

animals, domestic and farm, near Waveland. Jokingly, the guy dressed in a crisp army outfit yelled "HEY WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING MISTER!" I spun around in my chair and we both just laughed for a long time... then he asked me to email him so he could pass it on to his superiors that this vital service was needed. Yes, the military higher ups were attempting to pull the plug on this communication tent. A good part of the kitchen that was serving thousands of refugees was organized by the Rainbow tribe, old and new hippies, I felt at home. It is at the eye of the storm that we find our rest.

For anyone wanting to go to Waveland, Mississippi, and help out, just call me, 1-888-NOTOWAR. There is no US Mail, Fed Ex, or land line. Phone calls are not functioning in Waveland, Mississippi. Folk are working hard. I have been told that this emergency relief work will be going on thru Christmas, and the rebuilding for years. A few days ago, I got a call from the Rainbow people to come to Port Author, Texas for disaster relief caused by Hurricane Rita...

Here is a good blog on Waveland:
<http://newwavelandcafe.blogspot.com/>

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NASA Photo

FROM PITTSBURGH TO NEW ORLEANS

by Vincent Scotti Eirene

No sooner had the idea to go to New Orleans been born than dry goods for an open air kitchen and funding for a van materialized. As we gathered food I observed people were generous and at their very best. Also, this trip south would give me an eyewitness account and a better idea of what resources were needed. So Kristina, from Pittsburgh Food not Bombs, and I set out with a thousand pounds of beans, rice, potatoes, onions and coffee. Although I must admit that a van load of staples seemed a bit absurd in the light of extensive reports of the death and destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina.

Kristina and I screamed down the highway in a snazzy rented mini-van... traveling through Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana. It took 17 and 1/2 hours. Upon arriving at our destination. The camp grounds of Pine-o-Lakes, central command for NGO relief groups. The storekeeper, sporting a new truck with the largest Marine decal ever made, pulled up to the front of the camp store and instructed us to leave. He did not seem to be too impressed with our turtle beans and 1,000+ miles we had traveled. He finally gave me permission and I was allowed to go in, I had ten minutes. As I was walking through the camping area, I was overwhelmed with all the people camped out and obviously ready for the much needed work of disaster relief.

After some negotiation, Kristina and I were finally given the OK to enter the camp grounds. We met people from Food not Bombs chapters in Philly, New York City, Arizona and Connecticut. On sight of our van, people were welcoming and excited that we were there. The next morning, folk eyed the stealth van and wanted to venture a run into New Orleans. I was surprised when we gained access to the city, the Ninth Ward and Bourbon Street. The city was emptied of its residents. Strange spray paint markings had been made on the front of every home by the military to signify how many people had been in each house when its residents had been ejected from their home and city. We came across an artist who folk seemed to know and were helping to clean out his gallery. The mildew covering the first floor was thick, black and

scary. Slowly people emerged and were excited to receive their first hot meal since the hurricane hit. Unexpectedly, we gave out all the food we had prepared at the camp grounds. The next day, we assisted the Food Not Bombs folk in helping someone move back into their home. The small band has established a new base of operation in New Orleans for serving food, working with another collective organizing in the area and an emerging bike coop and distro.



But after two short days it was time to return home. We decided to catch the Rainbow Kitchen in Waveland, Mississippi. Nothing could have prepared us for this assault on our senses. If New Orleans dodged the bullet, then Waveland and other gulf coast towns experienced a direct hit. Here the poet Diamond Dave and a handful of others of the rainbow tribe were feeding well over 2000 people: the military, FEMA personnel, animal rescuers, police, firemen and women from Providence, Rhode Island, etc. ate and worked together. The parking lot was home for the free store Wall-less Mart. On and on went a sea of clothes and food and water. But the camaraderie was what stood out the most. Some army folk had just set up a tent with a free satellite phone and three laptops. Not one to be shy, I called home and talked to Rebecca and the kids and sent out several emails. Ironically, Rebecca was home desperately trying to reach folk to save