

# FAIR & equitable

MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ASSESSING OFFICERS

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## *The Mississippi Disaster*

by Michael Worley



## *An Interstate, Multilocal, Government, Hurricane Disaster Response*

by Morgan Gilreath



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Cover photos of damage in Mississippi caused by Hurricane Katrina courtesy of Mike Worley

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## An Interstate Multi-Local Government Hurricane Disaster Response

How Volusia County employees lent a much-needed hand to their Mississippi counterparts' post-Katrina recovery efforts

By Morgan B. Gilreath, Jr.



*Team no. 3 from Volusia County Appraiser's Office is pictured above from left to right, Will Triplett, Chris Cromer, Lynne Coffin, Susan Bolen, Bonnie Robson, Shelley Szafraniec (Team no. 2, Volusia County information specialist), and Morgan Gilreath.*

Our involvement in the Long Beach, Mississippi, recovery effort began quite simply and from the most honorable of motives: a friend's caring for the welfare of friends who had been in harm's way. William Whitson, assistant city manager of Port Orange, Florida, used to live in Long Beach. After Hurricane Katrina tore through Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi, he contacted a friend in his former hometown and was told about the incredible devastation there. He then called the city managers of nearby New Smyrna Beach and Palm Bay, asking if they would help with an unofficial trip to Long Beach to see what the needs were.

So, from this phone conversation, Team no. 1 was born. The three men gathered some supplies and set out to conduct a fact-finding mission in Long Beach. What they found when they got there was a city government with no computers, no way to process payroll or handle purchasing, and no way to respond to the demands of recovery from a devastating disaster. Long Beach was only weeks away from going broke as a result of losing all its records and most of its tax base.

Whitson and the other city managers from Florida then responded proactively to form Team no. 2, composed primarily of information technology (IT) personnel. The team leader was Tom Fitzgerald, the IT director from Port Orange, Florida, and the team included two incredibly gifted and enthusiastic young IT professionals, David Wagner, Network PC Support Technician from Palm Bay, Florida, and Sarat Dontula, Web/database administrator, City of Port Orange, Florida. They grabbed several computers, networking and telecommunications equipment, and a complete telephone system (which will eventually end up in the hands of a child advocacy operation) and headed for the devastated town. They also brought digital cameras, global positioning system (GPS) technology, plus IT knowledge and a lot of "get it done with whatever you have" savvy. They set up a computer center in the Long Beach Fire

Station, which was serving as the temporary City Hall in addition to its usual role as a fully functioning fire station.

Within a week, Team no. 2 had located and purchased a payroll and purchasing system from a vendor in Maine, downloaded it, got it up and running, and began training local staff on how to operate it. In a brief span of time, Team no. 2 had helped prepare the City of Long Beach to pay its people and to begin handling the many and varied purchasing challenges of the coming months—an incredible task under very difficult circumstances.

The city then asked the team for help with damage assessment. In a cash crisis, the city could not obtain financial assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) until it filed a report on infrastructure damage to water lines and systems, bridges, manhole covers, sewer lines, and storm-water drainage systems. FEMA would pay for 100 percent of the infrastructure damage once it had been documented.

Team no. 2 went to the hardest hit area of Long Beach, south of the railroad tracks, and took GPS latitude/longitude readings as well as photographs, each time rotating in a 360-degree circle. I believe that they did this at each intersection, documenting the hundreds of pictures with precise locations. From the regional planning council, they found a geographic information system (GIS) map, managed to uncover a parcel layer, brought in computer-aided drafting (CAD) data on the utilities, and created an incredible mix of high-tech programs and gadgetry that worked! They then incorporated a Microsoft™ Access database so that each digital camera had a name and each picture a number. They then created centroid latitude/longitude numbers for each parcel, linking to the pictures in the Access database. In this way, someone could type in a name, address, and parcel number and see a picture of the property, the value, the amount of damage, the available utilities, and so forth, as the data were input and made available. People in City Hall were able, for the first time, to see what had happened in

the area around their homes. Incredibly, all of this was accomplished by Team no. 2 in one week.

