

The Daily Iberian

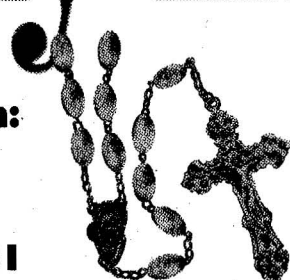
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Dec. 8
17 shopping
days 'til Christmas



Saints win:
*New Orleans
tops Falcons.*
Page B1



Volunteering:
*N.I. native makes
rosary for fundraiser.*
Page A4

INSIDE

CLASSIFIEDS	B5	OPINION	A6
ENTERTAINMENT	B4	SECOND FRONT	A4
MOVIES	B2	SPORTS	B1
NATION	A7	STATE	A3
OBITUARIES	A2	WEATHER	A2

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LOCAL & STATE

THE DAILY IBERIAN **A3**

Artwork helps visualize impact of 2005 hurricanes

BY MARY CATHARINE MARTIN
THE DAILY IBERIAN

Three years after hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit Louisiana, the Southern Mutual Help Association detailed a report on its progress.

The Association also commissioned local artist Paul Schexnayder to show the impact of the storms in an "exciting and meaningful" way.

Schexnayder's three paintings show Hurricane Katrina hitting the state and its impact area, Hurricane Rita hitting the state and its impact area and the areas of coastline inundated by floodwaters are shown.

They are placed on an background scene that progresses from night to

the glimmer of dawn, and will be hung in SMHA's office.

The SMHA's three-year report says how the Association raised \$9,553,978 for its rural recovery response.

Its total direct investment in homes and businesses through July 2008 is \$8,352,157, and it has worked with 983 homeowners, small businesses, fishermen, farmers and churches to recover and rebuild, according to the report.

Homeowners come from Delcambre, Erath, Abbeville, Henry and other places.

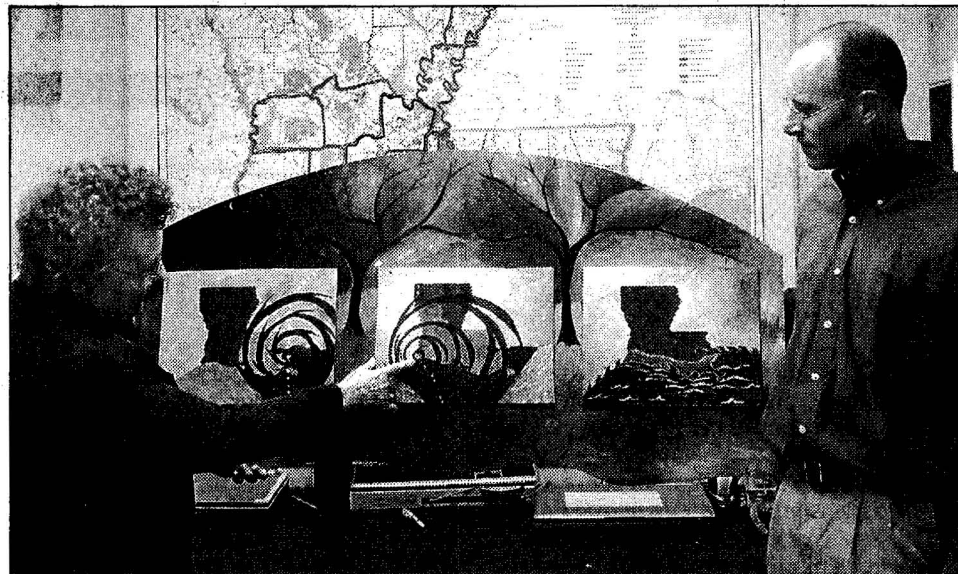
SMHA helped the Pitre family in Delcambre, whose homes and ship-building business were destroyed, raise at least

one home nine feet and move back into town.

The Association also helped Dung Bui and Joseph Doan of Abbeville resuscitate their business, Intracoastal Seafood, with grants, loans and a line of credit that allowed them to advance supplies like fuel to shrimpers before they could sell their catch, expanding its economic impact beyond those it helped directly.

SMHA estimates its projected economic impact in rural Louisiana communities as \$96,372,347.

The detailed report is in keeping with the SMHA approach of using "the power of the story" to gather information, guide investment and raise money, among other goals.



Lorna Bourg, executive director of the Southern Mutual Help Association, and local artist Paul Schexnayder look at a work of art Schexnayder donated to SMHA last week. Left is Hurricane Katrina

and its path, middle is Hurricane Rita and its path and at the far right is the inundated coastline of Louisiana, with the names of towns that found themselves underwater.

MARY CATHARINE MARTIN / THE DAILY IBERIAN