

Treadmore Tribune

September President's Letter

When we see someone in trouble, our natural reaction is to lend them a hand. That's true on a personal scale when someone we know is in trouble, but we recently saw that it's also true on a national scale.

Helping hands were extended from across America, from Canada and Mexico, all reaching toward our gulf coast area. Even before Hurricane Katrina's waters started flowing back to the rivers and lakes from the streets and homes, the aid had begun to flow in. People from across North America and around the world stepped forward, offering help in many ways. Some sent money, food or clothing, some traveled to the affected states to provide firsthand help, and others took refugees from the storm into their homes.

Considering the size of the disaster and number of people displaced, it's not surprising that there was some initial confusion in the relief efforts. But with each day more people stepped forward to lend a hand.

It was impossible to watch the amazing images of the devastation and not feel pain for the folks whose homes and businesses had been ruined by Hurricane Katrina. I don't think many of us can truly appreciate the trauma of having to abandon your home, leaving everything behind, not knowing if we could ever return. Like most people, I wanted to do something to help.

People across the country, and around the world, began to rally in supporting the communities ruined by the floodwaters. You can read the article in this issue about the many ways that members of the Big O family did their part to help.

We can all feel proud of the generosity and compassion shown by the Big O people in the stores, distribution centers and at corporate. So many of you were quick to offer your support for Katrina's victims. We don't know exactly who will be helped or how, but we know that our money will somehow make a difficult time a little bit less difficult.

One of the special things about Big O people is that we are so quick to offer help. It comes very naturally to us. Dealers help dealers with advice and guidance. We support our communities in hundreds of different ways. And when one of our own has some personal or business disaster, they know that they there are many fellow Big O family members ready to offer support.

I am incredibly proud to tell anyone who'll listen that I am part of Big O, especially at a time like this. There's no way their thanks can reach us, but I know that everyone in and around the gulf coast who's being helped sends a thousand silent thanks to the people who generously donated to help them. Let me add my personal thanks for your support.