

CREATED BY VOLUNTEERS FOR THE ANIMALS

The Humane Society of Louisiana had only recently purchased the property of several acres with a small brick house on Obed Magee Road in Tylertown, Mississippi, because it was expanding and had to leave the city of New Orleans, when Hurricane Katrina hit. When the floods that devastated the city subsided and people could get in to the stricken areas, the rescued animals started pouring in to this new space that was not ready for anything, much less anything of this magnitude.

People from all over the country came to help save the animals. They also helped this Humane Society of Louisiana facility recover from Hurricane Katrina. In a little over a month hundreds of dogs and cats, fish and parakeets, a goose, chickens, turtles, hamsters, gerbils, and rabbits were brought here. There is a story of these animals and what horrors they went through before they came to Camp Katrina. But there is just as much a story of the phenomenal people who made a Camp Katrina for them to come to.



This was my first look at the camp - the porta-potties, the dumpster and the sign. The sign and the porta-potties were moved. I became the 'porta-potty Nazi', trying to keep them clean and stocked and keep people from throwing trash in them - I put up a sign 'DO NOT throw trash into the potties! If the company can't pump them and gets pissed off, we have no place to piss in!'

Those people came from Virginia and Michigan and Pennsylvania, from Kentucky and New York and Hawaii, from Canada and California and Washington and Florida and Colorado and too many more states to list. In the nine days I was at 'Camp Katrina', these volunteers who never met each other before created an animal facility out of a chaotic but functioning space that was reeling, as was all of the area, from being struck by two major hurricanes within two weeks of each other.

They flew, they drove; they stayed two days, two weeks, two months. They got a name tag (very officially hand printed on colored duct tape) and said "what can I do?" and they looked around and saw something that was needed and they said "I can do that" and they did it. Some came and went home and came back to do more, because they had to help as much as they could.

The first ones there put up dog runs and tents and were starting to take in animals when Rita threatened and they had to put thousands of pounds of food and cages and leashes and dishes into trailers and cram the animals into the tiny 5 room brick house and hope for the best - and they were spared. And they started to put the shelter up again.



With several dozen dogs in residence, Poop Pails were an important part of the decor!

They each came with a skill that could be used. They tended sick and injured animals and shoveled stone to cover the soggy ground where the new dogs are washed. They built dog runs, they covered them with tarps and dusted the ground to kill fire ants. They sorted tons of donated animal food and medicine and leashes and cleaning supplies and blankets and people snacks and made order out of the jumbled piles of these so that things could be found when needed. They created an operating room and office out of a room filled with supplies and chairs and a table and some animals, and they turned a bedroom into an ICU, and the kitchen and hallways into cat rooms (and the hamsters and gerbils – “Oh, you can’t use the microwave, the gerbil chewed through the cord”). Someone went out and bought a small refrigerator for people food, because the one in the house was filled with animal medicines.

JR and Pat had come with their wives, Kathy and Lorraine. Kathy was a veterinary technician and went directly to the ICU. Lorraine had management experience and oversaw the whole camp operation while she was there. JR and Pat could do home repairs and they patched the roof, rewired the house, built a wall across the carport entrance, built shelves, upgraded the plumbing, put up fencing for dog pens, patched pens, put up the perimeter fence, and found jumper cables when a car wouldn’t start – joking the whole time they worked.



Jeff (Humane Society Director) and Rick discuss security in the security tent. The stuffed dog was a mascot. Rick had claimed a German shepherd that seemed to be trained possibly for police or security work - and named him Rescue.

Rick had been an MP. He was in charge of security. Elizabeth had been rescuing dogs in Hawaii, and she was in charge of the dogs. Veronica manages a shelter in Michigan and she took over when Lorraine had to leave. Laurie and Kathleen and Mayree and Sherri and Libby and Lee and Leila and many more had volunteered at shelters or lived on farms and they fed and watered and walked and brushed and talked to the dogs. Beth spent two days sitting and lying on the ground in the run with a dog that was so traumatized she would not eat, or come out of her house. By noon of the second day the dog came out to eat, and sniffed Beth's hand and received a pat without cowering and hiding – a victory! Neva and Diane are moms – Neva took over the mountains of laundry – sheets and towels and blankets used in the animal's cages - that were piled up, and they both (with a lot of help) sorted and organized the supplies.

