

## **Indies Get Crafty, Raising Over \$10,000 for Victims of Katrina in 48 Hours**

*Earlier this week, the independent crafting community banded together to form Crafters United with the hope of raising \$1,000 for the American Red Cross disaster relief fund by September 9th. Through the sale of donated items on their online shop as well as cash donations, they raised \$3,000 in 24 hours, and \$10,000 in just 48 hours. Now they're thinking bigger. . .much bigger.*

Like most people, those in the indie crafting community have been feeling heartbroken and helpless as they watch the unfathomable unfold—Americans dying as they wait to be rescued from the hurricane ravaged areas of New Orleans and Mississippi. After banding together earlier this week to form *Crafters United*, a partnership committed to raising funds to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina, the community is finally feeling less helpless and more hopeful as they witness their collective fundraising powers.

What started off as an “every little bit helps” operation has blossomed into a full-fledged fundraising effort whose new goal is to raise \$10,000 to support those affected by Hurricane Katrina. In the first 24 hours alone, *Crafters United* raised \$3,000. In just 48 hours, the group surpassed the \$10,000 mark.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, *Crafters United* began selling the handcrafted wares donated by over 500 crafters through its Etsy website, located at <http://craftrevolution.etsy.com>—from handcrafted jewelry to hand knit scarves and handmade body scrubs. One hundred percent of the proceeds from each sale will be donated to the American Red Cross disaster relief fund to assist the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

It's not just crafts that the indies are donating, though. Popular indie community sites and indie friendly businesses such as MyCicy (<http://www.mycicy.com>), Craftster (<http://www.craftster.org>), The Sampler (<http://www.homeofthesampler.com>), and BussBuss (<http://www.bussbuss.com>) are doing their part to spread the word by promoting the *Crafters United* fundraiser on their websites. Businesses that cater to crafters are also joining in, with Reprodepot Fabrics (<http://www.reprodepot.com>) donating several full bolts of fabric to the cause. Nearly 30,000 people have viewed the site since its launch and organizers say they are processing about 10 sales/hour with donations coming in at double that rate.

“The response has been incredible. We are so proud of the Independent Design and Crafting Community! The donations are literally pouring in faster than we can list them. There are only four staff and a handful of volunteers working around the clock. None of us has had more than 4 hours of sleep in the past two days! We're a little overwhelmed, but it gives us a great feeling that we've found a way to put our collective talents together to help however much we can,” says Georgia Hadley, a founding member of *Crafters United*.

While members of the indie community get the most satisfaction out of knowing that they are doing something to help those in need, participating in *Crafters United* has also done something important for them—buoyed their sense of hope and humanity in the face of this disaster. As crafter Leila Wylie of Mamie Originals puts it, “For me, this isn't just about saving lives, it's about saving hope. Thank you for helping to save mine.”

*Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast earlier this week, forcing hundreds of thousands out of their homes and causing untold deaths. Rescue efforts are currently under way, with many victims trapped in flooded communities. The affected areas are currently experiencing a shortage of food and a lack of drinking water. Victims, already suffering from untreated medical conditions and dehydration are feared to soon face threats of typhoid, cholera and dysentery.*

***Crafters United*** is a partnership between *Craft Revolution*, an online magazine dedicated to

*restoring the awareness and appreciation of crafts in today's retail society; Etsy, a site by crafters for crafters whose goal is to make it as easy as possible for people to sell their handmade items; and crafters across the world.*

**Craft Revolution** (<http://www.craftrevolution.com>) was founded by four independent businesswomen who share the desire to restore the awareness and appreciation of crafts in today's retail society. Craft Revolution does this by promoting crafts--and the talented people who create them--as high-value, desirable alternatives to the offerings of big-box stores.

**Etsy** is a site by crafters for crafters whose goal is to make it as easy as possible for people to sell their handmade items without the hassle of setting up an entire website and for a much lower cost than operating through EBay Inc., the online marketplace. Supported by Habana Outpost, a solar-powered market in Brooklyn, Etsy (<http://www.etsy.com>) launched on June 18th, 2005 and was created by the developers of GetCrafty (iospace), with assistance from Leah Kramer (creator of [Craftster.org](http://craftster.org) <<http://craftster.org/>>).