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For Immediate Release
Contact:

Cynthia Forstmann, Write Edge Communications
(970) 328-0786 or (301) 706-8214

Fikes Truck Line Aids Katrina Relief Efforts: *“Whatever they need us to do, we’ll do.”*

Hope, Arkansas... Fikes Truck Line is lending equipment and drivers, and covering fuel costs in the delivery of food, water, personal care items, blankets, medicine kits, and more to the areas in the South where thousands have fled their homes in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Since the first weekend in September, the company has driven three truckloads of donations gathered through community initiatives, including a drive organized by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), and a contest between rival high schools to fill a trailer with water bottles.

Kelly Andrews, Director of Safety for Fikes, has made all three deliveries. Two shipments went to Louisiana – the first to Baldwin, where UMCOR has a warehouse to stage emergency response; and the second to Lafayette where the Red Cross needed water for 7,000 refugees housed at the Cajun Dome. The third shipment, the water bottles collected from students at the Prescott and Springdale High Schools in Arkansas, was driven to a vacant Winn-Dixie in Jackson, MS where a relief site has been established by UMCOR. “We all want to do something to help,” says Kelly, “so when the call came in from the United Methodist Church asking for a truck, we realized that this is what we can do.”

Fikes’ President, Jim Smith has deep ties to the areas affected by the hurricane and has pledged, “Whatever they need us to do, we’ll do. Trucks and drivers will be critical to relief and rebuilding efforts.”

Keith McGhee, Director of Youth and Children’s Ministries at Hope’s United Methodist Church, made the call to Fikes. “We needed the supplies, but also a way to get them to the people affected by the crisis. This has been community effort with contributions from groups all over the area.”

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PO Box 662 • 2600 East Third Street (71801) • Hope, Arkansas 71802 PHONE 800.643.6611 FAX 877.444.0155

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UMCOR and Fikes relied on the support of other businesses and the community to fill the trucks. They made a list of requested supplies and parked the truck at the church where people could bring their donations. Later, they moved the truck to a Wal-Mart parking lot in Hope where store personnel made announcements about what could be purchased and donated onsite. When Kelly arrived to pick-up the first load, he was met by a group from Maryland who had been caravanning south with supplies. "They heard our appeal on the radio while driving through Hope," he said, "and asked us to bring their donations as well."

Fikes Truck Line is a leading flatbed specialist with headquarters in Hope, Arkansas and terminals in Texas, Colorado and Kentucky. The truck line delivers building materials, steel, machinery and manufactured goods all over the United States. For more information, call Fikes at 1-800-643-6611 or visit their website at www.fikes.com. For more information about UMCOR and Hurricane Katrina Relief Efforts, see <http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/>

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