



**American
Red Cross**

Cape Cod and Islands Chapter

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Media Alert

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For Immediate Release

Red Cross Sends Cape Cod Volunteer Husband and Wife Team to Aid Haitian Evacuees in Florida

Hyannis, MA, January 31, 2010 - The American Red Cross is deploying Bob and Betty Hartman of Plymouth to Florida to help provide mental health services to Haitian families relocating to the United States.

The husband and wife team are Mental Health Services Volunteers with the Cape Cod and Islands American Red Cross. They split their time between Massachusetts and Myrtle Beach, South-Carolina.

Bob and Betty Hartman are retired psychologists and they will spend 10 days in Orlando as part of a National Red Cross team of health professionals who are staffing Florida airports 24/7 to assist Haitian families upon their arrival in the U.S.

"We'll be there to support them and to assess their condition as they enter the country," said Bob Hartman, who added most of the Haitian evacuees have family in the States and will only be staying in Florida briefly before traveling on to various parts of the U.S.

The National Red Cross has specialized teams on the ground in Haiti, but local Red Cross chapters are not deploying volunteers to Haiti. However, Red Cross chapters in areas where U.S. citizens and foreign national evacuees are being received into the U.S. are providing some services such as mental health assessment.

The Hartman's became Red Cross volunteers five years ago with the Cape Cod and Island Chapter in Hyannis, after retiring. They were recruited by the American Psychological Association following Hurricane Katrina and spent their first deployment in Miami following Hurricane Wilma. *"That's when we realized we knew very little about how the Red Cross operates and decided to become volunteers and receive training,"* they said.

The couple has deployed once a year since that time and serve as Red Cross Disaster Human Resources System administrators in their home chapter handling volunteer deployments to disaster areas. Since they spend December through April in Myrtle Beach, they have taken disaster classes at the Coastal South Carolina Chapter and also teach "Fulfilling Our Mission," an introductory course to Red Cross volunteerism.

All American Red Cross disaster assistance is free, made possible by voluntary donations of time and money from the American people. You can help the victims of thousands of disasters across the country each year by making a financial gift to the American Red Cross International Response Fund, which enables the Red Cross to provide shelter, food, counseling and other assistance to victims of disaster. Contributions to the International Response Fund may be sent to your local American Red Cross chapter or to the American Red Cross, P. O. Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013. Internet users can make a secure online contribution by visiting www.redcross.org.

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NOTE: Bob and Betty Hartman are available to be contacted by local reporters after they arrive in Florida from Monday February 1st on and can be reached at (508-942-7875 or 508-245-2219).