

TEXANS ON MISSION™

A quarterly publication of Texans on Mission

FALL 2024

HURRICANE RELIEF:

HOPE
AFTER THE STORMS

PAGES 2-4

ALSO INSIDE: REBUILD IN MATADOR | CAMP BUILDERS IN N.M. | WATER IN PERU

HURRICANE RELIEF:



Two of the largest hurricanes in U.S. history struck this fall, and Texans on Mission volunteers and equipment came to residents' relief in Tennessee, North Carolina and Florida. Hurricanes Helene and Milton tossed millions of people back in time, as storms wiped out access to electricity, tap water and the Internet with no clear signs of when they would return.

"People can't get water, people can't get food, people can't get electricity," said Philip Forester of Johnson City, Tennessee, a few days after Helene caused massive flooding. "So please, anything you all can do to help, we would really, really appreciate it."

TXM Disaster Relief brought mass feeding, chainsaw and flood recovery units to both sides of the Appalachian Mountains in Tennessee and North Carolina.

Then Milton rolled across the midsection of Florida. TXM responded with mass feeding, flood recovery tools and electrical support. As of the print deadline for this publication, TXM was providing roughly 7,000 meals a day to storm survivors.

"Helene left a trail of almost unbelievable destruction," Texans on Mission Disaster Relief Director David Wells said. "And

then Milton pounded central Florida.

"These storms have really been hard on the people, often leaving them feeling hopeless," Wells said. "So we've jumped in to help them as quickly as possible and to stay around to help when others leave."

Whether using chainsaws, shovels or cooking equipment, TXM volunteers are helping people do what they can't do on their own. As they serve people, they're encouraging them, praying with them and sharing God's love. The time volunteers spend with homeowners means as much as the help they provide.

"These guys are a blessing," said Joe Carpenter of Forest City, North Carolina, after the Rolling Timbers TXM chainsaw team pulled a 25-foot-tall tree off his roof. "I'm 83 years old. There's no way I could do this on my own." 🇺🇸

At the time of print, Texans on Mission hurricane relief was just beginning. For more information, visit texansonmission.org.



You're a blessing



In recent days, we have all watched the shocking images of destruction caused by Hurricanes Helene and Milton. Flood waters washed away entire communities. Millions lost power, and many still do not know when it will return. And, of course,

there was the tragic loss of lives.

It's heartbreaking.

For most Americans, that's where it stops. But not for you. God has worked through those emotions, and you have responded. You have deployed Texans on Mission mass feeding, flood recovery, chainsaw, shower/laundry and chaplain teams to meet needs and share God's love.



That's what it means to be on mission for Christ. You are living out James 1:22: "Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." Whether you are praying for the effort, supporting it financially or serving on the field, you play a crucial part in what God is doing after these deadly storms. People across the eastern portion of the country are hurting, and together we are delivering help, hope and healing in the name of Christ.

You're ministering to people like Joe, who has lived in Forest City, North Carolina, all 83 years of his life. He's seen a lot in his time, but he's never seen a storm like Helene. The winds pushed an enormous tree through the roof of his house, sending insulation and rain pouring inside as he hunkered down.

He knew he couldn't get the tree off his house by himself. He needed help. Shortly after, a Texans on Mission chainsaw team was in his front yard. In about a day, they'd removed three large trees from his property and cleaned up his yard. When the team was finished, they prayed with him and presented a Bible to him.

"There's no way I could ever repay what they're doing," he said. "It's a blessing."

A blessing. Made possible by you. And through you. Thank you for your continued support of Texans on Mission ministries.

Mickey B. Lenamon

Chief Executive Officer
Texans on Mission



When the responder needs help

Tracey Smith has been active in Louisiana Baptist disaster relief efforts for years. Hurricane Francine turned the tables on the volunteer in September; this time, he needed help.

