Residents come together to fill sandbags

By KAYLA LOKEINSKY

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With Hurricane Irma rapidly approaching Florida, it was all hands on deck at the Lake City Public Works headquarters on Friday as local residents rushed to fill sandbags in preparation for the storm.

As people shoveled sand into burlap sacks and loadadults jumping into action. showed up with their par- sandbags on their day off. ents, ready to pick up a shovhurricane.

City Middle School.

Farmer, who was taking turns shoveling sand with ens and a hog.

mals to higher ground," Farmer said.

sandbags. Despite her age, just have to be prepared." Lydia was working, loading into a bag.

more sand.

to help fill sandbags and was able to. prepare for the hurricane.

"We're going to pass Chevy said while pointing at them out to our elderly neighbors. They just can't come up here and get them."

- Edward Kight

School has also been called off Monday and Tuesday.

Columbia High School ed their cars, it wasn't just student athletes and members of student government Several Lake City children also assisted with filling

Despite the looming el and help get ready for the threat and the hard work she was putting in, Lydia said "We do what we gotta she isn't worried about Irma, do," said Adeon Farmer, a and plans to spend Monday 13-year-old student at Lake watching YouTube videos as the hurricane rolls through. "I'm excited," she said.

While Lydia is looking forhis friend Jordan Coppock, ward to the storm, her moth- Davis added. "If they waited 20, isn't just concerned er Tracy, who owns True in that line they'd be here about himself and his family View Window Cleaning, is when it comes to being in focusing on getting ready. Hurricane Irma's path. He's Having to worry about her was not only providing resalso worried about his ani- family, her home and her idents with bags and sand mals, including dogs, chick- business has led to Tracy to make their own sandbags being proactive when it — they also had piles of pre-"I have to move my ani- comes to being hurricane pared ones, which they were proof.

At the next sand mound of our house so we wanted over, Lydia McAuliffe, 9, was to keep it away," Tracy said helping her mother Tracy fill about getting sandbags. "We

Another family getting shovel after shovel of sand prepared for the storm was the Medearis family. While distributed today from 8 a.m. "I'd rather be at school," Michael Medearis filled his to 5 p.m. They're available Lydia said as she scooped up sandbags, his son Chevy, at three locations: Columbia 6, watched from the back County Public Works (607 School was canceled in of his dad's pickup truck. NW Quinten St.); Columbia Columbia County on Friday, Although he was too small to County Fairgrounds (438 so Tracy brought Lydia out get up and dig, he wished he FL-247); and Fort White

"He won't let me help," FL-47).

his dad.

Although Chevy wasn't able to help his dad, there were several people at the sand piles helping others in between preparing their own bags. Lake City's Edward Kight helped Farmer and Coppock fill a sandbag before returning to his friend Austin Davis. The two men had a pickup truck fully-loaded with sandbags.

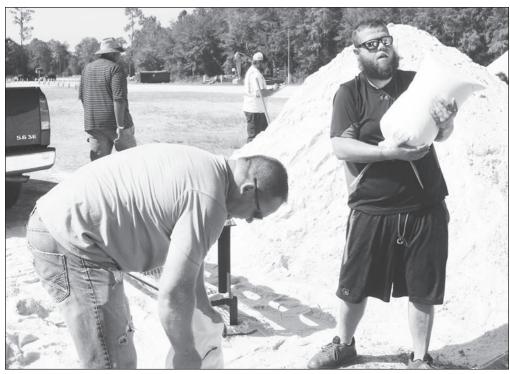
Although they did have some for themselves, they were mostly getting sandbags for people they knew couldn't get them themselves.

"We're going to pass them out to our elderly neighbors," Kight said. "They just can't come up here and get them."

"They're way too heavy," forever."

Lake City Public Works loading into cars for people "We get water in the back who needed assistance. The line for the prepared sandbags was about 15 cars deep, prompting those who were able to go to the self-serve station.

Sandbags are still being Community Center (17579



Lake City residents Edward Kight (left) and Austin Davis fill sandbags in preparation for Hurricane Irma. Kight and Davis filled sandbags for themselves and the elderly.



Michael Medearis (left) loads a sandbag into his truck where his son Chevy, 6, watches.



Congressman meets with emergency officials ahead of Hurricane Irma

Congressman Neal Dunn, R-Panama City, stopped by the Columbia County Emergency Operations Center on Friday to discuss preparations for Hurricane Irma. From left: Columbia County Assistant Manager Scott Ward; Columbia County Sheriff Mark Hunter; Dunn; and Columbia County Manager Ben Scott.

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Deli coming soon!

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Verizon offering data relief for customers in hurricane's path

From staff, wire reports

To all of its Florida customers in Hurricane Irma's path, Verizon Wireless is saying, "We've got your back."

Through midnight Monday, Verizon is giving postpaid customers talk, text and data relief with no overage fees while prepaid customers receive an extra 3 GB for data.

Wireless communication is essential during severe weather, Verizon officials said, which is why the Verizon network strong performance during times such as a hurricane.

Following the initial offer, Verizon will continue to closely monitor the storm's path and impact and make additions and adjustments as needed, and will communicate those details as those decisions are made.

"We understand that our network is never more important than when disaster strikes. This offer is just one way that we are showing our commitment to the entire state of Florida as this historic superstorm continues on its path ..."

— Russ Preite, southeast Verizon president

team prepares year-round to ensure a never more important than when disaster strikes," said Russ Preite, president of the Southeast Market for Verizon. "This offer is just one way that we are showing our commitment to the entire state of Florida as this historic superstorm continues on its path to make landfall there."

For continuous updates on Hurricane Irma, visit http://www.verizon.com/ "We understand that our network is about/news-tag/emergency-preparedness.



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