

Stars raise more than \$150 million for terrorist attack relief

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NEW YORK (AP) -- Appeals by Hollywood actors and musicians during an unprecedented telethon last week generated more than \$150 million in pledges to benefit families of the World Trade Center and Pentagon attack victims.

The money will be distributed through the United Way with no administrative costs deducted, organizers said on Monday. The pledges were made through 7 a.m. Monday to a Web site or to telephone numbers staffed by more than 38,000 volunteers and automated operators in the United States and Canada.

"America: A Tribute to Heroes" was shown on 35 separate broadcast and cable networks simultaneously on Friday and was seen by just under 60 million viewers. It featured actors like Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts making pitches, and musical performances from Bruce Springsteen, Sting, Stevie Wonder and many others.

By contrast, the Live Aid concerts and Band Aid all-star Christmas recording during the 1980s raised a reported \$110 million in relief for African famine victims.

Organizers are also considering releasing a compact disc with some of the telethon's musical performances.

Such an all-star album would probably generate much more income.

Performances included an unrecorded song by Springsteen, "My City in Ruins," Neil Young singing John Lennon's "Imagine," Wyclef Jean doing Bob Marley's "Redemption Song" and Tom Petty singing "I Won't Back Down."

The night ended with two patriotic numbers: Canadian Celine Dion singing "God Bless America" and Willie Nelson leading an all-star version of "America the Beautiful."

ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox are paying production costs for the event, staged for security reasons without an audience in New York, Los Angeles and London.