

N•Or•M•A•L



New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire

The NOrMAL APPEAL
Press Pack

NEWS RELEASE: NOrMAL FORMED TO AID NEW ORLEANS

A Lincolnshire based organisation wants music lovers to help the 3,200 professional musicians evacuated from New Orleans rebuild their lives and careers. Stranded miles from home, often having lost all their belongings including instruments, the only hope for them continuing to earn a living is to arrange for them to perform – and that costs money.

Founders Jonathan Hoare and John Coops of South Rauceby in Lincolnshire formed NOrMAL – New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire – to co-ordinate benefit concerts in regular music venues across the country.

Says Jonathan Hoare: “We don’t want any money ourselves. We ask people running a live music event to dedicate their next performance as a New Orleans Musicians Benefit. This is for musicians involved in all types of music. Go on to the NOrMAL Appeal web site and make a credit card donation, and this goes to directly aid New Orleans musicians via the Jazz Foundation of America

”NOMC and JFA are our preferred institutions, New Orleans Musicians Clinic and Jazz Foundation of America. The organisations are working on the ground with evacuees and their need is great. If you are not able to do this as a group or an individual and you want to contribute, get in touch and we will help you make a donation in some other way.”

NOrMAL is also hoping, that with the increased press coverage, venues and musicians will come forward to offer their assistance.

NOrMAL is working to a longer time scale too. Next February 28th is Mardi Gras – the time when New Orleans musicians should be at their busiest. There is no chance that Mardi Gras will be celebrated as normal in the city says co-founder John Coops. “What we are doing is getting at least ten venues to hold charity events for during the early part of 2006 and send the proceeds to directly aid musicians.”

Locally NOrMAL will be helping organise three events in South Rauceby to mark Mardi Gras. Subject to confirmation, the choir Wide World Voices from Grantham will sing at Rauceby Hall by kind permission of Mrs Gillian Hoare. A Mardi Gras special will be held at the Bustard Inn courtesy of Mike Peterken and there will be a music event in the Rauceby village hall.

Other Lincolnshire jazz and blues venues approached so far for the New Year events include Boston Jazz Club, the Black Horse at Nettleham, New Jazz 5 at Lincoln, The Sands at Gainsborough, The Farm at Chapel St. Leonards, the Bull at Kirton, the Axe and Cleaver in Boston and Old Nicks Tavern in Horncastle.

Blues and jazz musicians, many of whom lived in low-lying areas close by the French Quarter, have been especially badly affected by Hurricane Katrina. Many are homeless and have lost their instruments. Relocated to Lafayette, Louisiana, the New Orleans Musicians Clinic is organising its own aid programme for musicians displaced by the disaster. There and in Baton Rouge the Jazz Foundation of America is funding the employment of 150 homeless musicians at a series of concerts for children in schools and people in shelters. The first was on September 16th.

Jazz Foundation director Wendy Oxenhorn says: “I pray the musicians will be able to find ways to stay (in New Orleans). So many have left the state. The more we get in donations, the more we can give them the chance to work and pay for their housing (in the city they made).”

Classical music is suffering too. Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra is the only full-time orchestra in America that is owned and operated by its musicians. The bassoonist is now in Texas. The violinists are in Ohio, Georgia, Massachusetts, Illinois and Tennessee. The lead horn player is in Nashville. The 68 orchestral musicians are in exile and none of them knows how their orchestra will survive. When the New Orleans Symphony went bankrupt in 1991 its musicians formed The Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra.

They sold their own tickets, recruiting friends to conduct. Even now, players are paid less than half the going rate for professionals and almost all the members had second jobs to supplement their musical income. They too need assistance.

