



Mennonite Disaster Service

MDS' beginnings go back to a Sunday School picnic discussion in Hesston, KS, in July 1950.

Sixty-two years later, MDS continues to respond throughout Canada and the US. This year we continued to see disasters of extreme magnitude, including two of the three most expensive natural disasters in US history.* Both had to do with water; too little and too much. The drought has affected 60-65 percent of the continental US and parts of Ontario, Canada. MDS launched hay drives to respond to the needs of the farming community. Hurricane Sandy was like the exclamation point at the end of an arduous year. Estimates of the cost of this superstorm are still being calculated. On the western edge of the storm volunteers shoveled snow and cleared downed trees. On the storm's eastern edge volunteers cleaned up trees in Rhode Island and mucked out flooded homes in New York.

In the midst of these new disasters and new needs, unfinished work remains from storms in 2011 and earlier this year. MDS continues to rebuild in communities in Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Dakota, Texas, and Missouri.

A milestone this year was the closing of our last project in the Gulf Coast after responding to Hurricane Katrina since 2005. This was the longest continuous recovery effort in MDS' history.

This year 3,492 volunteers served at 15 binational projects, totaling 22,638 days – a value of \$493,282.02 (based on a modest volunteer rate of \$21.79/hour**). Additional volunteers served in many Unit and Regional responses.

In a culture where self-interest and self-absorption is high I believe service to others is a powerful antidote. Through service, new relationships are built and hope is restored. I pray that we may continue to minister as the hands and feet of Jesus; responding, rebuilding, and restoring.

Kevin King
Executive Director

*source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2012/1207/Stubborn-US-drought-could-be-costlier-than-hurricane-Sandy>

**The estimated US national value of volunteer time for 2011 is \$21.79 per hour from www.independentsector.org

2012 AT A GLANCE

15 Binational Projects

3,492 Volunteers

244 Long-term

2,946 Short-term

218 Summer Youth

84 RV

277 Clients Served

Clean ups 102

Minor repairs 102

Major Repairs 40

Houses rebuilt 33
