

The Alderman Newsflash

November 2017



We Survived Hurricane Irma

Alderman Oaks cares for their residents like family. When Hurricane Irma forced Alderman to make an emergency evacuation Saturday, September 9th, they found sanctuary at the Faith Presbyterian Church. While the Alderman Oaks building is sturdy, we were mandated by the county to evacuate. Owner Rusty Blix did not take any chances. In fact, he left his family vacation in Colorado a week early to arrive to Alderman Oaks Saturday morning and help evacuate, and care for residents.

Out of the 65 residents living in Alderman, 38 were unable to stay with family, as many of them were evacuating their homes and moving into shelters as well, or lived out of town. A team of 11 people (owner Rusty and his wife Kay, Theresa, Shirin, Denise, Mary, Donna, Elise, Lisa, Ashley and Monica) were there for the duration of the storm. Other staff members joined in for various shifts, (Larissa, Daphne, Tyachina and Hudson) to care for the residents at the shelter.

Saturday - the day before Irma hit - was organized chaos. Chef Mary packed multiple vans with enough food, water, and cooking supplies to feed nearly 50 people. All residents were helped to pack 3 days' worth of clothing and staff packed up medications.

Big black trash bags full of medical equipment, toilet paper, and more essentials went ahead of the residents to the church. Alderman had been told they would be the only ones staying in the Church's gymnasium, but when they arrived there were families already inside with their children and caged pets. Adults, children, and animals were settling in to wait out the storm together.

Alderman quickly adapted to the new turn of events and the staff set up dining room tables, chairs, and blow up beds in a section of the gym. Mary had lots of snacks between meals, and plenty of wine - the Irma medication

of choice! With all of the eating, drinking, card games (and lots of napping) it was an ongoing Happy Hour!

Saturday evening and all day Sunday and Monday, Chef Mary and Donna prepared wonderful hot meals for the Alderman Residents and Staff. On top of this, they prepared more meals for the families staying in the shelter with the food they had brought on their own.

When a slight problem arose Saturday night, staff members quickly found a solution. Some of the blow up beds did not stay inflated, but Rusty faithfully came to the rescue, blowing them up with the compressor throughout the night as needed. Sunday morning Rusty, Theresa, Denise and Shirin met the maintenance man Sammy, over at Alderman to grab as many twin mattresses as they could to bring back for the residents, saving the night for many.

The church had everyone feeling very safe and secure even as the storm winds blew. However the roof began to leak and buckets became a part of the décor. Then the church plumbing began to fail because the lift stations were without power, forcing residents and staff to leave the church facility, as it was now unhealthy to remain there. Even though there was no power at Alderman, residents and staff eagerly returned Monday afternoon after being given permission from the county.

The company Alderman had contracted with for generators in event of an emergency had shipped them all to Houston after Hurricane Harvey called for all hands on deck there. However, it wasn't long before adult children and supporters of Alderman and the Sarasota community brought over several generators to keep some lighting and fans going for air flow in the building. As one can only imagine, the staff was pretty exhausted by this time, and not able to get the assisted residents to their rooms on the second and third floors with the elevator out.

(Story continued on back)

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(Story continued)

With bags of clothing and supplies laying everywhere and beds ALL over the first floor, one may have thought they walked into a warzone.

Despite no power, there were still hot meals lovingly prepared by Chefs Mary and Donna. So overall, with less than ideal conditions, residents were happy and comfortable, even refusing to leave when given the opportunity to relocate with family.

When a relative returned to their home to find electricity and AC, they quickly invited their Alderman Oak family member to stay with them. The resident's response: "I am comfortable where I am and well taken care of. I am just going to stay here."

Another resident's family member offered to take them home, "No, I'm not leaving. Everything's running smoothly and I feel taken care of. I'm happy to stay."

An in-pouring of prayers and donations of water, ice, and Gatorade greeted Alderman daily. Kay Blix and a friend of hers took the resident's clothing to their own homes to do laundry when they got their power back. Some incredibly strong young men came and assisted residents up the stairs to their apartments the next day. Prior to power being restored Thursday afternoon, staff tirelessly continued to care for residents by running up and down the three flights of stairs with meals, medications, water and just to check on each resident.

With many retirement communities saying they treat their residents like family, Alderman Oaks has always shown they treat residents like family. Hurricane Irma proved –yet again –that **Alderman Oaks truly is a special, loving community to live in.**



November Birthdays

Cory Fuller - Nov. 1

Nicholas Pepe - Nov. 2

Elvira Fay - Nov. 8

Marlene Coats - Nov. 11

Percy Watts - Nov. 19

Lester Helmich - Nov. 22.

Pat Pasternack - Nov. 22

Staff Members

Fred Grady - Nov. 15

Mary Joseph - Nov. 19

Theresa McKenzie - Nov. 26

And if you have a photo or story to share, email them to Avery at: Averyj7@gmail.com

Like what you see? Come in for a visit!