

## Help Postal Service employees impacted by natural disasters



Joplin photo by Lisa Shoring

# PERF in need of funds to help victims

**T**HE WILD WEATHER THAT brought a torrent of tornadoes and floods this spring was capped by the deadliest tornado to hit the U.S. in 60 years. The twister that tore through Joplin, MO, on May 22 killed 138 people and left thousands homeless.

The homeless include 12 letter carriers, 11 of them in Joplin.

Fortunately, these letter carriers, and other postal employees in Joplin and around the country, can depend on their fellow postal workers and managers to help them get back on their feet through the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF).

Thousands of letter carriers support PERF by signing up for paycheck deductions through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). However, PERF is facing a serious shortfall following these tragic weather events, and NALC is issuing a special appeal to letter carriers to help PERF now.

"PERF's bank balance is dropping fast," President Fredric V. Rolando said. "Postal employees already are looking for help from recent natural disasters, and what's more, this year's hurricane season is upon us and it's expected to be severe, too.

"Letter carriers need to do their share. Our brothers and sisters are just as vulnerable to disaster as anyone else. Even if you are giving now through CFC, we could use extra help. If you aren't giving by CFC, please send a check now and sign up for payroll deduction this fall."

Region 5 NBA Dan Pittman and RAA Mark Sims toured the disaster area in Joplin. "I lived through Hurricane Camille and I've never seen devastation this bad," Pittman said.

Sims said about 4,500 delivery points in Joplin are gone: "Six or seven routes have been completely obliterated."

Joplin's Station A post office was damaged, but a temporary facility has been established there so customers who no longer have addresses can come and pick up their mail, Pittman said. It's a vital lifeline for them to receive relief checks, food stamps and insurance documents.

As noted in a *Wall Street Journal* article, letter carriers returning to their routes were one of the first signs of a return to some sort of normalcy in Joplin.

President Rolando is a trustee of PERF, along with Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe and the presidents of the postal unions and

management associations that participate. Active and retired postal employees, craft workers as well as managers, are eligible for grants of up to \$14,000, after insurance and other relief, such as FEMA assistance, have been paid.

Millions of dollars from PERF have helped postal employees recover from natural disasters, house fires and similar life-changing events. The money comes almost entirely from donations by postal employees.

After Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in 2005, nearly 1,400 letter carriers received a total of about \$300,000 from PERF, Rolando said. "But when it came to replenishing those funds, letter carriers contributed less than a third of that amount. That's not like us. We need to do more."

You can donate to PERF today by using the envelope included in this issue of *The Postal Record*. (Note the new address: P.O. Box 7630, Woodbridge, VA 22195.)

To get more information or to apply for PERF assistance, write to the above address, call 202-408-1869, send an e-mail to [perf10268@aol.com](mailto:perf10268@aol.com) or visit [postalrelief.com](http://postalrelief.com). PERF's CFC number is 10268. ☐