### Property Appraiser Volunteers

The call then came for Team no. 3 to come help with damage assessment. I found out about it around 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 20. By 1:30 p.m. I had confirmed our logistics status and asked my staff to volunteer. They were the “best,” in my opinion, stepping forward without question. And so, Team no. 3 was born, Volusia County Property Appraiser’s first participation in this effort. I was proud of my volunteers.

On Wednesday, September 21, at 6:00 a.m., members of Team no. 3 gathered at the offices of the City of New Smyrna Beach. Arriving from the Volusia County Property Appraisers office were Chris Cromer, Susie Bolen, Lynne Coffin, Bonnie Robson, Will Triplett and myself. We were joined by volunteers from Port Orange, New Smyrna Beach, and Palm Bay. Kissimmee and Punta Gorda team members planned to join us in Tallahassee. The five of us from the property appraiser’s office each brought a vehicle, in order to “field” more people once we got there.

The almost 600-mile journey to Long Beach went relatively quickly. I called it

“freed for speed.” We left New Smyrna Beach with 12 vehicles, including four police squad cars and fire battalion vehicles with lights flashing. Two positioned themselves in the front and two in the rear to keep our convoy together. After meeting the Kissimmee and Punta Gorda groups in Tallahassee, we left the metro areas and our police escort allowed us to quickly drive to our destination. The view as we entered Biloxi, Mississippi, and points west was a sobering preview of what we would see in Long Beach.

### The Devastation

When we arrived at our destination, the extent of the devastation left us speechless. No one had ever seen anything like it. I don’t think that anyone in the community escaped damage. There was a quarter-mile swath of total destruction along the entire gulf coastline of Long Beach. U.S. Highway 90, the coastal highway through town, was washed out in many places and there were no buildings left standing within three to four blocks of the shore.

After spending eight nights and nine days in Long Beach, including the most devastated areas south of the railroad tracks, it feels almost sacrilegious to talk about the devastation. There was more absolute and total destruction of property than I’ve ever seen in any one place.

It was the human side of this tragedy that hit me the hardest. It’s intensely personal when your home (or the home of a relative) is destroyed and it contains all that you hold dear. The sight of a single personal item, here or there, tore me up, and they were everywhere. A spoon or fork, a plate, a shoe, a sweater and shorts, or the cute kitchen clock, with seashells and lighthouses around the face, frozen at 7:13, when time stopped for that household. Where their homes once stood, returning owners found only debris and litter.



*A moment frozen in time*

We saw numerous American flags on poles stuck in the ground or tied to sticks or trees. It reminded me of the first men on the moon proudly proclaiming, “This is my country, my ground.” These sights sank a hook in me that won’t come out. Disaster has a very personal side and it was most unkind to the residents of Long Beach. I was there for a little more than a week, they had been there since the storm hit and they still have many trials ahead. I don’t feel I have the right to say more about what happened to the people. It’s so personal and doesn’t, in my opinion, translate well.



*A compelling symbol of perseverance in the face of hardship*



*View of the surge zone near the Gulf coastline shows very little left standing*



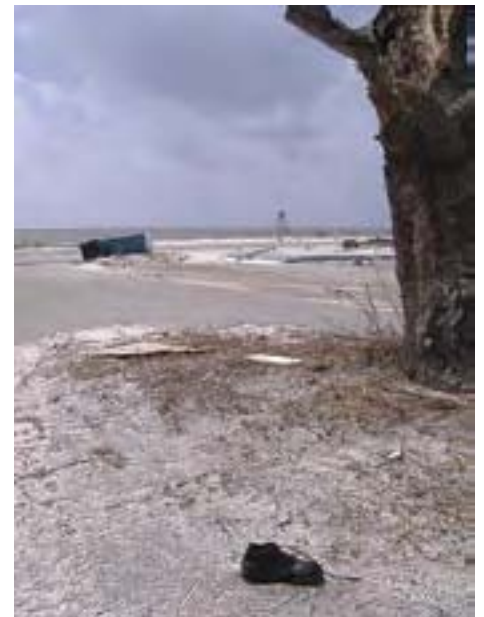
*Examples of the total destruction in Long Beach, Mississippi*

