

# Mississippi Leader Thanks Local 63 for Generosity After Hurricanes

Over the course of this past fall, trucks from Local 63 made trips to the hurricane-ravaged Gulf of Mexico four times. Filled to the brim with bottled water, emergency medical supplies, canned goods and school supplies, trucks driven by Local 63 members brought hope and relief to the storm-battered communities of Mississippi and Louisiana.

For the Teamsters of Local 891 in Jackson, Mississippi, the generosity and support shown by Local 63 members was more than simply a measure of hope.

In December — long after service organizations and humanitarian efforts had left the Gulf — Teamsters from Local 63 pulled into Gulfport, Mississippi, driving a truck packed with bicycles, wrapped Christmas presents, and the jolly “Ho, Ho, Ho!” of Local 63’s own Santa Claus, business agent Dallas Wimer.

“We wanted to make sure every Teamster kid from Gulfport got a bicycle,” said Wimer, who plays Santa Claus for his family when he’s not out bringing joy to those in need. “The members of Local 63 really came together, and the Teamsters in Gulfport had a really nice Christmas when they feared they wouldn’t have one at all.”

At Local 891’s UPS delivery center, just down the road from Jackson, Local 63 members set up an impromptu North Pole. They unloaded the Teamster truck filled with presents from Local 63 families and lined the gifts up according to the appropriate age. A row of 140 bicycles greeted the children of Local 891 as they and their parents celebrated the Christmas they thought they wouldn’t get.



“So many of them came up to me, sat on my knee and told me that all they really wanted for Christmas was for their families to be safe,” said Wimer, who donned his Santa suit and

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listened to the kids’ Christmas wishes. “They wanted their old houses back, or their lost dogs. Most of all they wished the hurricanes hadn’t happened.”

For their generosity and selflessness, Local 63 members were recently honored by Willie Smith, president of Local 891. Smith attended last month’s Local 63 membership meeting and thanked the members,

business agents, and leadership for everything they did for Local 891 in a dire time of need.

“You could have celebrated the holidays with your own Christmas party, but instead you gave it up for the members of Local 891,” said Smith. “You can only imagine how appreciative our members are for your generosity and selflessness in our time of need.”

Smith recalled the smiles on the faces of Local 891’s children — kids who thought their Christmas had been washed away with the floods, rain, and wind. “The looks of joy on those kids’ faces were enough to lift the spirits of all our members,” said Smith. “It means so much to know that we can count on our fellow Teamsters in a time of need, and you should know that whenever your time of need comes you can call on Local 891 for anything. Thank you from all of us.”