

# Project Katrina

## Update November/December 2005

David Greenhalgh, reporting from the Gulfport Police Department:

*The following is part of an November/December 2005 update on the situation in Gulfport from FCPO member David Greenhalgh. David is part of the relief effort and has volunteered the next 12 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.*

It seems hard to believe that over 3 months has passed since I first arrived in Gulfport, Mississippi. I continue to be amazed when I look back at the progress which has been made in getting families back together and members of the Gulfport Police Department back in their homes. There is however still lots to do, and in saying so we feel led to continue this project until December of 2006. In our next phase we plan to reach out to hurting and needy officers in Long Beach and Pass Christian PD's.

As I write, I am getting ready to head back for 10 days to the Great White North and Christmas with my family. Ok, so I will confess, Vancouver is not really known for its snow but it is north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel and a whole lot colder than the Gulf Coast of Mexico and Mississippi. To me, it will be the Great White North!!

What has happened over the past month? In November we were beset upon by a convoy of personnel and supplies dubbed "Miracles for Mississippi" direct from the wonderful state of Florida. To make it a cross country adventure, FCPO US board member Howard Eddy arranged a team from California who worked some very long hours and made a huge difference to a lot of families. Howard and his team also organized a Thanksgiving dinner for over 140 people during their week there which was no small feat. We met many wonderful supporters and generous donors of both money and materials.

I should mention that Grant Wolf Executive Director FCPO came down to present the Chapter charter to the Gulf Coast Chapter FCPO. The Chapter inaugural date: – 29<sup>th</sup> August 2005 – the day of the Katrina storm. This is a Chapter fellowship that was founded in a Baptism of flood.

Alec continues to work wonders with the Fire Department. With God's help he has leveraged all kinds of beneficial work on firefighters homes. Laurie has become a mainstay of the Youth For Christ relief operation and I am often the beneficiary of her home style cooking.

This past month has been full of planning and preparing for January and February 2006. We are to coin a military term, "locked and loaded". Our storage site is organized, we have tools on hand, houses to work on and teams preparing to head down. January looks to be extra busy and here is a rundown on what is to come.

A team of RCMP members from Victoria, BC and Montreal, Quebec will be flying in early January. Two 10 member teams of Victoria, BC area firefighters come down mid and late January, complimented by a 15 member police team from Calgary, Alberta. To finish the month off, 4 Victoria Police members are also coming down. All will be doing restoration and cleanup work, all have taken personal vacation time and all have paid their own way down with the help of several association, city and union donations.

How has all this come together? Certainly not by our doing that is for sure. Yes we, as individuals, may put in the time, but it is God who has provided the opportunities, opened the doors, provided resources

and put people where they need to be, when we need them to be there. Coming down and lending a hand is only part of the equation. Your continued and ongoing prayers supporting this project, the personnel on the ground and your financial support are just as and even more important.

I have, over the past few months, had my eyes opened in many ways that cannot be described on paper. I can say that I have learned a new meaning for the word joy:

J     Jesus first  
O     Others second  
Y     Yourself last.

Over 2000 years ago Shepherd's knelt by a baby in a manger, Angels sang and wise men traveled the known world to pay homage and worship. The true meaning of Christmas is summed up in one word: Joy.

God Bless and Merry Christmas

David Greenhalgh