Smith, pastor of First Baptist Church of Morgan City, La., found himself on the receiving end of disaster response when Texans on Mission's Deep East Texas team came to his rescue. As would be expected, Smith didn't stand around and watch; he worked alongside the Texas volunteers tearing out lower walls and treating for mold.

"Well, we've been through this before," Smith said. "We've been through hurricanes Laura and Delta back in 2020, but we didn't have flooding like this."

Flooding from Hurricane Francine seeped through the outer walls of Smith's house, soaking the carpet and gradually being absorbed into the walls.

As the water rose around their house, Smith "sat in the truck with the two dogs" near his fishing boat in case he needed to "help our neighbors escape," said Marci Smith, his wife. It was not needed, but Tracey was ready to help.

The Smiths' own home became surrounded by an unbroken sea of water.

"It's just kind of a hopeless feeling not being able to stop or prevent that from happening," he said.

The day after the storm, Tracey noticed the water "was migrating more and more throughout the house.

"So we didn't know to what degree we're going to have

to remove the flooring or walls or anything like that. It pretty much changes your routine and most definitely changes your way of life. You know that it's not going to be back to what you would consider normal anytime soon."

Tracey has responded to other disasters, including Hurricane Ian in 2022 when he worked with Texas volunteers, so he knew what to expect from the volunteers when they arrived.

"We knew the quality job" they would do, Tracey said. "We knew that they were going to be more than willing to do whatever we needed. And we were just glad to have them."

And "this is a good bunch," he said of the Deep East Texas team, which has volunteers from the southeast part of Texas. ➡



See full story online at TexansOnMission.org/francine-story



REBUILDS



Hope comes to Matador

Texans on Mission rebuild home for tornado victim

Brooke Brandon fearfully recalls the day — June 21, 2023 — a tornado ripped through the West Texas town of Matador. Her town. Her home. The home her parents built in 1963 and she and her siblings inherited.

“All I did was scream and pray,” she recalls. “I had three cats and was screaming for the cats, and there was a dog out in the storage room. So all I could think of was the animals, you know?”

She remembered hearing wind and the sound of glass breaking, but “I don’t remember anything else, really. It’s just really loud.”

The tornado touched down about nine miles away from the city and moved quickly over the Texas caprock into Matador, taking out businesses and homes. She and her neighbors were directly in its path. The home of the couple next door “was leveled,” she says. The wife didn’t survive, and the husband still suffers from injuries he sustained that day.

Brandon sits at her kitchen table surrounded by the sounds of hammers, drills and sawing. Her kitchen floor is stripped to the baseboards, and the walls are unfinished sheetrock. Still, she’s grateful for the construction all around her, calling it one of many “blessings after blessings.”

The noises around her are being created by a dozen Texans on Mission volunteers, representing a collaborative effort between TXM’s Rebuild, Disaster Relief and Builders teams. Rebuild planned the effort. A disaster relief group from Southcrest Baptist Church in Lubbock provided much of the labor. And Bob Davis, a member of TXM Builders and from Matador, coordinated the project.

The volunteers worked for a week refurbishing the garage and storage room and placing cement board on the façade, adding to the work already provided by a similar team from Lawn Baptist Church.

“Well, all I can say is it’s been a bunch of blessings after blessings,” she repeated. Those blessings started when first responders and her uncle, Stan Martin, found her and the three cats and dog, all alive, after the tornado. A support fund provided by neighbors helped, too, but the money soon ran out leaving her with few options to rebuild her destroyed home.

Brandon said Rafael Munoz of Texans on Mission called “out of the blue” and said help was coming. Then teams working under the Texans on Mission Rebuild banner showed up with materials and manpower to provide construction work.

She said the family was “running low on our money, the donation money we received, when all of a sudden, boom, it’s just happening. It’s been nothing but a miracle since then.

“Y’all just stepped in again and provided,” Brandon said. “When we thought you’re done, well, you said, ‘No, we’re not done.’