Voluntary groups have formed in the USA to support displaced musicians. One such group NOAHleans.com is in Houston. They say what the musicians of New Orleans need are:

- 1 . places to live in until they can get on their feet.
2. an instrument clearing house where they can get access to instruments in order to perform and make a living.
3. local venues to expand their use of live musicians.
4. people to organise and hold benefit concerts for New Orleans musicians.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT JONATHAN HOARE OR JOHN COOPS

Via email at info@normalappeal.org.uk

or visit our website at www.normalappeal.org

or telephone

01529 488508(Jonathan Hoare) or 01529 488014(John Coops)

N•Or•M•A•L



New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire

Payment Statement

Direct Aid for The New Orleans
Musicians

Payment Statement

Ways to Pay

By credit card.

Log on to www.normalappeal.org to make your credit card donation.

Fill in the donation form and you will be directed to the Jazz Foundation of America website to make your donation.

Please note confirm exchange rate prior to transaction as at 20th September £1 = \$1.8

If you do not wish to donate by credit card

Send a cheque made out to Normal Appeal

To
NOrMAL Appeal
82 Main Street
South Rauceby
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 8QQ

and enclose contribution statement or your address details

Thank you for your support

NOrMAL

NOrMAL – 82 Main Street, South Rauceby, SLEAFORD, Lincs NG34 8QQ

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

I want to help the evacuee musicians of New Orleans and I support the initiative organised by NOrMAL. I can help by:

Organising a benefit event and making a payment at www.normalappeal.org or to the address above

 tick box

Making a personal donation at www.normalappeal.org or to the address above

 tick box

Name _____

I/We have contributed:

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

£ _____ . _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

NOrMAL – 82 Main Street, South Rauceby, SLEAFORD, Lincs NG34 8QQ

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

I want to help the evacuee musicians of New Orleans and I support the initiative organised by NOrMAL. I can help by:

Organising a benefit event and making a payment at www.normalappeal.org or to the address above

 tick box

Making a personal donation at www.normalappeal.org or to the address above

 tick box

Name _____

I/We have contributed:

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

£ _____ . _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

NOrMAL – 82 Main Street, South Rauceby, SLEAFORD, Lincs NG34 8QQ

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

I want to help the evacuee musicians of New Orleans and I support the initiative organised by NOrMAL. I can help by:

Organising a benefit event and making a payment at www.normalappeal.org or to the address above

 tick box

Making a personal donation at www.normalappeal.org or to the address above

 tick box

Name _____

I/We have contributed:

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

£ _____ . _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

N•Or•M•A•L



New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire

The Initiative

NORMAL APPEAL

The Initiative

There will be no Mardi Gras as usual this year in New Orleans. This is the time when the musicians of New Orleans get a good proportion of their livelihood. The Musicians are scattered all over the country, some unable to contact their fellow musicians and family.

There are so many touching stories coming through from the aid workers in Louisiana. The director of the Jazz Foundation, Wendy Oxenhorn, says a musician which she had spoken to on the phone, but never met in person, was found to be alive. She nearly cried when she spoke to him on the phone and told him she was coming down to help, and asked him "What would you like me to bring you from New York, what do you need?" He said "I got no way to listen to music, and I sure do miss Charlie Parker, but if that's not possible cause I know that's asking a lot, then I'll tell you what i'd like most of all... I'd like some seeds. I just wanna plant some seeds..."

NOrMAL- New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire is the brain child of John Coops of the Vortex Brothers and Jonathan Hoare of Rauceby Hall Events. Both based in South Rauceby, Lincolnshire, they felt the compulsion to do something proactive for the betterment of Musicians in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, the region so cruelly ravaged by Hurricane Katrina. No one would disagree that New Orleans heritage is built on the backs of those fine musicians who sprang from the region. New Orleans is culturally empty without its music.

The main objective of NOrMAL is to bring a greater awareness in the UK of the plight of musicians and their families in New Orleans and the Delta. One main function is to co-ordinate a variety of musical events throughout the UK on and around Mardi Gras(28th February 2006). This Mardi Gras will mark local solidarity with the people of New Orleans, and send the message that we are going to do our best to help their music to live on.