## The Leaders of Long Beach

Mayor Billy Skellie seemed to be more of a manager than a mayor, which is a compliment. He was in the Fire Department/City Hall every day, always encouraging everyone and making us feel welcome. He was very engaged—always conferring or attending meetings. The citizens of Long Beach are lucky to have this true gentleman leading them.

Building/Codes/Planning Department Director Vic Lassabe was faced with a mammoth task, given the total destruction of almost 25 percent of the property in Long Beach and moderate to severe damage to 75 percent of the remaining properties. He welcomed us as if we were old friends and provided us with whatever assistance we needed. I cannot imagine the challenges he will face as people begin to apply for permits to renovate and rebuild. Like all the city officials we met, Vic truly cares about his town and the people in it.

Fire Chief George Bass is one of the most gentle and considerate men I've ever met. He would say, "I just want to thank ya'll for being here, we really appreciate your sacrifice in coming down here to help us. Can we do anything for you?" His men were called upon to be away from families and they had lost all that was dear, except for their own lives. These men still



*A solitary shoe by the ocean is a poignant reminder of the forces that disrupt human order in the world.*

responded to calls to help others in need of their services. Chief Bass was unflappable and caring; he quietly took care of almost anything we needed—from passes to the south side to straightening out the mostly federal caretakers of the gas pumps designated for law enforcement personnel and select others about our vehicles' qualification to fill up there.

City Engineer John Campton, in the midst of trying to supply potable water to Long Beach citizens and deal with every city engineer's worst nightmare, had the foresight to design forms for each type of infrastructure we would need to assess before we arrived. Initially, his forms seemed needlessly complicated to us appraiser-types. Later, we found them to be exactly what we needed to find and record descriptive information. We had forms that allowed us to describe damage to water wells, water mains and fire hydrants, manholes and sewage systems, pumping stations, traffic signals, and bridges. Later, with the help of Team no. 4 and Volusia County engineer Jim Pekala, John was able to put realistic values on all of the items we had recorded for him.

Harrison County Tax Assessor Tal Flurry, whose county responsibilities go beyond the boundaries of Long Beach, is a thoughtful public servant who is alert to opportunities to help others. When he heard about the Florida teams' activities in Long Beach, he contacted members of Team no. 2 to learn what they were doing and see if their work might be of use to other cities or counties in the area. He was the force behind our meeting with officials from other nearby communities to discuss how response efforts could be coordinated across jurisdictions. He always came through for us, too, even under extreme time pressure, when we needed data for our work. We were likewise happy when we could share our data with him.

### The First Briefing

Upon arrival, Team no. 3 leaders met with Mayor Billy Skellie, Building Director Vic Lassabe, Fire Chief George Bass, and City Engineer John Campton. We were told that the city had just received its first debris removal bill and that without a system in place (Team no. 2's set-up was not totally finalized at this point), the city would have trouble paying the bill.



*Debris scattered everywhere created a monumental clean-up challenge*

This was of significant concern because there was such a great demand for trucks, bulldozers, and demolition/removal equipment across the region that equipment would simply move to the money.

Aside from this initial meeting, I spent my first hours with Team no. 2 leader Tom Fitzgerald. Tom had already been in residence for a week and he was so "into" helping the people that he wouldn't leave. He was the primary organizer behind the introduction of the incredible IT programs for the use of Long Beach government administrators. The city's computing capabilities had been severely compromised. Tom along with David Wagner and Sarat Dontula performed miracles, from a data standpoint, to get the city up and running.

