



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN HEATHER REDMAN

## Cannon volunteers give a hand, hope to city in wake of disaster

By Airman 1st Class Thomas Trower  
27th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

After throwing the splintered remnants of a porch roof into the back of a dump truck, Senior Airman Donald Davis of the 27th Logistics Readiness Squadron said, "After being stationed at Cannon for three years, Clovis is almost like a second home. This is a chance for us to repay the community for the support they have given Cannon over the years."

Airman Davis was one of the many Cannon Airmen who responded to a call for help following a devastating tornado that struck Clovis March 23.

The number of Cannon volunteers who have helped clean up Clovis from the storm has now grown to more than 500 Airmen, family members and civil service employees.

The 27th LRS has been operating in overdrive since Sunday to provide transportation to and from the city where storms tore through residential and commercial communities.

After the call for help got out Saturday, volunteers gathered Sunday to tackle the damage. The initial focus was to remove the debris left by the storm as quickly as possible.

The mission was to "clean up, pick up debris and do whatever the home-

owners needed to put their lives together," said Col. Robert West, 27th Maintenance Group commander.

The volunteer clean up increased Monday as more and more volunteers gathered at the running track on base. The two buses that ran all day Sunday were idling when volunteers arrived Monday but the overwhelming response mandated four extra buses.

When the buses were loaded with Airmen and personal vehicles were loaded with chainsaws and weed eaters, the convoy headed east from the unscathed base to the damage sites. They met more blue heavy equipment dump trucks and front-end loaders also sent from Cannon.

"[Monday] about 20 people who said they were from Cannon stopped and asked my mother-in-law and father-in-law if they could use assistance cleaning up," said Brenda Brady.

Ms. Brady, a Clovis resident, had plenty of praise for the base support.

"My husband, who has limited mobility, and his brother were trying their best to assist their elderly parents. Our entire family is so grateful for the help of these men and women."

The base managed to provide more than just muscle and sweat to

the residents of Clovis. The gratitude expressed by people who looked at piles of shingles and shards of glass scattered over what was once their home had a single theme; the help of the Airmen gave residents faith and hope that it is possible to rebuild and recover from such a devastating setback.

The parade of Cannon volunteers traveled door-to-door making a sweep across the city.

What a middle-aged family of two could clean up in a month, men and women from Cannon cleared in minutes. Like a reverse tornado, the cleaning crews made the city blocks become recognizable once again.

Since the clean up and restoration of the city is not yet fully complete, the base has begun the "Airmen for an Afternoon" program said Col. Scott West, 27th Fighter Wing commander.

"Tornado victims can call the base at 784-4228 to get individual help from Airmen volunteers," said Colonel Scott West. "Airmen for an Afternoon is geared toward an individual property, home or business owner who needs four or so Airmen to help finish tornado-related work."

"As long as our community needs a hand, we're here to offer it," said Colonel Scott West.



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN HEATHER REDMAN

A Cannon Airman moves old tires into a rubble pile south of Clovis on Monday. More than 500 Airmen, family members and civil service employees have assisted local residents in recovering from a tornado and storms that hit town March 23. While much of the major clean up efforts are coming to a close, Col. Scott West, 27th Fighter Wing commander, has created the "Airmen for an Afternoon" program. This program will provide long-term recovery for property, home and business owners on an individual basis. To request assistance or volunteer for this program, call the Airman and Family Readiness Center at 784-4228.



PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS THOMAS TROWER

Top: Senior Airman Sarah Lunt, 27th Logistics Readiness Squadron moves a section of roofing into a trash pile while cleaning up tornado damage in Clovis Monday.

Above: More than 200 volunteers arrive to begin clean up efforts Sunday at the base track. Cannon has currently sent more than 500 volunteers to assist families affected by a tornado that struck Clovis March 23.



PHOTO BY 2ND LT. GEORGE TOBIAS



PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS RANDI FLAUGH

Above: A group of Airmen from the 27th Communications Squadron stand a soccer goal back up at Yucca Junior High. Cannon Airmen worked their way door-to-door across Clovis helping residents and business owners recover from the storm.

Left: Staff Sgt. Obed Brown, 27th Component Maintenance Squadron, feeds a dog made stray by a tornado that struck Clovis March 23.