

TIMES LIKE THESE...

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney, Associate Editor
Wednesday, 22 May 2013 00:00



I am still at a loss for words after seeing the devastation that hit Moore, Oklahoma on this past Monday afternoon, when a monster tornado tore through the town killing at least 24 people which included 9 children.

As of this article, rescue teams were still combing through buildings that had been brought to mere rubble and splintered homes that changed the lives of those citizens forever. This tornado has been called by many weather services, and even by President Barack Obama, as one of the most destructive tornadoes in U.S. history.

You could see the devastation for miles and where houses once stood before, you could see only shredded wood, tattered clothes, broken glass and twisted metal.

The National Weather Service estimated that the tornado reached winds of 190 mph and that the twister tore a 17-mile path over 40 minutes. It is estimated that the storm was two miles wide.

Obama declared a major disaster, making federal aid available to people in five counties.

“In an instant, neighborhoods were destroyed, dozens of people lost their lives, many more were injured, and among the victims were young children trying to take shelter in the safest place they knew, their school,” said President Obama. “So our prayers are with the people of Oklahoma today.”

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This was deeply troubling to me because my heart is close to the state and many of the residents of Oklahoma. I attended the University of Oklahoma from 1991-1994 and consider it my second home. I received a wonderful education while at the University of Oklahoma and met so many wonderful people and friends, whom I continue to interact with even to this day.

I am deeply concerned about people like my good friend Eric, his wife Erica and their children. Eric and Erica attended the University of Oklahoma with me and ended up getting married. They were very good friends of mine and Eric even served as a groomsman in my wedding. He and I don't speak every day, but when we do talk, it's as if we never missed a beat. When I am in town or have a layover in Oklahoma City, I seek to catch up with him. When he is in town or has a layover in Houston, he seeks to catch up with me.

I had called Eric several times and left messages to check on him and his family, but had no luck. But guess what happened?

I had written another article that was to be published this week, but as I was sending that article to the publisher I received a phone call on my cell phone from Eric on Tuesday. He proceeded to tell me that not only was he and his family fine, but that the tornado had missed their home by 1 and ½ miles. What a blessing!

But here is the other blessing. Eric also informed me that he and his wife had just landed in Houston to get a Visa for his wife's upcoming trip overseas and they would be here for several hours.

So as I close this article, I am on my way to go see my two friends, give them a hug and let them know how much I appreciate their friendship.

It is times like these that we must evaluate our lives and our hearts.

It is times like these that we must and value our family and friends.

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It is times like these that we must value every day and live life to the fullest.

It is times like these that we must do our best to give more than we take.

It is times like these that we must give people their roses while they can still smell them.

It is times like these that we don't allow tragedy to overshadow triumph.

It is times like these that we become a better man or woman than we were yesterday.

What time do you have?

Jeffrey L. Boney serves as Associate Editor and is an award-winning journalist for the Houston Forward Times newspaper. Jeffrey is a Next Generation Project Fellow, dynamic, international speaker, experienced entrepreneur, business development strategist and Founder/CEO of the Texas Business Alliance. If you would like to request Jeffrey as a speaker, you can reach him at jboney1@texasbusinessalliance.org.