It had been a long day and we settled into the sleeping quarters the city had provided for us. Our accommodations were essentially a huge tent with sheets of plywood for flooring which could sleep close to a hundred people, if necessary. We called it the "Fire Tent," because it was located right next to the Long Beach Fire Station. It had air conditioning with a huge fan to circulate the air. It actually got cold in there at night. The cool night air kept the mosquitoes out and the ants had been taken care of before we arrived.

There was also a "shower" semi-truck and trailer. The "semi" had stainless steel stairs and a walkway that led to 14 stainless steel shower stalls. It had an equal number of sinks and mirrors, connected to a potable running water supply, where



*The indispensable shower truck was a welcome site after a day of hard work*

we could shave and brush our teeth. The porta-potties for our use were located about 100 feet away.

At first, we thought the conditions were quite primitive. After subsequently sleeping two nights in an elementary school with water so contaminated you dared not even wash your hands and then seeing our “shower semi” drive away, reportedly to a new assignment elsewhere, we came to regard our first days in the Fire Tent like a stay in a deluxe hotel.

## The Work Begins

When we volunteered for Long Beach, we thought we would go there and do real estate damage assessment. We ran actual field tests on procedures and use of maps and developed valuation guidelines. We found that a team should be able to perform damage assessment on about 25 to 35 properties an hour for about six hours a day in 90-degree weather. That's a minimum of 150 properties per day per team. Six teams on the ground could theoretically finish 900 properties a day, and take eight days to get all 7,600 properties done.

What the City of Long Beach actually wanted us to do first was the infrastructure damage assessment because, as I mentioned, FEMA pays 100 percent of these damage costs as soon as the documentation is submitted. The city engineer had designed forms. We reviewed them and had a training/discussion session, prior to going out on our different assignments. My staff's next time performing infrastructure damage assessment will be our second time.

First though, we had to contend with Hurricane Rita, the follow-up to Katrina, which threatened us with enough rain and wind to keep us from going into the field for a full day. The next day, the storm's course still wasn't final and it hadn't quit raining, but the group was biting at the bit to get started. We divided into three teams and we went out into the field anyway.

## The Incredible IT/GIS Team

It is fair to say that not a single bit of our leg work would have ever seen the light of day of understanding without the efforts of our techno-geeks. The dedica-

tion of the IT/GIS men and women was incredible. They all had great attitudes and none seemingly needed sleep. Field team work pretty much takes place from daylight to dark. These folks did the same and then worked every night until as late as 2:00 a.m. I don't think they ever quit before 11:30.

I have already mentioned the incredible technical talent that comprised Team no. 2. They stayed two days into our week and were so dedicated that they had to be sent home, all dead tired and ragged from not taking care of themselves. Tom Fitzgerald, their leader, is a guy who can walk into a room filled with data-chaos (which he did), sort through it, and come out with a cohesive plan for a commonsense high-tech solution. He is a rare talent, and I am proud to have gotten to know him.



*Part of the system used to document infrastructure damage*

David Wagner and Sarat Dontula, very much the younger versions of Tom, were developing sophisticated high-tech solutions faster than most of us could keep up with. I doubt David (an Air Force reservist and as “can-do” a person as I've ever met) has ever knowingly “flinched” at a problem. Even though Sarat left on the Friday after our team arrived, he was on the phone and on his computer at 11:30 p.m. just a few days later when we needed his help.

Team no. 3's IT/GIS Team included Kevin Mouard, GIS Coordinator, City of Port Orange; Angie Hawkins, Network Administrator, City of New Smyrna Beach; Sergeant Mike Broulette, New Smyrna Beach Police Department; and Tony Curtis. Anytime I asked any of them for anything, I got back two or three ways

of looking at the data. We had the best of the best on this team.