Everyone got up early to be feeding animals by 7 a.m., and worked until after midnight most nights. Teams of rescuers went out day after day, walking ruined streets and listening for barking or meowing from animals left behind over a month ago when their owners evacuated “just for a couple of days.” They looked for strays which have been running the streets, and they got excited when they were alerted to a new area where many dogs are still to be found. They left the camp early in the morning and came back late at night with animals found in the destroyed houses and neighborhoods of the once

proud and beautiful city of New Orleans, or taken from temporary shelters set up in outlying city districts. The van loads of animals came in anywhere from about 9 p.m. to the wee hours of the morning, and the people were waiting to check the dogs in, give them water and a decontaminating bath and pet and feed and talk to them before they settled these traumatized animals in for the night and let themselves fall into a sleeping bag. Their best night was one on which 88 dogs were brought in.

They got up again to feed animals by 7 a.m., and maybe in between they got up to walk a security shift, because people from the area had stolen dogs to use in dog fights that we suspected were happening up a dirt road across from the camp. No, the local law enforcement did not do anything about it.



Looking into the camp from the entrance. Dave Serino and Roberta Wilson, who drove the trailer with the area donations down and brought back dogs -four more dogs when they got here than when they left Tylertown, because the black Lab had puppies in Roberta's lap! This was the day I got there - it looked a whole lot better the day I left!

Every day they fed dogs and walked dogs and cleaned dog runs. They cleaned cat cages and fed and watered them. They filled a plastic wading pool for the goose and rigged wire cages for chickens. They watered dogs and washed dog dishes. They cleaned the cages the new animals had been in for the night and they cleaned the carriers the animals had been brought to the camp in, and one day a group of them stacked all these cages and carriers in one place, instead of them being scattered all over the place – another good project done. Someone gathered together and folded all the tarps that were scattered around

the property, so they could be found and used when needed. They unloaded vans and trucks of donations that came in every day-more food and medicine and dishes and sheets and blankets and “people snacks.” They worked with the vets to check the animals’ health and give shots and make sure all the treatments were recorded to go with the dogs to their foster homes – or back to their owners. They cleaned and sorted and built and did it some more and they congratulated each other on jobs finished – and went to find new ones to start.

They walked around with groups who came to take animals all over the country to be fostered out, animals going to Iowa and New York, Kentucky, New Jersey, Tennessee and Illinois, riding in carriers with food and water, stacked in vans and one bunch in a fancy tour bus, their cages filling the seats usually taken by people going to a casino or dinner theater. They shed happy – and sad -- tears when animals left, because they were going to get homes once more, and because they would miss them – but more would come in that night.



The dog area. The tents to the right are where the new dogs spent their first night. They were washed, fed and given water, and put into cages in these tents, and covered up to keep them quiet. The next day they would be put in runs, which are towards the back of the photo. All the things piled up all over were cleared away by the time I left, they were in a mess because they people were still unpacking the storage trailers after shoving everything into them when Rita hit - and tornados were predicted for the area!

They worked in 90 plus degree heat and 100% plus humidity and kept reminding each other to drink lots of water so they did not get sick themselves.

They grabbed snacks from the tent filled with ‘people food’ donations, and ate Chinese food and grilled cheese sandwiches brought in by the Humane Society director. One night they got a real treat - a ‘red beans and rice’ dinner for everyone, served up the country road at a place that doubled as the local laundromat, snack bar and game room – and they ate in shifts so that some one was always with the animals. They sat late at night and talked about their own animals at home – and ones they might give a foster home to, hoping for the original owner’s sake that they can be reunited but underneath that hoping a bit that this survivor can stay with them, because they have become attached, even though they said when they came that they would not.