The events in New Orleans and the delta region are especially harrowing for musicians. People of the region have lost everything that was precious to them, their homes, family members, and most of all their livelihoods. It is hard to imagine how any of us put in the same position could find the strength to continue under such devastating circumstances. Aid is not only hand outs of food, clothing and temporary housing. Important initiatives by music based charities, include arranging concerts, gigs, reuniting band members, developing music workshops, and most importantly providing those who have lost their instruments with new ones. Musicians are regaining the hope and the direction to turn their lives around.

Fund raising in the short term is desperately needed to meet immediate needs and NOrMAL is asking every live music promoter to dedicate their next suitable event as a New Orleans benefit night.

Groups and individuals who wish to donate immediately should do so at the normalappeal.org web site.

If you can not donate by credit card transaction then you can send a cheque made out to NOrMAL Appeal, 82 Main Street, South Rauceby, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 8QQ

STATEMENT OF INTENT.

To whom it may concern.

I want to help the evacuee musicians of New Orleans and I support the initiative organised by NOrMAL.

I will help by:

Organising a benefit event and making a payment at www.normalappeal.org

tick box

Making a personal donation at www.normalappeal.org

tick box

Helping the fund raising effort

tick box

Working with NOrMAL

tick box

Name _____

Organisation _____

Contact details

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:

Jonathan Hoare, 82 Main Street, South Rauceby, SLEAFORD, Lincs NG34 8QQ
Or by email to info@normalappeal.org.uk

What we'll do and what we want you to do.

What we want you to do.

Organise a live music event between now and Christmas and dedicate it as a New Orleans Musicians Benefit. Let us know when and what it is and we will add it to our press, radio and television publicity materials.

Raise a donation, however small it might be and obtained however you see fit and then make a payment on the www.normalappeal.org website for the amount you raise, which will go direct to New Orleans musicians via the Jazz Foundation of America

In the New Year, close to February 28th, hold a dedicated NORMAL event, the Lincolnshire Mardi Gras. We hope to see these in every corner of the Country. Let us know where, when, who and what price and we will add it to our country-wide publicity.

Make a payment equivalent to at least 50% of the total raised by ticket sales or however people pay for the Mardi Gras event on the www.jazzfoundation.org website.

Anyone unable to make a credit card payment on the Web should contact us for details of how to pay funds via other routes. Please let us know how much you raise, again for publicity.

Have a good time.

What we will do.

Provide the preliminary structure under the banner NORMAL

Provide the coordination required

Provide publicity materials for the widest possible press, radio and television coverage of the event including your part in it if you let us know about it

Watch for and react to opportunities, issues and problems in bringing this event about.

Maintain a watching brief on the finance raised.

Liaise with the New Orleans Musicians Clinic on the ground in Louisiana and report back on what we are told

Maintain communication with and between participants IN A BID TO KEEP MUSIC LIVE IN THE UK.

Further organise live music events in the UK in the near and medium future for the same cause.

Have a good time.

N•Or•M•A•L



New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire

The Plan

The NOrMAL Plan

1. To co-ordinate an event around Mardi Gras, 28th February 2005, In South Rauceby, to include A jazz evening at the Bustard Pub, A blues evening at the Village Hall, and a classical evening at Rauceby Hall. All evenings to have Creole/Cajun style foods to mark Mardi Gras donated by the village. Fund raising will take place at each venue in the form of an auction or raffle over and above the ticket sales.
2. To Encourage Jazz,Blues and other musical events at pubs and venues throughout the UK and to suggest that their evening follow a similar format. This will be achieved by telephoning the venue and on agreement supplying them with a press pack.
3. All fund-raising under the NOrMAL banner is destined for the New Orleans Musicains Clinic and the Jazz Foundation of America.
4. To gain media attention and bring greater awareness to the Appeal.
5. To build a web page and advertise its existence through the media.
6. To encourage donations prior to the new year events through the media and web site.
7. To promote ticket sales for future events to be held later in 2006 at an open air concert in Rauceby Hall grounds, to those participating in the fundraiser on and around the 28th February. These events will also be publicised well in advance through the media.
8. To gain the support of a number of local and or national personalities to act as patron.
9. To co-ordinate with the Organisations that will benefit from the appeal.
10. To arrange such administrative structures as required. For example; a bank account, ticketing through a box office and other elements of infrastructure.
11. To continue to co-ordinate further events after the above mentioned at regular intervals in the coming years.