My guy, Chris Cromer, was right in there with them. When I suggested, fearing his imminent burnout, that he stop working and get some sleep on two or three nights, I might as well have been swimming upstream in a tsunami. Incidentally, two years ago, Chris was awarded “Florida Cadastralist of the Year” by the Florida Association of Cadastral Mappers. They only give one award. He's a gem. They all were. We love 'em.

Meanwhile, working between the field and technology teams was Bonnie Robson from the property appraiser's office. She proved invaluable to both groups by helping interpret our data for the IT/GIS team and assisting with data entry.

## Infrastructure Damage Assessment

As Field Team no. 3, Susie Bolen and I soon became “experts” in finding and documenting the status of manhole covers and sewer lines. Then we inspected and photographed (over, under, on both sides) all seven bridges in Long Beach (including one that couldn't be moved by my head). Finally, we documented all views of all the street lights in Long Beach. Most of the street lights were broken or gone, but all of the “controller boxes” except one were intact. We took pictures of wires, fixtures, support poles, electrical connections, you-name-it, and entered our findings on the form provided by the city engineer. We then did the same for the traffic lights.

We actually found, called in, and documented one bridge with an undetected defect that could have presented a real traffic problem. Lynn Coffin and Will Triplett, while down in the hardest hit area south of Railroad Road, smelled and called in a gas leak that no one knew was there. Although they never mentioned it or dwelled on it, the field team members were often potentially in harm's way, and they all performed flawlessly.

On Friday, there were still a lot of infrastructure assignments left, but the other teams had said they had them well in hand, and were estimating only a few more days until completion. Since Susie

and I had finished our assignments, I talked to Don Snell, our team leader, about “prototyping” the real estate damage assessment process because we had people from different professional disciplines with none of us having dealt with this level of devastation before. He agreed, so Susie and I began taking out folders of parcel-level sheets. We immediately began finding symptomatic problems in the data. We analyzed each, agreeing on adjustments and went back out to refine the process.

By early Monday morning, it became clear that the data initially loaded into the Access program was flawed, possibly old, and was going to be unusable. This was not good news. I called Harrison County Assessor Tal Flurry and asked if he could have his staff burn us a CD with all of Long Beach’s correct and up-to-date property data, along with the Replacement Cost New (RCN) data and all of their codes. This would enable us to do damage assessment percentages off of an RCN figure rather than a Reproduction Cost New Less Depreciation (RCNLD) figure and to make separate estimates for each building we found. I was asking him to do it “today” so we could get at least some of the real estate damage assessment done before Team no. 4 arrived in two days. “We’ll try to get it done,” he said.

Tal came through like a champ. We got the CD late in the afternoon, the IT/GIS members of Team no. 3 stayed up most of the night entering the data into the Access database. Then, starting Tuesday morning, we had seven teams doing what we all thought we’d be doing all week—damage assessment on real estate.

During the next two days, we assessed more than 3,200 properties, with pictures and descriptions of all the damaged ones. We also surveyed the 1,600 properties hit hardest on the south side of Railroad Road. Almost 1,000 of these were totally destroyed and we estimated an average of 60 percent damage to the remainder.

Chris Cromer did an incredible job to incorporate these estimates into the GIS, analyze it, and report the totals and dollars back to me around 5:00 p.m. Wednesday night. Chris may be allowed to sleep when he gets home, but he



*The immediate surroundings of the fire department/city hall provide a sense of order that contrasts sharply with surrounding areas.*

didn’t get much in Long Beach.

As Tal Flurry had hoped, these estimates proved useful to the assessor’s office and they likewise were valuable to Long Beach as support when requesting payments from FEMA.

Although Team no. 3 did a lot more than this, I’m just reporting on the part I was close to.