“You can just see God working,” she said. She called the volunteers blessings. They “didn’t have to be here, but God has provided.” 🇺🇸

Read the full story online at
TexansOnMission.org/matador.

A ministry modeled after Jesus

Jesus met people where they were. He ministered to them, met needs and shared the Gospel with them, radically changing lives – and the world – with God’s love. That’s exactly what Texans on Mission seeks to do. Our teams meet people at their points of crisis, such as after a disaster like hurricanes and tornados or in the midst of a struggle to attain clean water.



The need for such ministry has never been higher than now. The number of disasters is multiplying across the country. A seemingly continuous string of disasters – tornados, hurricanes, fires, floods – has hit Texas already this year. Hurricanes Helene and Milton have severely devastated states from Florida all the way up to North Carolina.

Ministries like Texans on Mission provides the crucial help, hope and healing in the name of Christ that is desperately needed. You can make sure hurting people get it.

RELIEF

Disaster relief teams meet physical needs with hot, nutritious meals. They clean out flooded homes. They cut fallen limbs and tress. They provide access to shower facilities and laundry services.



REJUVENATION

With your help, we do more than address physical needs. We encourage people. We lift their spirits. By serving and visiting with them, we remind them that they are loved – by us and by God.



RESTORATION

More and more, Texans on Mission teams aren't simply clearing the path for recovery; they're walking the journey together. We're rebuilding homes. Our connections with families are lasting longer. We're not only restoring homes, we're restoring lives as the Gospel transforms them completely.



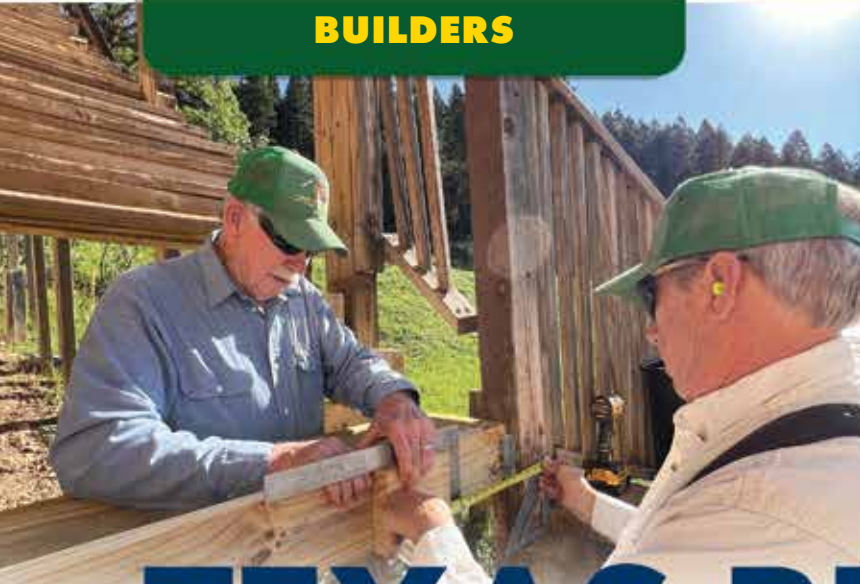
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TEXANS ON MISSION™

BUILDERS



TEXAS BUILDERS

bring help to New Mexico mountain retreat



Nestled in the mountains of southern New Mexico, Aspendale Mountain Retreat Center draws people from miles around for times of Christian renewal. It also draws children and teenagers for camps.

Texans on Mission Builders spent much of August at the Baptist camp. The eight-man, five-woman team built two cabins and repaired outdoor stairs on a dormitory

facility, as well as making curtains and other items. They arrived in early August just as summer camps wrapped up.

"The timing was perfect," said Jim Pettit, center director. Walnut Ridge Baptist Church in Mansfield, Texas, built the shell of the cabins in July, then the TXM team finished the roofs and interiors.

Aspendale is in New Mexico, but it's associated with El Paso Baptist Association. It occupies a high valley with elk grazing during the morning and evening.