N•Or•M•A•L



New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire

Statements of Support

Statement of Support
by the local Patron of NOrMAL
(New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire)

To all those whom it may concern

I know the organiser Jonathan Hoare and am happy to vouch for his integrity. I also believe in the goals and initiatives that he and John Coops have developed with respect to NOrMAL. I am delighted to offer my patronage to the organisation known as NOrMAL and would recommend any one wishing to offer their support to do so without any apprehension or hesitation.

<Name>

<Position>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

Signed

<Name>

Dated

Dear Jonathan,

Michelle Gegenheimer forwarded your generous offer to me so that we can coordinated with your fundraising efforts.

The NOMC is up and running and temporarily relocated to Lafayette, Louisiana.

The needs of New Orleans musicians are immense. In addition to the medical services that we normally provide to our patients, we are working to fund replacement housing, clothing, and other necessities as we work through this crisis.

Regrettably, relief efforts are disjointed in Louisiana. The American Red Cross is the focus of a majority of private donations and they do not address the specific needs of our artists. Accordingly, it is only through organizations like NORMAL that we are able to target the re-establishment of our cultural treasure, the music of New Orleans. Yet, this cultural heritage is the heart and soul of our City and the NOMC is committed to restoring this treasure.

Please contact me via email at this address with any questions. Unfortunately, I lost my home in the storm and am living out of a suitcase right now . . . my telephone service is hit or miss.

Contributions should be made payable to the New Orleans' Musicians' Clinic and sent to:

SWLAHEC/NOMC Emergency Fund
103 Independence Boulevard
Lafayette, Louisiana 70506
USA

Sincerely,

Chip Lamason
Director of Special Projects
New Orleans Musicians' Clinic

Dear Jonathan,

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your offer to assist the staff of the Clinic with personal assistance. Your expression of generosity is a genuine manifestation of the way that music brings the community together.

I believe that the basic personal immediate needs of the staff are being met. We all have shelter and are able to focus on working. Our greatest desire now is to return to our homes and begin rebuilding our lives. The Clinic has temporarily relocated to Lafayette, LA, and is working diligently to expand our mission to assisting musicians in areas beyond their medical needs.

I would suggest that your efforts would be best spent on developing fund raising efforts for the New Orleans Musicians' Clinic itself, as we need to continue to develop our emergency funding resources for long term reconstruction.

I am going to be working out of Virginia for the time being and I do not have access to much of the promotional materials that we normally send to our friends. But I would be delighted to give you any assistance that I can to tell you about our work. I do have textual materials about our mission that might be useful as you get further along with your benefits.

I understand that other folks in the UK are interested in helping us and I will pass along their contact information to you as it becomes available. Please keep in touch!

Chip Lamason

Dear Jonathan,

What a wonderful thing to organize in Lincolnshire; it is so inspiring to hear how everyone is pulling together for the sake of the musicians in need. You can send a press pack to:

The Jazz Foundation of America
attn: Eleanor
322 W. 48th St.
New York, NY 10036

It would be very helpful to raise fund for us!! Check out http://www.jazzfoundation.org/new_orleans.php for the latest on our hurricane relief efforts. Wendy, our executive director, was in Lafayette, LA, last week making connections with more organizations and coordinating all sorts of amazing things for musicians who've been hit hard. We've been arranging employment, locating musicians and finding them gigs through such programs as Project H.E.A.L. and the Tipitina Foundation. We're coordinating instrument donations with musicians who need instruments. We're providing first month's rent and basic needs. And we're talking to so many musicians themselves everyday from the New Orleans area who've lost everything. We don't just provide financial assistance, but also offer them counsel and hope in such a difficult time. I am going to attach two documents, one is the form that we are using to keep track of those who are raising funds on our behalf, and the second is a small press release about what we are doing. Let me know if you need anything else 212-245-3999 x21

thank you so much again for you interest,
Eleanor

-----Original Message-----

From: Jonathan Hoare [mailto:jonathanhoare@mac.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2005 5:44 AM
To: eleanor@jazzfoundation.org
Subject:

Dear Eleanor

I am in the process of setting up a number of fund raising events in Lincolnshire, UK. We are calling our organization New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire. We would very much like to know if what we are doing will be of help to you, as we think your cause to be something we would like the funds to go to, and are very taken by your ideas of helping musicians back to work. Music is something very close to our hearts.

I do hope that you will be interested and that we can be of some help to you. We would be happy to send you a press pack if you so wish.

Very best regards

Jonathan Hoare

N•Or•M•A•L



New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire

Contacts Page

Contacts Page

New Orleans Musicians Clinic
NOMC Emergency Fund
SW LA Area Health Education Center Foundation, Inc.
103 Independence Boulevard
Lafayette
LA 70506
USA

Telephone 001 337 989 0001
email music_mich2020@yahoo.com
web site [www.wwoz.org/ clinic/](http://www.wwoz.org/clinic/)

Jazz Foundation of America
Jazz Foundation Of America
6th Floor
322 West 48th Street
NYC 10036
USA

Telephone 001 212 245 3999
email eleanor@jazzfoundation.org
web site www.jazzfoundation.org

NOrMAL
New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire
82 Main Street
South Rauceby
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 8QQ

Telephone +441529 488508 Jonathan Hoare
or +441529 488014 John Coops
email info@normalappeal.org.uk
web site www.normalappeal.org

N•Or•M•A•L



New Orleans Musicians Aid Lincolnshire

The Appeal Recipients

The New Orleans Musicians Clinic

The New Orleans Musicians' Clinic (NOMC) was founded in 1998 to provide access to comprehensive preventive health care and wellness education to a segment of New Orleans' community of working but medically uninsured: the City's 3200 professional musicians and their families. The health crisis facing America's 47 million medically uninsured working Americans is obvious. However, in New Orleans, the plight of our musical cultural heritage is threatened by the absence of adequate preventive health care, early diagnosis and wellness education. The question we ask ourselves is this: It is not IF we can afford to care for Louisiana's cultural icons, it is whether we can afford NOT to care.

Prior to 1998, Johann Bultman, co-founder and Chair of the NOMC, operated the House of Bultman and regularly donated funeral services to jazz musicians who were unable to finance their own services. However, Bultman became frustrated that many of the world renown musicians passing through his doors had succumbed to preventable or treatable diseases. His wife, Bethany Ewald Bultman, a cultural anthropologist and journalist, serves as the NOMC Chair for Outreach. Ms. Bultman discovered the sad fact that writing about fundraising events to scrounge up enough to pay for cancer treatment for a musician was a painful example of too little too late. This issue was the catalyst for the development of the NOMC.

The traditional health care system in Louisiana is in disarray. A combination of factors conspires to deny adequate health care to our working but medically indigent. At the heart of the problem is the fact that Louisiana's gross per capita income is among the five lowest in the U.S. at a little over \$33,000 per year (\$4000 below the Federal Poverty Level). On July 26, 2005, the Federal Kids Count stated that the child poverty rate in Louisiana soared 11% between 2000 and 2003, as many as half the State's children live below the Federal Poverty Level and a third are trapped in outright destitution. Medical insurance for adults and parents is not an option under these household financial circumstances.

