

Hurricane Harvey Brings Out the Best in Americans

Pictures of destroyed homes and flooded neighborhoods are heartbreaking, but the inspiring images of neighbors helping neighbors and average citizens performing heroic acts has shown Texas, and America, at its best.

The eyes of the country have been on Texas as it deals with the devastating effects of Hurricane Harvey.

Along with coverage of the storm, it's the efforts of citizen volunteers that are becoming a major focus of the story.

As William Long, head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, stressed in interviews before the storm hit, when it comes to most disasters, government alone can't save the day, citizens need to be ready to save neighbors in harm's way, and, [quote](#), "People need to be the help before the help arrives."

And that is exactly what we've seen in Texas.

There is no telling how many lives have been saved because countless individuals took it upon themselves to wade through streets searching for family, friends, and strangers trapped by rising flood waters, using their personal boats, kayaks, and jet skis to reach people rescue workers could not, and opening up their homes to those who had nowhere to go.

Remarkably, much of the major news media almost seems shocked by all the good Samaritan stories coming out of Houston and other communities in southeast Texas rocked by the storm.

Perhaps that's because they've grown so accustomed to giving wall-to-wall coverage to fringe causes and groups that are more interested in dividing America than making it better.

Frankly, it's increasingly hard to follow the news without starting to feel as though a protest or march or made-for-TV riot is around every corner.

But as Texans have shown us, civil society, the little platoons that philosopher Edmund Burke referred to, while missing from most headlines and cable news, is still there.

As a native of the Lone Star State, I'm not surprised by the good we've seen. Texas got its very name from the Native American word Tejas, which means friendship and ally. And it's that sentiment that has been on full display in the aftermath of Harvey.

My guess is many of you aren't surprised either—because as heroic and inspiring as many acts we've seen on our television screens and social media feeds have been, this is what you would do if faced with the same circumstance.

It's what most of the folks across the street from you would do, and it's what most of the people in the next town or city of your state would do.

What we've witnessed in Texas is the best of America. People from different cultural and economic and racial backgrounds coming together to demonstrate that all lives matter and showing through actions, not protests, what it looks like to love thy neighbor.

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