



KATRINA Daily News

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Keesler medical aid reaches community neighbors in need

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As Keesler Air Force Base medical personnel walked to the doors of a local high school turned shelter, a man approached with wide eyes and a huge smile. Stopping a few steps from the Airmen, he raised a hand to his brow and said "I salute you. I'm proud of you all and thank you for your support."

Jack Shotwell had been in another shelter, but was forced to relocate with his son due to poor conditions. Interaction with Keesler Airmen was a sign that help was arriving – and he, along with nearly 40 other shelter residents, welcomed it.

While the Mississippi Gulf Coast is focusing on rebuilding in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, medical personnel from Keesler are providing comfort to many still residing in area shelters.

Every day, two teams of medical personnel consisting of doctors, nurses and social workers visit area shelters to evaluate the health of residents and provide medical care as needed.

"Once we were able to leave our shelters after Hurricane Katrina, we immediately began responding to calls for assistance from the community," said Brig. Gen. William Lord, 81st Training Wing commander.

One such call came Sept. 1, when a local police officer approached Keesler personnel to request medical aid at a shelter located in a junior high school just outside the base's gates.

"The officer told us there were a lot of people in the shelter and they were getting sick due to the lack of food, water and sanitary living conditions," the general said. "We immediately dispatched a medical team with food, water and medical supplies in order to assess the situation and provide treatment to the

many cases, we are the only source of medical care these folks will receive."

And the care is well-received by residents of the shelters.

According to Gulfport police officer Eddie Hilliard, it was a blessing to see Keesler personnel arrive at the badly neglected shelter.



Capt. Tracey Gosser, 81st Medical Group Neo Natal Intensive Care Unit officer in charge, treats 5-year-old Alexes Wisniewski's foot after removing some glass, while Alexes' mother, Patter, looks on. The captain is part of a medical team from Keesler, that travels to local shelters to provide medical care. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Dan Oberly)

extent possible."

The medical humanitarian missions have continued daily for the medical teams, visiting more than a dozen shelters in just a few days after the hurricane devastated the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

"It's such a great feeling to be a part of this effort," said 1st Lt. Schavonne Fludd, a basic personnel officer course instructor stationed at Keesler, who is also the coordinator for the medical teams' humanitarian missions, during a follow-on visit to a local high school gymnasium that is housing hurricane victims. "In

"I was the only source of support for this shelter for four days after the storm," he said. "There were about 170 people living here and there was no food, water, electricity or plumbing, so conditions deteriorated quickly. Suddenly, the military showed up and brought some food and water, and the medical team arrived to provide care to those needing medical attention. It was the first food and only medical care these people received."

The team returned to the shelter a couple days later to check on the

progress and provide any additional care that was needed. Once again, smiles abound as the team circulated through the gym to talk to residents and "bandage" any ills. In fact, one of the team's doctors borrowed a satellite phone from the unit's accompanying HAMMER ACE communications team to consult a cardiologist on behalf of a resident who required medication but had none.

"It's a blessing to have the military here," Mr. Shotwell said. "You don't really know what they do until they show up and really step up to help. It's like getting a shot in the arm."

KEESLER BASICS:



Maj. Teresa Roberts, 81st Mission Support Squadron Family Support Center chief, stands beside Master Sgt. John Lowe, Family Support Center superintendent, during a retirement ceremony held here Wednesday. The ceremony is one sign things are returning to normal after Hurricane Katrina battered Keesler. (Courtesy photo).

General Information

Evacuation info – All remaining dependents who plan to evacuate are required to report to the Levitow Bldg. (Fish Bowl/Family Assistance Center) to identify your method of evacuation. Please sign up at the Fish Bowl as soon as possible. If you are leaving via **military airlift**, the deadline to evacuate is Sept. 8. Call DSN 597-1263 for additional information. If you are leaving by **commercial airline**, military buses will provide transportation to Mobile airport daily from the Levitow Bldg. at 7 a.m. today through Friday. Contact vehicle operations at DSN 597-2430 or 2432 to sign up. Please provide your departure date. If you are leaving via POV, please provide your departure date.