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***I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.***

***Christopher Reeve***

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### **The Special People of Long Beach**

First of all, I’d like to mention our neighbors and hosts, the Long Beach Firefighters—what an incredible group they are! A number of them had lost their homes and all knew a relative or friend who had lost a home, a business, or more. They welcomed us, allowed us to drink their coffee in the morning, and shared meals with us many times. And they continued to respond to daily disasters, such as fires and car wrecks. While we were there, they responded to a travel trailer fire at 5:00 a.m., arriving on the scene in minutes. As one battalion chief put it, “six minutes from a dead sleep

ain’t too bad.” Out of consideration for us, sleeping in a tent next to their fire station, they pulled out the fire engines with only lights flashing.

A special firefighter to all of us was Jerry Dubusol, who was always ready with a smile and a kind word, and always around to see if we needed anything. Jerry lost his house to Katrina and everything else but his wife and little boy. One day Jerry came into “headquarters-central” (a room with two tables, six cots and anywhere from 6 to 26 people) and said, “Are ya’ll calling home every day? Are you calling your families every day? The next time you call home, I want you to thank your wives for us. Thank them for giving you up to come down here and help us when we really needed help.” He broke down as he said it and there wasn’t a dry eye as he left the room.

We ate our meals, for most of the week, at the middle school, where church volunteers from Corinth, Mississippi, cooked and served what was very good food—all you wanted to eat. Somehow, a meal handed to me with a nonintrusive “God bless you for being here,” was a nice touch. On my second meal there, a gentleman about my age stopped and held the door open for all five of us. As I walked up, I said, “Now go eat in front of us, we may not leave you any food.” He laughed and asked where we were from. Then he asked why we were in Long Beach. I told him we were helping the city with damage assessment. He looked at me with that thousand-mile stare I had seen 40 years ago in Vietnam and said, “How about writing me down? I lost three houses and two cars.” Michael Hester, a local attorney, having lost his office, several houses, and all





*Facilities were at times crowded as rooms were set up for multiple purposes. Pictured left is the ad hoc office in the fire station. Pictured right are temporary quarters at a local grade school when Hurricane Rita threatened.*

that he materially owned, still thought to hold the lunch door open for five people he didn't know. A gentleman to the core, it was very touching.

We were also visited by "Laundry Angels." On Tuesday morning, one of the ladies from the community came by with white plastic bags. "Give me your dirty clothes," she said, "I'll clean them and bring them back tonight." Just like that, not "How much do you have?" or "If I have time, I'll try to finish them." It was "I'll have them back tonight." And they were. But the really amazing thing, which confirms to me that God was in the mix, happened when the Team no. 3 members were thanking the woman and man who returned the clothes. The lady asked how we happened to choose Long Beach to come and help. When one team member told them the story about William Whitson, the lady exclaimed, "Why William was our next-door neighbor when he lived here!" Our whole visit was like that.

### **Compassion Was Always Present**

One night, Mary Schultz, Emergency Management Director for Palm Bay, Florida, saw a large dog attacking a very small dog. Once she had run off the big dog, she found an almost dead toy poodle. There was no way she could get the dog treatment that night, but she brought it inside, put it in her sleeping bag, and loved it through the rest of the night.

The next morning, Mary brought the dog along to breakfast. I got it water and cut off a coffee cup for it to drink out of. The dog didn't want any water at first. When I asked the lady inside for some bread, she handed me a loaf of beginning-to-mold bread, which became the

dog's first meal—probably in several days. I thought, "Cool, a shot of penicillin." He liked the bread and then drank some water.

Mary found a vet and took the dog over. The vet said he thought he'd treated the dog before and would try to find the owners. Three days later, an older lady and her grandson came by and the dog raced to the boy and leaped into his arms. Mary was prepared to take the dog home to Palm Bay, but was glad it found its real family. There have to be human versions of the same story all over the Gulf Coast. It was about caring and love and it touched me.

While working in the most heavily damaged area south of the tracks, one of the building inspectors helped an older couple move a refrigerator (although we had been instructed not to, for legal and insurance reasons). The inspectors then gave the couple some angels and a crucifix they had brought with them. The couple was so grateful they cried as they thanked them.