They laughed about the cows that wandered through one area of tents every morning, and about showering up the road in stalls the Red Cross hastily put together – on the lawn of the area Baptist church! They laughed at animal antics. They laughed about all the food brought in being vegetarian, because Jeff is one. They laughed at silly things that happened during the day. They laughed a lot.

They cried, too, over what the animals had been through, and they cried when one left for a home, and they cried when they left themselves, because they had been part of a team – and they said, “See you next hurricane!” – and they left part of their hearts and their generosity at Camp Katrina, and they cried for the animals.

When Hurricane Katrina hit, the Humane Society Director and the shelter’s manager lost their homes. Jeff was living in his mini-van and Johnna was sleeping on a couch in the living room of the house, the room that tripled as the shelter office, veterinary storage area and animal operating room. Their personal losses were never mentioned while they helped the animals and constantly thanked the volunteers for what they were doing.

When I left after spending nine days at Camp Katrina I was astounded at the order that had been brought to the chaos there was when I arrived. The veterinarians actually had a place to work. The supplies were sorted and under cover – you could find a leash or a towel or a trash bag or a snack. The carport was closed in to make more room for recovering animals. There was talk of closing in the porch so the cats could live there and the kitchen could actually be used by people – Wow! There were more runs and a security fence around all the dog pens. The roof was fixed and there was a real light in the bathroom of the house. There was much more to do, but there were new people coming in. They’ll do it. They’ll do it for the animals.

I cried when I left.



This is who came home with me. His name is Streetcar - because he was a stray and the only information on him was "Found 2400 block of Desire". No one was in 'cat world' when he came in, so I said I would check him in. I was fine until I took him out of the carrier and he crawled up, put his paws around me neck, licked me and started purring. He is about 6 months old, I guesstimate, has ringworm on his head (many of the animals had skin problems), and was nothing but skin and bone, with backbone, ribs and hip and shoulder bones sticking out. He is eating everything in sight and gaining quite rapidly. Imagine what this little guy went through, by his own little self on the streets for over a month! Talk about being a survivor!

INTO LOUISIANA

October 2, 2005 should have been a busy Sunday afternoon on the streets of Chalmette, St. Bernard's Parish, Louisiana. On a main highway there was some traffic, some vans and cars or trucks pulling small trailers. People should have been going to the store, taking a ride, going to dinner, going to church. On side streets, in the quiet, neat neighborhood with mostly one-story brick homes, cars parked by them, people should have been mowing their lawns, having a barbeque. Instead it was almost a ghost town.

It looks like a quiet Sunday afternoon, until you look closer. The cars aren't parked in the driveways. They are sitting sideways on lawns, upside down on top of one another, crushed under a shed, hanging from a fence, under a boat – and rarely near the house their owners lived in. Trees and branches have fallen everywhere. Blackened sections of lawns and burned branches show where wires fell and started fires. Boats sit in highway medians, on lawns, on the shoulder of the road. A bus is crossways in the island between lanes of a boulevard, another in the middle of a field with its front end smashed. At a small fuel stop tractor-trailers are tossed like toys.



There are no street lights; there is no power. All the businesses are closed. Most have open doors and broken windows. In the parking lot of a drug store a tent is set up where people are handing out water and supplies. There are rows

of ports-potties set up in strip mall parking lots. There are piles of rubble: tree branches and furniture, grills and toys. A couple of dozen cars are lined three rows deep alongside the highway, dragged there to clear the road probably-all with dents, damage and dirt on them. And more boats.

And in front of some houses beautiful rose bushes bloom, bright red and pink and yellow that only accents the destruction they now sit in.



The National Guard has set up an emergency first-aid station at the school sports arena. The American Red Cross office is closed, rubble thrown against the fence around the parking lot and a wheelchair sitting in front of it. The animal shelter is in a field near that, two huge tents with cats in cages in one and dogs in cages in another, and an emaciated horse and a goat tied in the shade of a building out back. People are walking through the cages, looking and hoping for their own pets.