Further, the 2002 Louisiana Health Report Card ranks Louisiana at or near the bottom in a wide array of health indicators including preventable infectious diseases, cancer and preventable chronic diseases. For example, Louisiana suffers from the highest incidence of diabetes in the country (almost double the national average), as well as the greatest incidence of overweight and obesity (both intimately tied to low income and nutritional behavior). A tragic 33% of New Orleans' children between the ages of 6 and 14 are obese (primarily within low income families). One out of six New Orleanians has been diagnosed with diabetes and the 2002 Report Card estimates that only half the actual number of cases have been diagnosed. Diabetes claims three lives per day in New Orleans.

In addition, the 2002 Louisiana Health Report Card states that the current ethic of treating patients after they become ill is economically untenable and it recommends the adoption of a new paradigm: preventive health care and wellness education. 85% of all health expenditures in this country traditionally occur in the last 24 months of a patient's life. The NOMC has been in the vanguard of this new early diagnosis and preventive approach to health care since 1998.

The working, but medically indigent, professional musicians of New Orleans form the basis for this City's world-wide reputation as a cultural Mecca, the birthplace of jazz, blues and rock 'n roll. The economy of our tourist-based industry is built on the backs of our artists. Our professional musicians form the heart of our community's cultural heritage and quality of life. Yet, the vast majority of the NOMC's musician-patients earn less than \$20,000 per year. Medical insurance (Blue Cross/Blue Shield limited coverage is approximately \$9000 for a family of four).

medical care, and medical prescriptions are not an option for musicians or their families under these circumstances.

The NOMC is committed to the belief that our cultural icons are entitled to adequate comprehensive health care, preventive health care and wellness education. These artists deserve more than to be lumped into the State's system for indigent health care which frequently exacerbates patients' illnesses by the unconscionably long delays in receiving appointments within the system.

In 2004, the NOMC processed 2387 total patient encounters, of which 178 were new patients. The NOMC saw 32 new dental patients in 2004 and had 638 total patient encounters. The NOMC filled 1352 prescriptions in 2004.

The NOMC enlists its patients as advocates for preventive health care and wellness education to the community, taking advantage of the celebrity status of our City's artists. Through broadcast media, festivals and other public events, the NOMC engages these artists as ambassadors to our community to educate New Orleanians about the critical need for preventive health care and early diagnosis. In this way, the NOMC's mission is publicized to the families and to the next generation of our community.

The mission of the NOMC is to Keep the Music Alive. Our goal is to improve the health care available to our community. By providing prevention, wellness and health education to our 1000 plus musician patients and their families we not only are enriching our culture, we are changing the health outcomes of musicians, their families and their audience.

Hurricane Katrina Update

The catastrophic destruction of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina has forced the relocation of the NOMC to the offices of our sister clinic located in Lafayette, Louisiana. The NOMC quickly set up its regular medical services through partner health care providers in Lafayette and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The vast majority of New Orleans musicians have evacuated the City and the NOMC is working to locate all patients, restore their medical records, and provide normal services. The NOMC is expanding its mission to work toward providing housing and meeting other essential needs of our artists, including providing instruments lost to the storm.

The Jazz Foundation of America, in a very personal way, has changed and saved hundreds of lives and homes over the years. The Foundation will continue to do what it has always done: to provide emergency services, employment opportunities and long-term support to veteran jazz and blues musicians in health, financial, career and personal crisis. The Jazz Foundation of America is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization (FIN: 13-3631523).

In the wake of Katrina, now more than ever we will be needed to:

Rebuild lives, securing housing and assisting with relocation of displaced musicians preventing eviction and homelessness

Create employment opportunities – as we did after 9/11 with our Jazz in the Schools program in NYC, which put hundreds of elderly musicians back to work, while introducing thousands of children to jazz and our “Musicians For Hire” program that generated over 500 gigs

Pay bills to keep phones and lights turned on

Keep food on the table and provide other basic needs

Offer pro bono legal services by the most prestigious firms

Provide medical and dental care through our pro bono network of physicians and specialists

