



## Community relief for San Leon

**By Chris Paschenko**

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SAN LEON — More than week after Hurricane Ike struck this low-lying, Galveston Bay community, some residents say they're still without electricity, and drive-through lines at relief stations here remained steady Tuesday afternoon.

Dawn Guajardo and Nancy Casto, both of San Leon, entered the supply line at San Leon Community Church, which received a tractor-trailer of water, food and sundries from Valero and other donors.

"I filled out a form to have my yard picked up," Casto said. "My husband's had back surgery, and he can't do it."

The Rev. Bob Gibson said his church started distributing produce about a month before Ike made landfall.

"God gave us four weeks to learn how to do this," said Gibson, from inside his dark church that was flooded during the storm.

The church at Ninth Street and Avenue H was a compound, loaded with pallets of water and boxes of food. Teens from Clear Lake Community Church sorted through tables of sundries and helped load the goods into residents' cars.

Gary Menke and Rocky Marx with Verizon set up free phone banks at the church and Bayshore Park. Marx said all local and some long-distance calls are free.

Mona Wilson is organizing the volunteer effort at the church.

"We're trying to help get the community back on their feet," Wilson said. "And we need volunteers. These kids will only be able to do it the rest of the week."

Anyone wishing to volunteer can call Wilson as 832-892-5633.

The church has a tent that will serve as a shelter for up to 50 people and outdoor showers set up with plywood for privacy.

"We've also got disaster relieve mud-out teams for people who need it," Gibson said. "We plan to do this for six to eight weeks."

Donna Newman and her boyfriend, James Wallace, have opened their warehouse apartment at 635 Ninth St. to anyone who wants to register for help from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Newman said they're not FEMA representatives, but they've let more than 200 people use their Internet connection to register.

At Ninth Street and E. Bayshore Drive, Judy Longo of Gulfport, Miss., passed out relief supplies courtesy of her group cowgirl group the TrailgrazHers.

The group is leaving today but planned to return to Texas with their horse trailers loaded again, Longo said.

Bill Taylor, vice chairman of the Aiken, S.C., American Red Cross has been rolling his shower truck between the Bacliff Fire Department and the San Leon Post Office.

It's equipped with five hot and cold showers and has a clothes washer and dryer inside. Taylor estimates he's provided 100 free showers per day for first responders and residents.

Some bring their own towels, but Taylor had some donated for those without. Shampoo and soap is provided he said.

"I had one man that hadn't showered in 10 days," Taylor said as he fed dog food to a stray cat. "He was just coated. I almost wanted to hose him down before he came in, but after 20 minutes he looked great."

At Bayshore Park, better known locally as Spillway Park, deputy constables with Precinct 7, handed out water and ice.

Chief Deputy Ray Lease said the Texas National Guard provided the supplies.

Former Dickinson High School Principal Mike LaTouche stopped by the park after checking the school in San Leon. He pitched ice in cars for a few hours.

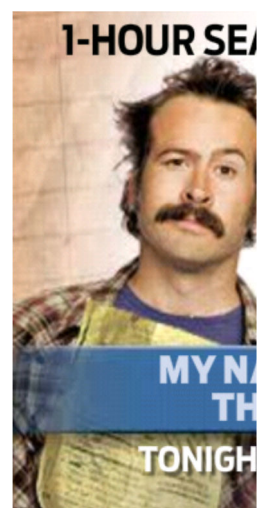
"I just saw they needed help, and I had time to do it," said LaTouche, who is now the school district's director of student services.

"This community is full of great folks who've pulled together to help those who don't have anything," LaTouche said.

Leslie Elliott, who runs the leased post office here, said residents with post office boxes could retrieve their mail.

Mail is being held at the Dickinson post office for those who can't receive home delivery, Elliott said.

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