The water has gone down. It was about 8 to 9 feet deep here, “Up to the rafters on the bottom of the attic”, according to one resident. Windows are broken, doors are open, belongings are strewn across the yards, lying in dried muck.



The muck, a mixture of oil, mud, and no one dares think what else, is dried and cracked into chunks of a solid gray to black mass two to three inches thick and from a few inches to a few feet across. It is everywhere, on lawns, streets, inside houses and cars.

Each house has spray painted on it an 'X', with a date and symbols indicating it has been searched. Some say "animal inside" and then a date the pet was rescued. Some have sadder messages of the number of animals – or people - found who did not escape the floods.

Some have messages the owners have sprayed on "Looters Welcome," "Goodbye," "Thanks for the Memories." A few have "For Sale" signs in front.



Some people are salvaging what they can. Some have piled what they can't on the front lawn with a sign "Free." Inside the houses everything is in ruins. Refrigerators lie on couches, small furniture is piled in the corner of a room. In one house a crayoned sign over the doorway from the living room to the kitchen gaily says "Welcome Home!" There is a display case, the glass broken but for a wonder upright, with a collection of lovely dolls inside it; more dolls line the mantle. In the yard is a small pile of G.I. Joe dolls. All covered with the muck.

At one house we stop and offer water to the family that is hauling boxes into their front yard – on top of the dried muck. A tire and a baseball glove sit next to each other in the corner of the yard, where the water left them. The Pohlman family has salvaged what they can – all things that were in the attic – an old radio dating to the 1930's that had been his father's aunt's, a box with a collection of salt and pepper shakers, some Christmas ornaments. They had just gotten new furniture. They were planning a trip to Las Vegas, the honeymoon they didn't have 25 years ago when they married. She had new clothes, but made sure to take them when they evacuated -- they were lucky, the family and their pets got out. Their son had their new car, with only 1,200 miles on it, but his Mustang that had been in the carport was now on the neighbor's lawn halfway down the block.



He says “It’s not the first time we’ve lost everything – when the kids was young we had a fire in our trailer home – we almost lost the kids. That’s what’s important, we got out and they got out and we got our pets.” She says “I’d invite you in for coffee, but the house is a mess.” He shows us the flagpole in the back yard, bent to the ground from the base - “I had Old Glory flyin’ on that every single day.” He tells us about the neighborhood, blue collar hard working people. He is a policeman. “Those folks over there, he was a barber and she was a hair dresser. I never paid for a hair cut the whole time we lived here, and they never had to cut their own grass – they was older”, he sadly remembers. He shows us a gun case lying on the street, the gun gone, stolen. “I don’t know where that came from,” he says, “but I don’t know how they think they can use it, it was all rusted.”

“They say they’re gonna bulldoze it all down, because the land is contaminated,” he says, telling us that they are near the water, near the broken levee and near where the oil storage tank ruptured from the water pressure and mixed with the flooding lake water that inundated the neighborhood.



When we leave he asks can we move his truck around front so he doesn't have to get into it with his mucky boots. They tell us to go to the church a few blocks away, and look at the statue of St. Anthony. A stone at the base dedicates it to his parents – and the statue and stone are unharmed, but the watermark shows that the floods came up to St. Anthony's neck.

In another neighborhood, closer in to the city and more affluent, with older, more ornate, more "New Orleans looking" homes, the water was not as high, only 3 to 4 feet. A woman tells us, "We got water in the basement, and if they'd let us back in we could have saved some things, but we were kept out so long everything got moldy." They are airing out and seeing what they can salvage. They left their "Doberman diva" and her 7 month old puppy with food and water when they left town on Sunday, thinking they would be back in a day or two. After 16 days of trying to get permission to go back and get the dogs, the husband found someone with a boat, someone who could get around the National Guard checkpoints and went in. The puppy was barely alive; it had pressure wounds and it took it 12 days to be able to stand up again-it has been in a vet clinic intensive care unit for 3 weeks. They took the dogs to the animal triage center at the shelter set up in the nearby Winn Dixie parking lot, and from there to clinics in other cities. "As soon as we can we'll have our pets back," they smile and say. Their cat was in the house for 26 days: "She wouldn't let us come near her," but it is doing well now.