As we sat at lunch one day at the middle school, a lady at the table next to us reached into her purse and brought out a cupcake, which she set down in front of the lady seated next to her. She then put a candle in the cupcake and lit the candle as our table spontaneously broke out singing "Happy Birthday to You!" It brought tears to my eyes to see people who were wearing dirty clothes (it wasn't safe to use the water) show such caring for each other. Love knows no bounds and can be bound by no tragedy. I think the emptiness wrought by tragedies can only be filled with love. This whole relief effort for Long Beach was born out of the love William Whitson

felt for his former home.

### **Other Recovery Efforts**

There were many volunteer groups in Long Beach in addition to our team; most I saw were faith based. They had all left family, normal routines, and the comforts of home. I have already mentioned the group from Corinth, Mississippi, who fed many people and I am aware of two church communities from DeLand, Florida, (Episcopal and Presbyterian) who have each staged multiple missions to Alabama and Mississippi.

Who I didn't see during my nine days in Long Beach was the media. They may be giving a lot of attention to this disaster, but I wonder if they are reporting on the "real" recovery effort. I heard many people in Long Beach talking about how lucky they were and how much they appreciated our helping. I don't remember hearing anyone complain about what had happened to them. Most people understand that calamities can happen. I think the character of the response we make helps to define our society. It speaks loudly of the human compassion exhibited here.

### **Mission Accomplished!**

At the end of the day on Wednesday, September 28, Team No. 4 arrived to replace us. There probably won't be another time in my life like the past nine days. Each member of my team volunteered for what turned out to be an experience that would take them places, both literally and figuratively, where they never dreamed they would be going. Providing vital assistance to people who had been stripped of everything brought us all closer together. It was a

phenomenal trip, filled with hard work and tough conditions, but it was also a philosopher's dream. In a lifetime, there are few defining moments such as what we experienced on this trip.

Our mission was accomplished!



*Morgan Gilbreath drives past mountains of debris on his last full day in Long Beach.*

### The Last Day

After breakfast, we had a management meeting and final hand-off to Team no. 4. Our team had completed two days of real estate damage assessment and processing and we could leave the new team with a working plan that would take them through their eight-day stay.

Before I set off for Florida, I took the group on a tour of "ground zero" and the entire town. Seeing the devastation firsthand helped the replacement team see things in perspective. As one Team no. 4 member, a code enforcement officer from Kissimmee, Florida, said to me, "Thanks for taking us to see that, now I know why I'm here."

I have to brag about my Volusia team. They, and the people of Long Beach, are the stuff that heroes are made of. It was put very well by the late Christopher Reeve, "I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles."

We left happy that the recovery effort was in much better condition than when we arrived, and we were all ready to sleep in our own beds that night.

### Epilogue

As of Mid-December 2005, at least ten local government teams from Port Orange, New Smyrna Beach, Palm Bay, Kissimmee, Punta Gorda, and Volusia County, Florida, have been to Long Beach, Mississippi. A number of other teams, begin-

ning with Palm Coast, are helping their western-neighbor city, Pass Christian (hit harder). My office has scheduled three additional teams of seven in January to assist Tal Flurry with damage estimates and data collection throughout Harrison County for approximately 100,000 parcels for the 2006 Tax Roll. ■

Morgan B. Gilbreath, Jr., is the Volusia County (Florida) Property Appraiser. He has been a Senior Instructor for IAAO; served on a number of IAAO Committees (Education, Research & Technology, Computer Assisted Ad Hoc Committee); is a three-time recipient of the Bernard L. Barnard Award; has presented at IAAO annual conferences; and is Past President of the Florida Association of Property Appraisers and a Past President of the Florida Chapter of the IAAO. The Volusia County Property Appraiser's office is the designated agency for damage assessment after natural disasters and has performed these appraisal activities 23 times in Volusia County since 1993.

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