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# Millions Flee Irma



NOAA

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## Supplies Dwindle At Local Stores

By **KRISTEN FIORE**  
Daily Sun Staff Writer

As Hurricane Irma moves closer to Florida, essential hurricane supplies are starting to dwindle and businesses are faced with the decision of whether or not to close during the storm.

People across the state are frantically searching for gas, water, nonperishable food items, flashlights and generators.

"The fuel supply, the water supply, the battery supply, all the essential things we need are coming," said Sumter County Emergency Management Division Director David Casto. "They're coming constantly. There's plenty in the supply chain, but there's such a demand that it causes a temporary delay in getting those supplies."

Casto asks that people be patient and take only what they need.

As of late Thursday afternoon, Circle K at Mulberry Grove had

Please See **SUPPLIES, A6**



Michael Johnson | Daily Sun

**Paul Cash, of the Village of Piedmont, shovels sand into garbage bags in preparation for Hurricane Irma.**

**DEVASTATED: AT LEAST 11 LIVES LOST AS HURRICANE SWEEPS THROUGH THE CARIBBEAN**  
**TRACKING IRMA: MONSTER STORM'S PROJECTED PATH SHIFTS BACK INTO FLORIDA PENINSULA**  
**SCHOOLS CLOSED: GOV. SCOTT ORDERS PUBLIC SCHOOLS, INCLUDING VILLAGES, TO CLOSE TODAY**



Michael Johnson | Daily Sun

**Cars and trucks line the northbound lanes of the Florida Turnpike on Thursday as Floridians continue to evacuate the state ahead of the arrival of Hurricane Irma.**

## Friends and neighbors throughout The Villages offer assistance to those in need ahead of Hurricane Irma's landfall.

By **VALENTINA BORÉ**  
Daily Sun Staff Writer

Linda Fogg helplessly watched the TV news as Hurricane Harvey leveled her hometown.

Two weeks later, the Villages resident is determined not to stand idly by as Hurricane Irma sets its sights on Florida.

The devastation in Houston motivated Fogg, of the Village of Pine Ridge, to get busy helping fellow Villagers get ready.

"When this came along, I knew I wanted to be on the ground here since I couldn't be on the ground (in Houston)," Fogg said.

Fogg put a message on Facebook offering assistance and said she's received responses to her post.

"I said I can run errands and bring food and whatever people need," Fogg said. "We just all have to help each other."

This brother's-keeper attitude is sweeping all corners of The Villages, 48 hours from the Category 5 storm's predicted Florida landfall.

Dennis Kelley, of the Village of

Dunedin, just moved to The Villages seven weeks ago, but was already posting on Facebook that he'd help anyone with anything.

"I thought of something I could do to give back, because I'm physically able and healthy," Kelley said. "There are people who are limited, and they can't do the simple things."

Offering to help the community really isn't a big deal, Kelley insisted — he's just glad others were inspired to extend the same offer.

Please See **HELPING HANDS, A8**

### IN SUMTER COUNTY



As of Thursday, Sumter County was in a local state of emergency, as were the other counties in the tri-county area. Shelters were not open Thursday, and the county was not giving out sandbags. However, sandbags were available for those who live in the city of Wildwood. Residents can get up to 12 sandbags at the Public Works Department, located at 743 Huey St. in Wildwood, with proper ID. David Casto, director of the county's emergency management division, encouraged everyone to be prepared for the approaching storm.

**Citizens Information Line:**  
352-569-3190

### IN LAKE COUNTY



Lake County announced that 13 shelters are opening 8 a.m. Saturday for residents and travellers evacuating South Florida. Four were added to the original nine to help accommodate South Florida evacuees, according to Lake County Public Information Officer Elisha Pappacoda. Pets brought to shelters must be in a carrier or crate marked with the owner's name, address and two phone numbers, and must have documentation of an up-to-date rabies vaccination. Owners also must bring supplies for themselves and their pets, including water, food and medication.

**Citizens Information Line:**  
352-253-9999

### IN MARION COUNTY



Sandbags were still available Thursday at multiple locations, including 3260 SE 80th St., Ocala, from

8 a.m. until dark. One additional station with only limited quantities opened in Belleview at the 5700 block of SW 110th Place, under the water tower. With the exception of Belleview, the other stations have a 10-bag limit. Six shelters open today at 5 p.m. Shelters include pet-friendly and special-needs locations. Anyone going is encouraged to bring items such as clothing, bedding, medications, food and water.

