



Hurricane Relief Efforts Wind Down

Equine rescue efforts finally draw to a close in the aftermath of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

For Immediate Release

HITCHCOCK, Texas/EWORLDWIRE/Oct. 25, 2005 --- Just as Hurricane Katrina's winds settled down, Habitat for Horses/Lone Star Equine Rescue volunteers arrived at the Lamar-Dixon Expo Center in Gonzales, La. They immediately began working with the Louisiana Veterinarian Medical Association (LVMA) staff and the Veterinarian School of Louisiana State University to organize equine rescue efforts.

After receiving official status as part of the State of Louisiana Search and Rescue Team, the organization arranged for volunteer teams to arrive in scheduled four-day cycles and began delivering donated supplies to the Expo Center.

Under the guidance of the LVMA, HfH/LSER brought in nearly 170 of the 400 rescued horses at the Expo Center, as well as about 150 dogs, cats, birds and two iguanas. Only four of the recovered horses have yet to be claimed by their owners.

During the next three weeks, the organization's members put in around 10,000 man-hours of work, doing everything from making phone calls to pulling pets from attics.

With Hurricane Rita headed for Habitat for Horses/Lone Star Equine Rescue's home base in Galveston, Texas, many volunteers left Gonzales to focus on moving their own horses and horses on Galveston Island to the Travis County Expo Center in Austin.

The week after Hurricane Rita, volunteers worked another 7,000 man-hours transporting horses, cleaning stalls and delivering supplies to various areas in Texas and Louisiana. Under the skillful guidance of organization president Terry Fitch, the center for rescue and recovery efforts from Hurricane Rita in New Iberia, La., recovered and returned 80 horses to their owners.

If the aftermath of the storms, HfH/LSER delivered 10,480 bales of hay and 125 tons of feed to locations in Texas and Louisiana under the direction of the Texas Animal Health Commission and the LVMA. About \$130,000 worth of supplies - everything from halters to grooming tools to medical supplies - were donated through the organization.

HfH/LSER presented the LVMA with a \$10,000 check toward the cost of equine veterinarian care at the Lamar-Dixon Expo Center, acknowledging the fact that LSU, the LVMA and many of the veterinarians who donated their time to help save the recovered horses suffered severe financial loss.

"It was an honor to work beside Bonnie Clark, president of the Louisiana Equine Council, Dr. Rusty Moore and Dr. Dennis French of the LSU Veterinarian Medical School and the many vets and vet assistants involved in the rescue and recovery efforts," said Finch. "We are deeply in debt to our members who gave selflessly to the recovery efforts in Louisiana and Texas, sacrificing many sleepless hours to save and extract horses and pets and to keep our efforts organized."

Habitat for Horses/Lone Star Equine Rescue is a 501.c.3 nonprofit covering Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma with around 1,000 dedicated members. It provides equine rescue services to law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma, an active equine adoption program, an equine

education center and equine-assisted services to youths and adults.

For more information, call 866-HfH-LSER (866-434-5737).

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