Fish Bowl Movie Schedule – *Thursday*: Babe, 10:30 a.m.; Hitch, 7 p.m.; *Friday*: 10:30 a.m., Little Giants; Independence Day, 7 p.m.;

Storage Pods – Storage rooms and pods are available. See your unit representative.

Food – Both dining facilities are open.

Breakfast: 5:30 to 8 a.m.

Lunch: 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Dinner: 5 to 9 p.m.

AAFES – The mini mall BX hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Subway is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Gasoline – Gasoline is available 24 hours at the AAFES Service Station; \$30 limit with a major credit at unattended pumps.

Fitness Center – The Blake Fitness Center is open from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Area Schools – Biloxi schools plan to resume classes Oct. 3. Ocean Springs is planning to resume classes the week of Sept. 26.

Claims Information

Claims Briefings –Legal representatives provide claims briefings for all personnel at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. daily. Call DSN 597-5404 for more information.

Advance Claim Payment – If you plan to file a claim with the military, you may be eligible to receive advance payment. Maximum amounts are determined case-by-case. Visit the claims office for more information.

Legal Assistance – Attorneys are available to assist with personal civil legal matters Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5 p.m. Call 377-5404 to schedule an appointment.

USAA – USAA is located at the Levitow Bldg. Their hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact a representative at (800) 531-8222 before visiting.

GEICO – Representatives are available to answer questions at the Levitow Bldg. until further notice. Call claims into the GEICO regional office at (800) 841-3000.

Finance Information

Finance – Limited financial services are available at the Levitow Bldg. from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Customer service hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. To reach a representative for customer service/travel pay related issues call DSN 597-7479. For budget issues, call DSN 597-2770. Contact a finance representative at DSN 597-7256 for additional information.

Health Care Information

Emergency Room/Urgent care clinic – Medical care is available at the EMEDS tent hospital located directly across from Tyer House and beside the Sablich Center. Routine or non-urgent sick call hours are 8-11 a.m. and 3-6 p.m. daily. 24-hour emergency care is available. Those not in the local area can contact the nearest military medical facility or call (800) 444-5445.

Life Skills – Life Skills Support Teams are located in the Fish Bowl and at the EMEDS tent hospital. A mental health provider is on-call 24 hours through the EMEDS.

Health Care for Military Families –Military treatment facilities across the U.S. have extended hours, established refugee clinics and begun many other creative programs to take care of displaced active duty family members and retirees. TRICARE has waived referral requirements for Keesler's TRICARE Prime enrollees. Necessary care can be obtained from any network provider with no preauthorization required. Call (800) 444-5445 for help in finding care.

SARC – Keesler's Sexual Assault Response Coordinator is available 24 hours a day. If you are the victim of an assault, contact DSN 597-7278 or the Keesler Command Post at DSN 377-4330 for immediate assistance.

Medical Transportation – A medical shuttle will transport personnel for routine medical issues from 8 to 11 a.m. and 3 to 6 p.m. Shuttles will stop at the Welch Theater, Thompson Hall, Wolfe Hall, Building 5022, Shaw House, Muse Manor and the Clinical Research Laboratory.

Dental Clinic – The Dental Clinic is open for acute needs from 7:30-9 a.m. and 1-2 p.m. The temporary telephone number is DSN 597-3003.

Chapel Schedule:

Sunday – Protestant Worship, 9 a.m.

Catholic Mass, 10:30 a.m.

Latter Day Saints at the Fishbowl, 2 p.m.

Protestant Worship, 6 p.m.

Wednesday – Mid-Week prayer and Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.

Friday – Jewish Sabbath Service at the Fishbowl, 6 p.m.

Postal Update - Postal specialists from Randolph AFB, Texas, are scheduled to arrive at Keesler today to evaluate the mail delivery system. Once the assessment is complete, the team will oversee setup of postal operations and get mail flowing to customers, as well as coordinating to get locally generated mail out.