**Citizens Information Line:**  
352-369-7500

### MORE INSIDE

A complete list of local shelters that will open today and Saturday. **A3**

Animal shelters ask families to foster pets as they fill capacity and evacuate the area. **A5**

# hurricane irma

## HELPING HANDS

Continued from A1

“The only reason more people aren’t doing it is they don’t think of it,” Kelley said. “There are many other people out there willing to help.”

Mary Nazgiewicz, of the Village of St. James, took a neighbor to get gas and pick up some medication before the storm arrived.

“I try to be available to her whenever I can,” Nazgiewicz said. “It makes me feel good to know that, not only am I prepared for the storm, but she’s prepared, too.”

Laura and Ray Bowen were one of the youngest families to move into their Village La Zamora home in 2005, and they enjoy helping neighbors in need.

“None of us are getting any younger, and a few of our neighbors have lost spouses or companions, so there are a few people who are alone,” Laura Brown said. “I thought some of them could use a hand.”

The Bowens have been checking houses for friends who are currently out of town — moving patio furniture and other items inside and offer recommendations to their fellow Villagers of any other preparations that may need to be taken.

Other good Samaritans in the community are opening their homes to friends and family evacuating from coastal areas around the state.

Mac Freeman, of the Village of Calumet Grove, said she opens her home whenever a storm comes to Florida. She has water, snacks and a generator on hand.

“I have lots of family and friends all over the place, and they are always welcome here,” Freeman said. “I want everyone to be safe.”

Annesa Hayne and her family are coming from St. Augustine to be Freeman’s guests during Hurricane Irma — just as they did during Hurricane Mathew last year.

“Mac is a planner, and it doesn’t surprise me that she is prepared,” Hayne said.



Mac Freeman, of the Village of Calumet Grove, prepares for Hurricane Irma by stocking up on food supplies Wednesday. Freeman’s home can fit 19 additional people who are seeking shelter.

Erin Williams | Daily Sun

Bobbi Cribbi, of the Village of Calumet Grove, said her friends from Delray Beach arrived Thursday morning, and a few from Largo came in that afternoon.

“Some are staying with us for about a week,” Cribbi said. “The others for a couple days. But they are all welcome to

stay as long as they need to.”

Volunteers in organizations such as the Salvation Army, The Villages Community Emergency Response Team and Operation Homebound are helping people prepare.

The Salvation Army is preparing its mobile feeding units, which can serve up to

1,500 meals daily, and mobile feeding kitchens, which can serve up to 20,000 meals daily.

“We are actively getting ready to serve hot meals and emotional and spiritual care to men, women and children who are making Central Florida their (temporary) homes,” said Lt. William Conley, commanding officer for the Salvation Army of Lake and Sumter Counties.

Operation Homebound, a ministry of North Lake Presbyterian Church that delivers meals to shut-ins, is packing extra food this weekend so clients still will have food Monday when the ministry will be closed.

“They’ll get their usual hot meal on Friday and a bigger bag lunch with things they can eat over the weekend or Monday,” program director Vickie Ruddell said. “We baked them chocolate chip muffins and packed granola bars — things like that.”

The group also gave out information on all the available shelters in the tri-county area.

Volunteers with Operation Homebound spent extra hours at the facility to lend a hand with the preparations.

“My assistant asked some folks this week to come in extra,” said Ruddell, of the Village of Duval. “One of the great things about our 400 volunteers is they are so gracious. They know the most important thing is to get our clients fed on any day, even when there is an emergency.”

The Villages Community Emergency Response Team began making a list earlier this week of people who would be available to help if they are activated by the District Public Safety Department.

The Villages chapter of CERT, which has more than 250 volunteers, is trained to assist the community alongside public safety officials.

Volunteers already have come forward to help at Villages Elementary of Lady Lake, which will be a shelter, and a special-needs shelter in Wildwood, said David Bussone, commander of The Villages CERT.

“I’m really proud of them for stepping up,” said Bussone, of the Village of Sanibel.

Volunteers on the call list have bags packed and are ready to go to people who need emergency assistance after the storm.

“All we can do is make sure that we’re prepared to the best of our abilities, know what our resources are and we’re ready to respond when the District Public Safety Department calls us,” Bussone said.

Valentina Boré is a staff writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 9061, or [valentina.bore@thevillagesmedia.com](mailto:valentina.bore@thevillagesmedia.com). Daily Sun staff writers Mackenzie Raetz and Lisa Lawson contributed to this report.

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