"You couldn't pick a better place weather wise," with lows in the 40s and highs in the 70s, said Ralph Stephenson, coordinator of TXM Cabinet Builders. But the sun is "a little bit more intense with the altitude" and breathing required some adjusting.

Larry Quinn, coordinator of TXM Camp Builders, called Aspendale the "westernmost camp that we have. Even though it's in New Mexico, ... we consider it one of our camps."

The camp director's introduction to TXM came last year. "I was thoroughly impressed with the group that came last year and was excited that they had agreed to come back this year," Pettit said.

"Everyone has been a blessing – great spirit, great attitude," Pettit said. "You can tell there's just the love to serve Christ in His Kingdom work."

Pettit also was "impressed with the professional work they perform" and with their concern for the finished product. "I've just been totally impressed with the skills and the attitude of men and women that took time out of their schedule to come."

Quinn has a deep spiritual commitment to supporting the work of camps. "There's about two places where children make major decisions for their life," he said. "One of them is Vacation Bible School and the other is camp."

"And I can't tell you how many times I have heard from people that I used to know in my workaday world that say, 'Oh, you're at a camp that I went to or you're at a camp where I accepted Jesus as my personal savior.'"

Quinn said the Camp Builder volunteers "just feel obligated to continue that process. These camps really operate on shoestring budgets, so it's important that they have a little help from time to time and the labor that we provide is free to them."

Speaking to others who might want to be part of Camp Builders, Quinn said, "Just come pitch in and have a good time with us." 🇹🇽



Read more about this project online at TexansOnMission.org/aspendale.

The ladies of Texans on Mission Camp Builders: sewing together for God's kingdom

Sounds of roaring electric saws and clanging hammers reverberate outdoors across Christian campgrounds courtesy of hardworking Texans on Mission Camp Builders volunteers. Inside, different sounds are heard. They're the whirs of sewing machines, snips of scissors and laughter from a great group of friends serving God in a remarkable way.

The "ladies of Camp Builders" are wives who accompany their husbands on Camp Builders projects. While their spouses unload construction tools from the Texans on Mission trailer, the ladies unload sewing equipment and bins upon bins of donated fabric and supplies.

When the sun rises each morning – after a hearty breakfast and devotion together – volunteers head to their projects, all of them eager to use their time and talents to make an eternal impact for the kingdom.

A sewing room is set up in an available space – often in a cabin's common space or an old storage room. In the sewing room, the ladies tackle as many projects as possible. The priority lies in what the camp needs, which can include curtains for cabins, seat cushions, food covers and even bean bags for cornhole games.

The women make skirts and shorts for various ministries; quilts and baby hats for pregnancy centers; curtains for the camps; fidget quilts for children with special needs and nursing home residents, among many other projects.

Veteran sewer 88-year-old Joan Tucker finds great joy in embroidering special designs for her quilts, bringing a personal touch to each pattern. She and her husband, Earl, have volunteered for 20 years.

"When we started, we were one of the youngest couples. Now we're one of the oldest," Tucker said with a chuckle.

When it comes to retirement, Tucker said, "You have to stay busy or else you'll just sit in a rocking chair until you fade away."

When volunteer Nancy Morgan retired from 42 years of nursing in 2017, she yearned to serve others behind the scenes.

"It's fun to sew together with a group of women and have fellowship together, but the end goal is to further the kingdom of God," Morgan said, noting the ladies pray over every completed item before it's sent to its final destination.



While some volunteers join the crew with a prior knowledge of sewing and needlework, many have little to no experience, yet all find a task to do.

"We have plenty of places for people to work," said Beverly Quinn, coordinator for the ladies of Camp Builders. "There are always things to cut out. There's always something to do for the people who don't sew."

She considers it time well-spent with good friends and for a great cause.

