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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Professional Photography Industry Establishes Relief Fund
to Aid Colleagues Devastated by Hurricane Katrina**

DEERFIELD, ILLINOIS – In response to the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina, members of the professional photography trade have established a relief effort to help industry colleagues get back on their feet. The **P.H.O.T.O. Foundation** (Photographic Industry Helping Others To Overcome) aims to rally industry support in the form of financial contributions, loaned equipment, extended billing and payment arrangements, and in-kind services to help photographers rebuild their businesses.

To contribute by check, mail donations to: P.H.O.T.O. Foundation, PO Box 611, Deerfield, IL 60015. Online donations are being accepted by credit card (MasterCard or Visa) at www.digitalweddingforum.com/katrinamc.htm and via PayPal at www.digitalweddingforum.com/katrinapp.htm.

To contribute equipment, services or other assistance, please contact: Karyn Newman at PHOTOReliefFund@zookbinders.com or Skip Cohen at PHOTOReliefFund@wppionline.com.

Creation of the foundation was inspired by the story of Neil Hurd, owner of **Neil Hurd Photography** in Metairie, Louisiana. On August 31, Hurd called his friends at Zookbinders Inc. in Deerfield, Illinois, to let them know he was safe. **Karyn Newman**, the album company's key customer representative, learned that Hurd and his wife had evacuated, but lost everything in the storm – all of his photography equipment, files and portraits. Hurd estimates it will take more than a year to rebuild his 27-year-old business.

“Neil had just visited our facility a week before the hurricane. I was trying to reach him to make sure he was okay when, thank goodness, he was able to call us. After I hung up I had to do something to help -- we're like family,” said Newman.

As reports of Katrina's extensive damage emerged, stories about other photographers, like Neil, were repeated over and over again. In response, **Zookbinders Inc.** joined forces with **Rangefinder Publishing Inc.** and **WPPI** (Wedding & Portrait Photographers International) to raise awareness throughout the industry. “The big agencies are there to help in the immediate

short term and they need all the help we can give them. This is about going a step farther with photographers helping photographers. The photographic industry is about family – this is our way of showing our colleagues we stand with them,” said Skip Cohen, president of Rangefinder Publishing.

As of September 6, more than 40 organizations had already agreed to help raise funds and awareness regarding the photographers affected by Hurricane Katrina, including: Albums Inc., Amphoto Books/Watson-Guptill Publications, Art Leather, Asuka Book, Auto FX Software, BIG Folio, Blossom Publishing, Blue Skies Marketing, Buckeye Color Lab, Cygnus Business Media/Studio Photography & Design, DWF (Digital Wedding Forum), DxO Labs, Epson, garyfongestore.com, GNP (Gross National Product), H&H Color Lab, Hahnemuhle USA, Hallmark Institute of Photography, Hasselblad, Kodak, Kubota Image Tools, LabPrints, Leaf America, LexJet, Marathon Press, Media Street, Miller’s Professional Imaging, nik multimedia, Nikon, PDIA (Professional Digital Imaging Association), Phanfare, Photovision, PMA (Photo Marketing Association International), Rangefinder Publishing, S.I.R. Marketing Communications, The Chilcote Company, The MAC Group, VPO (Virtual Press Office), WPPI (Wedding & Portrait Photographers International), and Zookbinders.

“The P.H.O.T.O. Foundation is one way for our professional community to help one another. We encourage donations to whatever relief effort individuals feel closest to, whether it’s the Red Cross, Salvation Army or other trusted organization,” said Mark Zucker, president of Zookbinders.

The P.H.O.T.O. Foundation is registered as a not-for-profit corporation in the State of Illinois. The organization’s 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status is pending approval. The newly formed foundation’s board members include: Skip Cohen of Rangefinder Publishing, and Karyn Newman, Leslie Zucker and Mark Zucker of Zookbinders.

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