

All Wrapped Up Continues Shipping Hurricane Katrina Relief Goods

Mill Valley's downtown mail and parcel center steps-up free relief shipments into Gulf region

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Mill Valley, CA August 9, 2005 – Yesterday, All Wrapped Up, a local Mill Valley Mail and Parcel Center, shipped out over 1,300 pounds of relief donations into the storm-torn Gulf. Yesterday's shipment followed 350 pounds that left the store on Tuesday and 190 pounds late last week. Customers have been dropping off donations of toiletries, baby supplies, food and clothing at the store since the free shipping program was announced on August 1st. "There's a total grassroots effort going on down there in the Gulf", reports Lisa Walsmith, who operates All Wrapped Up with her husband Ross. "It's unrealistic to think that FEMA or the Red Cross could get resources into the communities to meet the crushing need for services. So we're seeing people stepping up and organizing their own distribution channels. We've hooked up with several Louisiana charities and we're shipping stuff out as fast as it comes in our doors".

Volunteers have been helping Mrs. Walsmith sort and pack the donations. Walsmith estimates she has sent nearly 2,000 pounds of relief goods to-date, and the daily tally keeps growing. Boxes can be seen piled to the ceiling waiting for the afternoon shipping pick-ups. "In 17 years of running this business, we've established special relationships with our carriers. We rely on those relationships in extraordinary circumstances such as these, and that's really helped us this week", commented Mrs. Walsmith.

Last week, as evacuees were departing the hardest hit Gulf areas, the Association of Mail and Parcel Centers (AMPC) called on its member stores to combine resources to help those in need. When the call went out, All Wrapped Up, an AMPC member since 1989, began collecting relief supplies and shipping them to a fellow AMPC store near the devastation. Located about 100 miles from New Orleans, the Ship-N-Store is a combination mail and parcel center and self-storage facility that's now serving as a delivery hub for relief-related items. The store is closely located to a church, and that proximity aids in distributing the items. Because of their access to storage, Ship-N-Store has been able to process all sizes of shipments.

"Last week the emphasis was more on clothes" says Mrs. Walsmith. "As those needs are being met, we're now shifting our focus to consumables like snacks, toiletries, baby diapers and formula. I know the Red Cross is calling for cash contributions, and that's great. I hope people donate as much as they can. But right now we're trying to get toothbrushes straight into the mouths of those who need them and clean diapers onto the bottoms of crying babies. Drop something off with us today and it will be in the hands of someone who needs it within a few short days. "

“What we’re doing is so small, but still I’m pleased we have this opportunity to help. It’s important to react as quickly as we possibly can”, continued Walsmith. “People are bringing us personal care products by the case and in smaller lots too. Oral hygiene, feminine products, baby goods, you name it. It feels really good to see the kindness we’re seeing coming out of this community”.

Donations can be made at All Wrapped Up, 38 Miller Avenue, Mill Valley. Hours of operation are Mon-Fri 8:30-5:00, Sat 9:00-5:00. An updated list of needed items can be viewed on the web at donatetonola.org.

About All Wrapped Up

All Wrapped Up is Mill Valley’s downtown Mail and Parcel center, owned and operated by Lisa and Ross Walsmith since 1988. Services at the store include packaging and shipping, gift-wrapping, notary public, mailbox rentals, and retail sales of cards, gifts, and mailing supplies. For more information visit <http://allwrappedup.com>

About The Ship-N-Store

The Ship-N-Store is a Mail and Parcel center in Baker, LA. Additional information can be obtained from Lana Griffin (225) 774-2114 or at donatetonola.org.

About the AMPC

With over 2700 members, the Association of Mail and Parcel Centers is the leading association of independently owned Mail & Parcel Centers in the country. For more information on AMPC, call (800)365-2672 or visit their website <http://www.ampc.org>

Suggested donations include:

Baby food/formula/bottles/wipes/diapers adult depends
Toiletries- toothpaste, deodorant, soap, shampoo, feminine products etc.
Over the counter medicines (new, seal unbroken)
Small games/toys/crayons/coloring books for children
Pre-paid phone cards
Non-perishable food (snacks, cheese/peanut butter crackers, candy, cookies)
Pens, pencils, paper

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