"This gives the ladies a purpose," Quinn said. "We not only have fun together, but we pray together. I enjoy not only knowing we're making a difference in lives here and abroad, but that we all become family." 🇺🇸

Read more about this story at
TexansOnMission.org/builder-women

Hempstead church funds Peru water well then sends team to help drill it

Give the money. Help drill the well. That’s what First Baptist Church in Hempstead has done over the past year through Texans on Mission’s Water Impact ministry in Peru, with an assist from First Baptist Church in Melissa.

Last fall, the Hempstead congregation gave more than \$26,000 through the statewide Royal Ambassadors mission project, which raised funds to drill a water well in Peru. Nine months later three church members, along with translators from Melissa, went to Peru to help do the work.

“We went to follow-up on the money we had raised for a water well and to see what the Lord was doing,” said Hempstead member Rooster Smith.

They also helped the regular drilling crew dig trenches and operate the equipment.

Mitch Chapman, director of TXM Water Impact, said the effort provided a “great opportunity to connect our ongoing work in Peru with these special Texas churches.”

“First Baptist Hempstead took a great step of faith and support for missions last year in giving financially to drill the well,” Chapman said. “I’m so thankful we could organize this mission trip so they could be personally involved in the drilling and the ministry.”

Team member Rick Gardner praised the Peruvian team. “The in-country team did a fantastic job,” Gardner said. “They are a hardworking group of guys.” And they were “very patient” showing the missions team how to do the work.

“We prayed over the work before starting,” Smith said. “We hit water about 100 feet deep that afternoon,” and the experts

Youth in Peru display artwork they produced in ministry provided by First Baptist Church of Hempstead.





Texans on Missions volunteers from Hempstead and Melissa pitch in with TXM's Peruvian water well drillers to bring water to yet another village. TXM is drilling wells in the upper Amazon River and its tributaries and doing so along with ministry to children, youth and adults.



seemed surprised at how quickly they had been successful. Five minutes after hitting water, women began bringing pots to capture the water. He said it wasn't pure yet, but it was better than what they had been drinking. "It was very gratifying to watch the kids play in the water," Smith said. Before the well came in the team had watched villagers bringing water out of the river, and "it was pretty disgusting." The team also distributed Gold-to-Gold Gospel Bracelets, which are bands with colored beads illustrating redemption through Jesus Christ. Smith said Royal Ambassadors, Challengers and women from First Baptist

Hempstead made the bracelets to distribute. The Texans also took soccer balls and yoyos for the children. They played games with the kids when not working on the well. Game time "usually resulted in soccer" with cows and chickens on the field with the players. Chapman said: "I love it that teams from Texas can be part of both the drilling and the ministry. God is being honored. God's people are being strengthened. And God's kingdom is being expanded." 🇺🇸

Read more about this work online at TexansOnMission.org/hempstead-peru.

VOLUNTEERSPOTLIGHT

Presenting the mighty Quinns

One sunny day after returning home from a relaxing vacation, Larry Quinn begrudgingly headed out to his yard to tackle the knee-high grass that was quickly morphing into a suburban jungle. He started the engine on the lawn mower, made one-and-a-half passes, then “ker-plunk!” The equipment gave out.

Larry’s frustration quickly shifted to an epiphany. He sat down with his wife, Beverly, for a life-altering discussion. It was 2016. Both were recently retired and had begun contemplating how to spend the rest of their lives meaningfully.

“Look,” Larry said, pointing to a series of financial numbers — a love language for Beverly, who spent her entire career as a bank examiner. “I can buy a new lawn mower, and we can keep maintaining this home, or we can sell the house, live in the camper and do what we want.”

Beverly couldn’t deny it. The economics lined up, and the freedom sounded thrilling. They sold what they could part with, put the rest in storage and moved into their camper.

The following year, the couple hitched up the

camper and embarked on their first trip with Texans on Missions Camp Builders.

“We had been looking for something we could do together,” Larry said. “We discovered Camp Builders, and it just fit us like a glove.” 🇺🇸

**Read the full story online at
TexansOnMission.org/quinns.**