Coordinate with other great organizations like the tireless New Orleans Musicians Clinic (NO.M.C.), as well as Musicares, The Actors’ Fund, Society of Singers, Musicians Foundation to best meet the needs of the musicians

Replace and repair instruments, so musicians can continue to make their living

For the hurricane relief efforts we have started an instrument donation exchange and are receiving instruments from all over the country

We are currently working on a national project that would employ hundreds of New Orleans area musicians while bringing the spirit of New Orleans to the World

Through the New Orleans Musicians Clinic (N.O.M.C.) we will be employing musicians to play at nearby shelters to start the healing process

Repair souls by taking the time to have long talks on the phone, seven nights a week, keeping spirits up when it seems that all is lost

Jazz Foundation of America
322 West 48th Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10036
P:212-245-3999 ext. 21; F:212-245-3994
eleanor@jazzfoundation.org
www.jazzfoundation.org

Louisiana Philharmonic: no stage, no home

The evacuated players are scattered across the country

Updated: 7:08 p.m. ET Sept. 9, 2005

The bassoon player is holed up in Texas. The violins are scattered across Ohio, Georgia, Massachusetts, Illinois and Tennessee. The French hornist, who also plays the garden hose, is stuck in Nashville.

Katrina has blown the 68-member Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra — the only full-time symphony in America owned and operated by its musicians— into exile. And no one knows if their beloved ensemble will survive.

The orchestra's audience, the city of New Orleans, is gone. Its venue, the ornate Orpheum Theater in the business district, has taken on water. And many of its musicians have lost their homes.

"There's no reason to have an orchestra if there's no one to play for," said Howard Pink, who escaped with his instruments, all 30 or 40 of them, including his French horns, his ram's horns and a 15-foot alphorn, all of which he uses on his second job as the star of a traveling road show called "Howard Pink and Musical Garden Hoses."

Pink's house in Gretna is ruined. "The water damage is insane," he said. He is staying with friends, 450 miles from home and he can no longer bear to look at the images of his destroyed city. "It's too horrific," he says.

Self-made orchestra

The Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra is the proud offspring of the New Orleans Symphony, which went bankrupt in 1991, leaving its musicians unemployed and stunned. "They didn't tell us," said bassoonist John Fairlie, who's staying in Temple, Texas. "We found out because we got letters from our health insurance company saying our policies had been canceled."

So the members got together and decided to rebuild the orchestra themselves. They sold their own tickets. They enlisted friends to conduct. "For the first few years," said Pink, "we paid all the bills first and divided what was left as salary. Sometimes that was \$50 a week."

Professional French horn players, like every other orchestra member, aren't in it for the money. The pay is lousy — about \$18,000 a year in the Louisiana Philharmonic. You have to love the music, and you have to have at least one other job. Pink has his garden hoses. Cellist Kent Jensen conducts a youth symphony and gives private lessons, and sometimes paints houses.

Classical musicians offer aid to Katrina victims

Trying to find jobs and homes for displaced musicians

NEW YORK - Though New Orleans is renowned for its rich musical heritage, classical music may be the genre least identified with the city known for its jazz bands, blues clubs and pop festivals. But across the nation, classical institutions and individual artists have rallied to offer their resources to victims of Katrina and to help preserve the region's classical resources — most notably the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and other orchestras in the Gulf region. "To have these musical institutions at risk is just really devastating for the town and the region," said Jack McAuliffe, vice president and chief operating officer of the American Symphony Orchestra League.

“So because of that, I think those of us who are affiliated with music, and in this case especially orchestras, have said ‘What can we do to help?’ so in addition to the people surviving, that the cultures survive.”

The Washington National Opera is donating all of its proceeds from a Sept. 14 dress rehearsal of “I Vespri Siciliani.” The Detroit Symphony Orchestra is working with Habitat for Humanity to raise relief aid. And other orchestras nationwide have held events to help the devastated region. There have also been offers to help displaced musicians. Several orchestras are offering jobs. Some musicians are reaching out personally to others, making space in their homes for fellow artists.