The husband saw destruction everywhere, and on one corner, two bodies tied to a stop sign. “They said the National Guard was doing that, so the bodies wouldn’t float away and could be recovered,” he says.

They told us that some places in the Latin Quarter are open – and the famous New Orleans coffee and beignets are being served out of the back of a truck on Sunday mornings.



On Elysian Fields Boulevard the Theological Seminary has used fallen branches to block off driveways, and an armed guard stands behind one pile of them. Many exits off the interstate highways are blocked by police cars. The “Animal Rescue” signs on our van get us through check points. Other exits are barricaded off, but cars go around the fences. People are trying to get home, trying to salvage what they can, to see if they can go home again. There is a curfew in parts of the city.

On the way out of the city we see a military convoy heading in, to take over the nighttime guard. An old man drives a pickup truck slowly north on the interstate, the bed and a small trailer behind filled with a few pieces of furniture, and things in large trash bags. We drive back to Camp Katrina, thinking about home.



THE ANIMALS' PLIGHT AFFECTED EVERYONE AT CAMP KATRINA

“This guy was a big executive, the head of Morgan-Stanley, and he was sitting with the dog in the middle of the field”, Elizabeth recalls. “We were running around tearing everything down because (Hurricane) Rita was coming in and they were predicting tornados here.” The pretty Corgi came to the shelter pregnant, a stray picked up in the ruins of New Orleans. She was trying to deliver the puppies and could not. Elizabeth went on, “They had to give her a C-section, and her puppies were all dead, and we were trying to get the dogs moved out and put the ones left in the house and get everything into the trailers before the hurricane hit us and in the middle of it all this big executive with Morgan-Stanley was sitting in the field with Corgi-Mom on his lap and the tears were just streaming down his face. An executive with Morgan – Stanley, crying and crying over what happened to that dog.”

She should not have been surprised. Everyone cried over the animals and their stories, executives to housewives to farmers and everyone in between.



Digger - so named because he kept digging out of the run. He went to the Hampton's.

Corgi-Mom's story had a happy ending. She spent time in the ICU, in a cage in what had been a bedroom of the house on Obed Magee Road. People walked her and checked her condition and fussed over her and exclaimed over her sweet nature. And, in the end, she pranced up the steps of a swanky tour bus and was put into a cage secured to a bus seat and was on her way to the Hampton's in Long Island, New York, with about 2 dozen other animals the Animal Rescue League took to foster out. She'll make someone a loving, loyal pet.

The people picking animals to go on that fancy bus kept asking 'what's the story about this dog', and we kept saying 'every dog has a story.' Some of them we knew but most we didn't.



How too many of the dogs looked when they came to Camp Katrina - painfully thin, but wanting to be petted.

Imagine the stories. Imagine you are a pet, and one day your people put you in the basement or in a closet or pantry or carrier or tie you in the back yard and say “It’s just until the hurricane passes, we’ll be back tomorrow.” And they don’t come back. You bark, cry, whimper, meow. And they don’t come back. You eat the food and drink the water they left. And they don’t come back. Some of you see water coming in your house and find a way to climb above it, or manage to swim until it goes down. Some of you get out. Some of you are the now famous ‘rooftop dogs’, shown worldwide on the news. Some of you don’t make it out. But you all now have one thing in common – you were left alone in a city that may never recover, and your owners may never find you. And you each have a story.

