

## 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

### Lend A Hand

Lend a Hand has experienced a year of challenges!

In 2008, we were asked to go to more places D'Iberville and Ocean Springs, Mississippi, De Land, Florida, Clerendon, Arkansas, Oakville, Iowa, and Prot Arthur, Texas).

We sent more groups.....a total of 14 in 2008 as compared to the 10 each for 2006 and 2007.

We responded to requests for aid from floods, tornados, and hurricanes.

And yet, in 2008, **we had fewer volunteers than in prior years**...In 2006, the average was 45 persons per trip, in 2007, the average was 37 volunteers per trip, and in 2008, the average dropped to 28 per trip. This decline in 2008 can be attributed to several factors.

1. In Oakville, we were only able to house 24 people at a time, thereby limiting the number on each trip.
2. There are strong indications that although we have over 700 on our mailing lists, not all are actively interested in going on another volunteer group. In the disaster assistance jargon, this is called 'Compassion Fatigue'. People are 'burning out' and need a period of relief and rejuvenation.
3. The economic straits being encountered at all levels of society have caused a pause while individuals ponder the amount of discretionary funding that might be available to pay for the bus trips.

Additionally, in 2008, **we experienced for the first time a deficit between our annual revenues and expenses**. Income received in the form of donations and grants decreased by \$13, 723 or 32% which translated in a balance sheet deficit of \$11,018.33. This \$11,000 deficit can be explained in several ways.

1. Churches, corporations and individuals found constraints on their 'mission giving' because of rising operational costs and a general decline in Pledges and other offerings and collections.
2. Corporations and Foundations realized lesser amounts of dividends and capital gains in the portfolios of the organizations, resulting is fewer dollars available to support worthy community and charitable causes.
3. Individual donations decreased by almost 50%.

To offset some of the revenue shortfall, the Steering Committee made several changes to our operational strategies.

1. We changed our bus provider and saved an average of \$2,500 per bus trip.

2. We established a guideline that if fewer than 20 signed on for a trip, we rented 15 passenger vans instead of using a bus. For up to 28 volunteers, we leased a 35 passenger bus; for up to 45 volunteers, we leased a 55 passenger bus.

3. When motels were to be used, we ‘shopped around’ for the best discounted price.

4. Whenever possible, we contacted the Presbytery in which the motel was located and received permission to use their specific tax exemption status to reduce our costs.

**And yet, we remain joyful and optimistic.** It seems, that the Lord has always provided. We have never cancelled a trip because of lack of funds. There have been several times when we were about to phone to cancel the volunteers on a scheduled trip when, without explanation; a check would arrive at the office to fully cover the amount needed to make the trip happen! Miracles.....yes! God’s intervention....yes!

### 2008 STATISTICS

LOCATION	TRIPS	VOL.	HOURS	FEMA WAIVERS	HOMEOWNERS SAVINGS
D’Iberville	5	197	7880	\$156812	\$197000
De Land	1	15	600	\$ 11900	\$ 15000
Clerendon	1	26	1040	\$ 20696	\$ 26000
Oakville	6	132	5280	\$105102	\$132000
Ocean Springs	1	27	1080	\$ 21492	\$ 27000
	14	397	15880	\$316012	\$397000

Total assistance

\$713,012