

PRESS RELEASE

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## **Delivering Support in Time of Need**

### ***BloomNet® Assists Retail Florists, Shares Relief Efforts in Tornado-Ravaged Alabama Communities***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Carle Place, New York, May 17, 2011 –

On Wednesday, April 27, 2011 devastating storms of historic proportions ripped through several southern U.S. states including Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and Tennessee. Among the hardest hit areas was Tuscaloosa, Alabama where an estimated mile-wide tornado carrying winds of more than 165 miles per hour killed scores of people and damaged or destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses.

“The tornado blew the front of the building in, crushing and shredding everything, then it tried to take the roof off and wrinkled beams as it traveled through our store, then it hit an 8-inch block wall in the rear of the store...the wall tumbled down and crushed two of our vans,” said Bronson Englebert, who with his wife Stephanie owns Stephanie’s Flowers in Tuscaloosa. Associates from BloomNet, a leading business solutions provider and single destination for products and services for retail florists worldwide, were among the first on the scene in the aftermath of the deadly tornado – offering assistance to Stephanie’s Flowers as well as to several other retail florists in Tuscaloosa, Cullman, Brookwood and other Alabama communities.

“Doug Parks, BloomNet Manager, Training, Industry Relations came in the next day, full of energy, and said what can I do, how can I help? He remained at our store for four days and was joined by Jackie Harrell, BloomNet Market Area Consultant for Alabama, and Cindy Brookman, BloomNet Manager of Market Area Specialists. All three BloomNet representatives volunteered to do everything they could to help us,” continued Mr. Englebert. “BloomNet was there for us with comfort and support during a very difficult time.”

In assisting Stephanie’s Flowers and other retail florists during the challenging days immediately following the tornado and leading up to the all-important Mother’s Day holiday, BloomNet provided fresh floral products, containers, aprons, posters, delivery signs and other supplies along with delivery services. BloomNet associates also helped get phone lines and computer systems up and running again. BloomNet donated food and water, and created 24x96-inch outdoor banners proclaiming to the public that the shops were open and ready to serve customers. “BloomNet was ready and willing to do anything, they were extremely helpful and it’s much appreciated,” stated Mr. Englebert.

In addition, BloomNet provided carnations and worked with numerous florists throughout Tuscaloosa, visiting area shelters and bringing the spirit of Mother’s Day to

local residents affected by the tornado. The flowers were given to kids at the shelters to present to their moms.

“The incredible devastation caused by the tornado in terms of lives lost and property destroyed should never be forgotten and our prayers are with all affected in Alabama and other states,” said Mark Nance, AAF, President of BloomNet. “We are proud to have been able to do whatever we could for retail florists during this time of crisis. BloomNet believes in building relationships first and doing business second, and we’ll always be there for our florists, every day and in their time of need.”

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### **About BloomNet®**

BloomNet® is a world class business solutions provider offering quality products and diverse services to a select network of professional retail Florists who utilize BloomNet’s resources to grow their businesses profitably. ([www.mybloomnet.net](http://www.mybloomnet.net) or 1-800-BloomNet). Professional Florists who are part of the BloomNet network can take advantage of several key benefits including higher profitability on wire orders, the highest published rebate in the industry with the easiest rebate qualifications, lower membership costs, state-of-the-art technology solutions, and a complete suite of value-add products and services. BloomNet has established and maintains the industry’s most stringent business standards for participating Florists. BloomNet, Inc. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of 1-800-FLOWERS.COM, Inc.

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