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Saturday, Mar 11, 2006

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Posted on Thu, Feb. 23, 2006

### Elizabeth Taylor treats New Orleans to a birthday gift

Associated Press

**LOS ANGELES** - Elizabeth Taylor will ring in her 74th birthday Monday with a gift worth several hundred thousand dollars.

Only it isn't for her.

The two-time Oscar winner will commemorate her birthday by donating a mobile medical unit to the New Orleans AIDS Task Force, publicist Dick Guttman announced Thursday.

The medical unit is "like a large recreational vehicle, about 40 feet long, with two examination rooms and x-ray facilities," said Martin Delaney, founding director of Project Inform, a national AIDS organization that helped facilitate Taylor's gift.

The vehicle, manufactured in Ohio, is already in New Orleans, Delaney said. It will be staffed by doctors who worked in AIDS clinics shuttered by Hurricane Katrina.

The new medical vehicle will allow doctors to provide "vital care" to victims of the disease in New Orleans and surrounding neighborhoods, Delaney said.

"There are a lot of areas in the Gulf Coast that have never been served well by AIDS clinics," he said. "This provides a chance to bring treatment out to a much wider range of places."

The mobile medical unit is already being used for educational purposes and will be staffed by doctors soon, he said. An official launch is planned for late March.

Taylor, a longtime AIDS activist, helped establish the American Foundation for AIDS Research in 1985 and created the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation in 1991.

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