

From: karen gillioun
Sent: Monday, October 6, 2008 11:20:13 AM
Subject: Re: TERT Deployment Teams

Hi Sherry,

Just wanted to write a few lines to tell you thank you for letting me be a part of such a wonderful experience. I had such a good time dispatching for the people of Bridge City. With everything they were going through and still are, they managed to keep a smile on their face and remain upbeat about the whole situation. I have never seen such devastation so up close and personal. Everywhere you look, you see people's personal lives laid out on sidewalks and in yards for everyone to see. Things that people take for granted everyday has been ripped away from these people in one night. No homes, fresh water, or electricity, even going to the grocery store or taking a bath is a great task. No familiar place to tuck their children in at night. Looters stealing what little things they managed to save, but yet they still have high hopes. One of the great things about Bridge City is the amazing people that live there. I had made a comment to one of the officers about how horrible everything seems to be and why don't people move and start over. There are a lot of people saying the same thing. Everyone but the residents of this wonderful place. I didn't realize or understand the importance of it all until he explained his situation. Many of the people living here are 3rd generation. It isn't just a place to live, it is home. Rebuilding their homes means rebuilding their lives. All their memories are wrapped up in this community. Every street I drove down, Neighbors were helping neighbors, friends, and strangers. It doesn't matter whether they have known you for one year or one minute, they welcome you with open arms. The human spirit is a remarkable quality that cannot be broken in tragic times, at least not in Bridge City. It will take time, patience, and determination, but these people can overcome anything. I wish I could have helped more. I plan on keeping in touch and trying to help out as much as I can. This is an experience that will stay with me forever. God Bless each and every one of these people and hopefully one day I can return and see Bridge City the way it used to be, the way the residents describe it in their stories. I left my home and all its comforts and arrived in Bridge City, a

stranger, expecting the worst, but I returned home with so much more and made friendships that I hope will last a lifetime.

Karen