

# Reconstruction slow in Florida

By SUE BUCK  
STAFF WRITER

Dade County, Fla., is hurting in a big way.

Reconstruction efforts aren't going well or smoothly since Hurricane Andrew wreaked havoc on southern Florida and Louisiana last August.

Susan Treffler, an elementary school teacher who's been assigned to Dade County Schools

Adopt-A-School program, a division of community participation, minced no words in describing the devastation, which some say will take more than a year to overcome.

Although personable, Treffler's anger, frustration and hurt came through.

"The situation is awful," said Treffler, whose home also was damaged. "The rebuilding pro-

cess is incredibly slow. People aren't getting money from their insurance companies. Some people can't rebuild."

New state building regulations are further hampering the effort, she said.

Treffler's home is at least 10 minutes away from the worst hit area in Homestead, Fla.

"It's very upsetting for me to go down there," Treffler said. "I have a house with a roof. There's people that don't, who get rained on every time. Their furniture is full of mildew. All the stores down there are gone. I don't know where they shop."

Even Treffler's daughter, who left for college before the hurricane struck, told her mom: "I've seen pictures on TV, but I just can't get a feel for it."

Aerial photos depict a war-torn appearance. Treffler planned to show her daughter the situation graphically during Thanksgiving vacation.

"It's visually and psychologically devastating," Treffler said.

"The landmarks and trees aren't there."

Neither is Treffler's career lab, an elementary level learning activity which reinforced basic employability skills and good manners. Work stations, divided according to jobs, afforded students a taste of different careers.

"It's all gone," Treffler said. Offers of help have poured in from Washington, D.C., to Washington state, Treffler said. But she hasn't heard of any offers to help from other countries.

Diane Chambers and the Gill PTA in Farmington also called and are now collecting books to restore school library media centers.

Treffler is hoping for donations in volume and quantity, rather than individual donations. Undershirts, sweatshirts and money are also in demand. Treffler will provide information and lists of schools and sizes needed at each school. She has three pages of lists. Her number is (305) 995-1215.

## Books from page 1A

"We have a lot of families that go south (during school break), Chambers said in explaining how the books would reach their destination. They will be personally delivered to Florida contacts.

The Gill PTA plans to take pictures of the school to send down also, "to make it more personal," Chambers said.

The Gill PTA was matched with the three school through a Dade County hotline, Chambers said. Susan Treffler, a reassigned Dade County school teacher, helps to man the hotline. Chambers quoted Treffler, in describing the post-hurricane situation: "Your whole life stops. You don't think of anything but paying the bills. The schools are providing some semblance or order."

Treffler can be reached at (305) 995-1215.

For more information or to volunteer for the Gill book project, contact Chambers at 474-6085. Gill Elementary is at 21195 Gill. Earlier this year, Gill Elementary also raised \$1,000 for the

needy in the hurricane-torn south, said Mike Duff, principal. "One of our teachers had a contact with a family in Louisiana," Duff said.

In September and October, Forest, Kenbrook and William Grace Elementary schools packaged clothing and other items. Students contributed a variety of items including their snack money and favorite toys.

At Eagle Elementary, students were each given a turkey feather to decorate, with their family name and were asked to contribute at least \$1 per child in their "Dollars for Dads" project, said Sue Johnson, Eagle principal.

"We have a big turkey on the wall," Johnson said. "As our turkey grew with feathers, we watched our dollars grow for Dads County Schools. Some \$400 has been collected."

Longacre Elementary students were also involved in the humanitarian effort by donating school supplies, like paper, pencils and crayons, said principal Bill Smith.

## Buff from page 1A

eration Desert Storm," said the Birmingham attorney. "When the dust settled, it was just a case of possession."

Lang was indicted after a Feb. 11, 1991, raid on a Briarcrest Street house in Franklin Knolls, south of 14 Mile and east of Northwestern Highway where Lang lived with his family and worked as a jeweler, according to police.

Lang kept a number of firearms, military weapons and detonating devices, which were seized in the raid by officers from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and Farmington Hills police.

Items confiscated in the raid included an Uzi semi-automatic assault rifle with a shortened barrel, 25 pipe bombs, anti-tank weapons, and other guns and ex-

"I think the judge realized that he (Lang) did not intend to hurt anyone."

Seymour Posner  
attorney

plosives. U.S. attorneys also charged Lang with manufacturing explosive devices.

The sentencing took place Nov. 24.

Posner said Lang has returned all but three of the guns he was charged with illegally possessing.

"He understands that he had violated the law," Posner said. "He's a young man and he made a mistake. And it was a violation of federal law."

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