A month after the storm the rescue teams are still finding animals, miraculously still alive, in the water ruined homes of New Orleans and the surrounding parishes. These are gaunt, emaciated, and almost unanimously so glad to see people they cannot stop licking and jumping and wagging their tails. The teams are still catching strays running the streets, in packs or alone, fatter from eating the dog food that is being put out on almost every corner but still frightened, confused, and looking for their people.



This dog was so sweet I named her Precious. She had been bred and rebred, a one-dog puppy mill. She would sit for hours with Bayne, husband of one of the volunteers. He had the beginnings of Alzheimer's, and Precious would get as close as she could get to him, and just sit there.

Mark, from Long Island, spent days in the city trying to get as many animals as he could; he slept in his van in the parking lot of the Winn-Dixie market that had been turned into a temporary shelter and animal drop-off point. He found many animals, including a shy young dog that he took home to foster. One day he saw a Uhaul with dogs inside it. He was about to break a window to get the dogs out, because it was so hot, when a woman came outside and said that she and her daughter were checking on the dogs every ½ hour at least. They were trying to get to Arizona, and he was crying when he said that he gave them \$40 to help them out.

One night Lorraine came out of the house in tears. She had gotten a call from some one who said a group of dogs was being held at a school somewhere in the city, and that the police went in and shot them. Everyone at the camp was horrified. More checking revealed that it had happened, because the dogs were beyond any hope of saving, too starved, too sick. Everyone mourned, even though everyone knew it was for the best.



Scarface -- this old guy had probably been a bait dog, his face, shoulders, sides and legs were covered with scars. He had a sweet, quiet disposition and just wanted to be petted.

At the Winn-Dixie, a young man came up to one of the rescue teams and asked if they had seen a white pit bull. They have seen hundreds of pit bulls, many of them white. "It was in the house with my grandfather and he – he – he didn't make it. I want to find my dog, he's the only thing I have left." The rescue team gives him phone numbers to call and goes on to look for more animals.

One little dog had been found in a house, where it had been for a month, with its owners. They were dead. Another sweet tempered female dog was found in a room with her mate and their litter. She was the only survivor.



In the heat of the afternoon, you could always just sit around and talk - and pet a dog. Karen Ross from New Lebanon holding the dog, Lee and Bayne, both from Kentucky.

The "Fisherman," one of two men who had originally been hired because they had boats and could get in to the city areas and look for animals brought dogs one night. He said some Federal Marshalls had stopped him and said they knew where there was a dog in a house. He told the story: "Ah followed them a long ways in (...to the city) to this house and we went in and looked but we didn't find no dog. I asked them was they sure and they said 'Yes', they'd heard it. Well, then, Ah told them, Ah'm not leavin' until Ah find it. And do you know, that dog had climbed up, you know in the kitchen where they's cabinets up above and all, well, the kitchen was a mess of course with the refrigerator laid over and all, but that dog had climbed up on top of the stove and was up in a cabinet - Ah jest seen it's paw a'stickin' out and Ah got 'er". The dog had been in the house for 31 days. It was emaciated, but had energy enough to wag all over when taken from its cage at Camp Katrina. The young Lab mix was named Lucky Lady.

A mother and daughter live next door to each other, and have 19 cats, most of which were in cages in the daughter's house when the floods started. She was next door, having tea with her mother when a nephew pounded on the door to tell them the water was rising. Together they managed to get upstairs with her father, who has dementia and had a door locked and had to be persuaded to open it. As soon as she could, she went next door to see how the cats had fared. They were swimming in their cages, but they were all right.



Cats brought in from a woman who had been keeping them at her home, and had too many to care for herself. They were in the big room of the house, waiting to be checked in and taken to cages.

The police and National Guard at check points going in to the city wave the vehicles with ‘Animal Rescue’ signs on through, and many applaud and cheer them. They tell the rescuers where they have seen or heard animals. In one instance, a policeman says “I know where there are two dogs – I’ll show you on once condition – that these dogs NEVER go back to that owner!”

