

An oak tree fell on Beaufort, SC Branch 3262 member Al Dick's LLV when Hurricane Irene struck the state in August. Dick made it out safely.



Natural disasters take toll on PERF

The unusual earthquake that shook the East Coast in August was startling, but it did little damage. Then came Hurricane Irene, flooding states from North Carolina to Vermont. The next week, another hurricane blasted more water into the region. Meanwhile, Texans watched as their state, suffering from too little rain instead of too much, was overrun with wildfires.

The earthquake and hurricanes even affected *The Postal Record*, delaying production of last month's issue when the printing plant had to be recalibrated and then experienced a loss of power.

August and September once again reminded that nobody is immune from natural disasters, including postal workers. That's why the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF) was created.

PERF provides assistance to postal employees—both craft workers and managers—who suffer from natural disasters or fires. PERF provides grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$14,000, depending on the total amount of qualified loss after insurance and other relief assistance. Since 1990, PERF has provided more than 3,000 grants totaling nearly \$15 million to postal employees affected by hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires and home fires.

"When a crisis affects any of us, it affects all of us," President Rolando said. "Letter carriers and other postal employees look out for each other like they look out for the community. PERF gives us the means to help postal employees so they can get back on their feet."

The unions and other participants in PERF are the postmaster general, National Association of Letter Carriers, American Postal Workers Union, National Postal Mail Handlers Union, National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, National Association of Postal Supervisors, National League of Postmasters of the United States and National Association of Postmasters of the United States.

With the memory of the flooding and wildfires still fresh, now is a good time to make a contribution to PERF—especially since the fund needs to be replenished following the severe tornadoes, storms and floods that shocked places like Tuscaloosa, AL, and Joplin, MO, just a few months ago.

"Natural disasters and fires don't rest, and we can't either," Rolando said. "Letter carriers are deeply supportive of our communities, and we need to keep supporting each other with regular contributions to PERF to help those among us—people we work with every day—in their time of need."

The easiest way is to give through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). The CFC number for PERF is 10268. You can also mail a check to PERF at P.O. Box 7630, Woodbridge, VA 22195 or donate by credit card online at its website, postalrelief.org.

If you need help from PERF, visit its website for eligibility and application information, call 202-408-1869 or e-mail perf10268@aol.com. ✉



Union Plus Disaster Assistance

Some union members who need help after a disaster can also look to Union Plus.

Disaster relief grants of \$500 are available to participants in the Union Plus credit card, mortgage or insurance programs, or to other union members suffering severe financial hardship due to a disaster. Participants must have had accounts in any of these programs for at least 12 months and be up-to-date on payments before the disaster.

A union member seeking help should visit UnionPlus.org/disaster.