

# Senator's son releases Katrina benefit album

By **NIKKI WITTNER**  
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The devastation of Hurricane Katrina inspired Chet Lott, son of U.S. Sen. Trent Lott, to write a song that launched an album to benefit the survivors of the storm.

When Katrina hit, Chet Lott, a Pascagoula native and political lobbyist, was in Kentucky with his family and heard media reports of destruction. He immediately came home to see the aftermath.

"I was told that my childhood home was gone, but I didn't really understand it until I saw it myself," Lott said. "The whole town was devastated and we all felt helpless. That first day the only relief we saw was a truck full of American Red Cross volunteers. They were giving out bottled water in the midst of our homes being erased."

That night, Lott wrote the title track for a newly released CD, "Erased It." The title says it all, Lott said. All the proceeds from the album

sales are going to the local American Red Cross chapter.

Paige Roberts, executive director of the Southeast Mississippi Chapter of the American Red Cross, said Lott's wife, Trisha, contacted the organization in October with the project.

"I am so thrilled to be working with Chet on this poignant project that is truly a great CD," Roberts said. "Every Red Cross dollar is a donated dollar and any time that someone wants to do a project we are eager to work with them. This is truly a way to benefit the whole community because the funds will be used in Jackson and George counties exclusively."

The 14-track album features guest musicians Cheryl McKenney, Kati Penn, Eddie Prichard, John Richardson, Frank Saxton, Gordon Towell, Greg Wing and Jay Flippen. The album is a blues-inspired mix of original tunes and classics such as "Tupelo Honey," "Light My Fire" and "Knockin' on Heaven's Door."

Lott also wrote "Where Am I From," a song inspired by one night at a political fundraiser.

"I kept telling the same story over and over about how I ended up in Kentucky, and that night in the car I told my wife that I was going to write a song that explained I was a Mississippi boy," he said. "I walked around the house humming and singing the lyrics that night."

Those two Lott originals are on the album along with several other covers and two new original songs written by J.P. Pennington, who was a member of the 1980s group The Exhiles. Lott's goal in the project was to make a CD that would benefit the people in his community and all those who were affected by Katrina.

"I knew that I could spend my days helping clean up debris and I did, but that just wasn't helping the overall need," Lott said. "There are still needs out there and will be for some time."

The Lott family is known



PHOTO COURTESY CHET LOTT

The CD is available at [www.chetlott.com](http://www.chetlott.com)

for its musical performances that include the senator's GOP barbershop quartet. Lott said some of the songs on the CD are inspired by an aunt who was a great performer. The album is Lott's first full-length CD, although he has cut demos in the past. The album took 11 months to complete.

"I am picking up the CDs this week and they will be shipped out as the orders come in," Lott said Wednesday.

To date, more than 500 copies have been pre-ordered.

Roberts said the money raised will go directly into the community through disaster preparedness and countless other areas. Lott said he plans to issue a check to the ARC chapter quarterly.

"Chet is truly a wonderful person who is dedicated to helping his hometown recovery from Hurricane Katrina," Roberts said. "This is just one more way he is giving back and doing his part to help the community."