One day volunteers are sent to a woman’s home in a nearby town. She has been taking in animals and has too many to care for by herself. They bring back about 20 cats one day and 11 dogs the next. One of these, a mini-Doberman, is shaking with fear. A volunteer cradles it in her arms, sits in the shade and talks to it, telling it stories and “you’re gonna be all right, honest you are” for an hour, until it stops.



One of the cats waiting to be checked in.

A kitten is brought in one night. A stray about 6 months old, it was found on Desire Street. How did something that small survive? It is skin and bone, but meowing loudly, and when taken from the carrier, it wraps paws around the volunteer's neck and licks her chin. It feels safe again. It has ringworm and diarrhea, as do many of the animals. Curable, and it has already snuggled its way into a volunteer's heart and will go home with her, and be named Streetcar.

Volunteers driving through a neighborhood looking for dogs see a couple trying to salvage furniture from their house. They left their 'Doberman diva' and her 7 month old puppy with food and water when they left town on Sunday, thinking they would be back in a day or two. After 16 days of trying to get permission to go back and get the dogs, the husband found someone with a boat, someone who could get around the National Guard checkpoints and went in. The puppy was barely alive and it took it 12 days to be able to stand up again-it has been in a vet clinic intensive care unit for 3 weeks. "As soon as we can we'll have our pets back" they smile and say. Their cat was in the house for 26 days, "She wouldn't let us come near her", but is doing well now.



Pilar, the veterinarian from Alberta, Canada, getting ready to vet check a new kitten.

A man and his son stop their car, all they have left, at the gate to the camp. “We got out, with our five Chihuahuas, but now we’re staying with someone and we need food for them, do you have any? And do you maybe have a carrier or something? The one is pregnant and she needs some place to have her puppies.” The little boy describes their two cats, that they could not catch to bring with them, and the volunteer promises to look for them. “We went back in, but we lost everything, and we didn’t see the cats,” the father says. They leave with a carrier, and bags and cans of food and are told to come back when they need more.

The rescuers tell of finding a dog that has been in a cage on a roof for 34 days – and is alive. How? No one knows. Some, in yards and on the streets, are not alive. Rescuers sigh and sometimes cry, but go past these looking for ones they can save.



Besides the dogs, they find cats, rabbits, hamsters and gerbils and birds and fish and chickens and one day bring back a goose. That is promptly named AFLAC and put into a pen with a wading pool full of water. The smaller animals are in cages in the house and the chickens in a wire pen out back – the rooster tells everyone when to start a new day at Camp Katrina.

A month after the storms many of the dogs found are Pit Bulls and Rottweillers, large dogs able to survive. Both are usually friendly with people; many of the males show scars of fights and the females have other evidence of either fights or of being over bred – one-dog ‘puppy mills’. Security patrols are necessary at night to keep locals from stealing these to use as fighting or bait dogs. There are also cute smaller dogs, like two Lahso Apso’s that came in. Unfortunately, one alleged volunteer took them when she left – without bothering to get permission from shelter officials. Fortunately, the majority of the volunteers were there to actually help, and not for their own personal gain. The shelter is still deciding whether to pursue recovering those dogs and charge the person. They have enough to do without that unnecessary problem.



At the St. Bernard's Parish Shelter, the dogs were under tents, in cages like this -- this one did not care if it moved ever again, it seemed.

The rescue teams go out again – the National Guard has told them where a group of dogs is huddled on a high piece of ground in the still flooded 9th Ward. They will try to get to those dogs today, “They can’t have much time left.”

At the camp, others feed and walk and pet the rescued animals. And load them into vans and a camper and a trailer and SUV’s and a bus to be taken all over the country, to no-kill shelters that will find foster homes. Their pictures will be on www.petfinder.com. They hope that at least some will find their owners. Some of the cats and dogs are being held until the owners themselves find a home and can come for a happy reunion. Everyone – animals, owners and volunteers alike - wants more of those. And there will be. Everyone is sure of it.



Sorry, can't pose, I'm busy being petted. At the St. Bernard's Parish Shelter.