared up for a 1 week "reconstruction" beginning in mid-November. I have heard that members in the Calgary, Alberta area are coming in the new year as is most likely a team from Vancouver/Vancouver Island on Canada's west coast.

Raymond and his family are only one of many similar stories we have to tell. The members of the Gulf Coast need your help during this time. If you can swing a hammer, tote a bale, put up shingles, drywall or pull wire, you can make a difference. So you can't go, how about talking with someone you think maybe could or taking the lead in organizing a team? I was once told that there is no such thing as a coincidence but rather all things in life are "God-incidences". Perhaps you may consider reflecting that in reading this, are you being called to help?

David G.

PS: You can see regular photos and stories at:

[www.fc pocanada.com](http://www.fc pocanada.com)  
[www.fc po.org](http://www.fc po.org)  
[www.gulfportpd.com](http://www.gulfportpd.com)

**Canadian donations can be sent to:** FCPO Canada: 73 Devonshire Ave. Tillsonburg, Ont. N4G 5C3

Canadian donor cheques should be made out to *FCPO-CANADA*, with a separate piece of paper marked "Gulfport P.D. Relief." (please do not designate directly on cheques). All gifts are tax-deductible. (CHARITABLE NUMBER 12036 5804 RR 0001)

**US Donations can be sent to:** FCPO-USA, P.O. Box 3686, Chattanooga, TN 37404-0686.

US donor cheques should be made out to *FCPO-USA*, marked "Katrina Relief." All gifts are tax-deductible.