

CLAIRE BOUDREAUX BATEMAN

6010 Perkins Road, Suite A Baton Rouge LA 70808 225.766.8807

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Claire Bateman

225.766.8807

Claire@clairebatemanbooks.com

CAPTIVATING NEW CHILDREN'S BOOK REVEALS THE SPIRIT AND BEAUTY OF HEROISM

Accompanying website gives readers a place to share their own stories

BATON ROUGE, LA (August 13, 2009)--Children's book author and Louisiana native Claire Boudreaux Bateman announces the release and availability of her third book, *Call Me Hero* to coincide with the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.

Based on true stories of heroism and service in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, *Call Me Hero* includes lively text and captivating illustrations by Mississippi artist Kym W. Garraway.

Told through the compelling, endearing voice of the mischievous mutt "Hero" in the catastrophic days before, during and after Hurricane Katrina, *Call Me Hero* follows his journey as he is rescued from the flood waters and given a new life. Hero has lost his home, his family and, worst of all, his name. Yet, as he searches for his owner, he discovers the true meaning of "hero" and learns through touching adventures how it is much more than just a name.

The story takes the reader from the drowned city of New Orleans, the rescue shelters in Baton Rouge, to the devastation in Cameron Parish on the western coast of Louisiana, and touches on the rescue efforts along the Mississippi and Texas Coasts and, ultimately, encourages readers to discover the hero in themselves.

Bateman's story was inspired by her experiences of watching her beloved Baton Rouge community become an epicenter of service and compassion. She saw her husband and his friends pulling boats to New Orleans to aid in the rescue effort. They were among countless individuals from across the state and nation who performed selfless, heroic rescues – pulling people from hot attics, bringing helpless animals to safety and encouraging frightened but relieved survivors to shimmy down their roofs into the boats. Her neighbors opened their homes and hearts while area schools took displaced students into their crowded classrooms. The city swelled with evacuees and imported volunteers.

"This story is for them," Bateman said. "I have friends throughout the Gulf Coast Region who, four years after hurricanes Katrina and Rita, still don't know who secured their property or saved their cherished pets. The rescuers didn't take credit for their sacrifices, so my friends will probably never know their names or be able to thank them. I'm hoping these unknown heroes will go online and tell their stories."

As a way for readers to share their experiences, Bateman has established the website, www.callmehero.com, where they can post rescue stories and photos. She has also pledged to donate ten percent of the cost of each book to non-profit organizations who currently aid in disaster relief. Individuals can use the website to identify their favorite organizations—not just those along the Gulf Coast—and bring aid wherever there is need.

Published by Shell Beach Publishing in Baton Rouge ISBN # 978-0-9706732-4-4, *Call Me Hero* will be sold as a gift set with a plush toy for \$29.95. Visit the author's website, www.clairebatemanbooks.com for a list of children's stores and gift shops throughout the country where the books are sold.

About the Author

Call Me Hero is Bateman's third book. Other books include: *How Christmas Began* and *This Little Light of Mine*. Bateman is a native of Lake Charles, Louisiana and resides in Baton Rouge with her husband and two children.

About the Illustrator

Kym Garraway is a life long resident of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. She is a full time muralist and commercial artist. Using watercolor on watercolor board, *Call Me Hero* is her 9th children's book. Her love for animals in conjunction with the hidden blessings of life's challenges inspired her illustrations for this story.

For a review copy or an interview with the author, write Claire@clairebatemanbooks.com or call 225.766.8807.

What others are saying about "Call Me Hero"...

"Our non-profit not only participated in the relief efforts after the devastating storms of 2005, but we were privileged to witness the service of others throughout this amazing region. 'Call Me Hero' aptly captures the diverse rescue activities post-disaster and the depth of commitment of volunteers who answer the call to service. Children who read this story will realize they are never too young to be of value to those in need."

--Alan Graham

Mobile Loaves and Fishes (Austin, TX)

"Hurricane's Katrina and Rita devastated the Gulf Coast. As a teacher, I saw children who lost their homes, schools and communities. In the disaster though, an opportunity arose for my students to reach out to those children whose worlds were now on end. Claire Bateman's book, 'Call Me Hero,' captures both the spirit of resilience in the people who lost everything as well as the compassion felt by those of us in a position to be of service. This book will definitely be a permanent addition to my classroom library."

--Carolyn Murphy

4th Grade Teacher

St. Aloysius School (Baton Rouge, LA)

###