



RCMA HOY

Redlands Christian Migrant Association

Helping Our Youth



September 2004 Issue 137

OUR MISSION: We Open Doors to Opportunities! ¡Abrimos puertas a las oportunidades!

Charley, Frances, & Ivan; With Crisis Comes Opportunity

Charley, Frances, e Ivan; Con crisis viene la oportunidad

After years of mild hurricane seasons, Florida was hit hard by three massive tropical disturbances within a matter of weeks. Storms Charley, Frances and Ivan each took different paths, but left destruction and loss along their paths.

Most every Floridian was somehow affected by the aftermath of these tropical heavy-hitters. Many lost power, water, phone services, while some had damage or, worse, lost their homes. Some even lost their lives. Yet many Floridians who were not victims of the weather, as well as others throughout the country, came to the aid of those in the path of the hurricanes. These generous helpers were eager and willing to assist and immediately began provided funds, supplies and manpower to anywhere and everywhere it was needed. An outpouring of help emerged from the Homestead and Florida City areas, perhaps because many remembered the ravages and destruction of Hurricane Andrew years before.

The Chinese ideogram or character for "crisis" is made up of two characters signifying "opportunity" and "danger.". In the midst of the destruction and loss are experiencing from the hurricanes that have come and have yet to come (hurricane season isn't over yet, folks), we should remember that the onset of crisis can open the door to opportunity; the opportunity to help those in need. It is this spirit that founded Redlands Christian Migrant Association and which continues to drive our organization. It is brought into a clearer light in times of danger and crisis, that RCMA is a family, created and intended to help those in need. Our RCMA family does not only include the children and families we serve on a daily basis, it is also the teacher, the cook, the health specialist or other staff member working to help migrant and low income children and their families every day, both in good and bad times. It is also the Board member, the donor, the volunteer, the grantors and foundations, who provide guidance and funds RCMA so we can continue helping those in need. It is the neighbor or co-worker who buys RCMA Christmas cards or raffles who help support many of the new and existing projects to help better educate the leaders of tomorrow; our children. You are all part of our RCMA family.

With these thoughts in mind, we have devoted the majority of this month's HOY to our RCMA family. Not only did Charley, Frances and Ivan tear apart buildings and lives, but they also brought together people throughout the state, and throughout the world for a common good; to help those in need and to rebuild what has been broken. For all of them and you, we are truly grateful and proud that each one can be called part of the RCMA family.—Editor

Después de años de temporadas de huracanes normal, Florida fue golpeada duramente por tres perturbaciones tropicales masivas en una cosa de semanas. Las tormentas Charley, Frances e Iván tomaron diferentes rutas, pero dejaron destrucción y pérdidas por todo su camino.

Casi todos los Floridianos fueron, en alguna forma, afectados por los resultados de estos golpeadores tropicales. Muchos perdieron energía eléctrica, agua, servicios telefónicos, mientras otros tuvieron daños o perdieron por completo sus hogares. Algunos inclusive perdieron sus vidas. Algunos de los Floridianos que no fueron víctimas del clima y otros a través del país, vinieron a la ayuda de aquellos que estuvieron en el camino del huracán. Estos generosos ayudantes estuvieron ansiosos y dispuestos para asistir e inmediatamente empezar a proveer fondos, provisiones y mano de obra cualquiera y todos los lugares que lo requerían.

Una gran cantidad de ayuda surgió de las áreas de Homestead y Florida City, tal vez porque muchos recordaron los sufrimientos y destrucción causados por el Huracán Andrew algunos años atrás.

El ideograma Chino para la palabra "crisis" esta hecha de dos caracteres: uno el de "oportunidad" y otro el de "peligro". En medio de la destrucción y la pérdida que se experimento por los Huracanes que vinieron y por los que vendran (la temporada de huracanes aun no termina amigos), debemos recordar que el enfrentar una crisis puede abrir una puerta a la oportunidad; la oportunidad de ayudar a aquellos en necesidad. Con este animo se fundo Redlands Christian Migrant Association y este animo continua impulsando nuestra organización. Es mas claro en tiempos de crisis que RCMA es una familia, creada y con intenciones de ayudar a aquellos en necesidad. Nuestra familia de RCMA no solo incluye a los niños y las familias que servimos diariamente, sino también al maestro, la cocinera, el especialista de salud y otros miembros del staff que ayudan al migrante y a los niños de bajos ingresos y a sus familias cada día, tanto en buenos como malos tiempos. También es el miembro Directivo, el donador, el voluntario, las fundaciones, quienes proveen guía y fondos de tal forma que RCMA pueda continuar ayudando a aquellos que lo necesitan. Es el vecino o compañero de trabajo que compra tarjetas de Navidad de RCMA Christmas o boletos de rifas para ayudar a los proyectos existentes y nuevos para ayudara educar a los lideres del mañana: nuestros niños. Todos ustedes son parte de esta familia de RCMA.

Con estos pensamientos en mente, hemos dedicado la mayor parte del HOY de este mes a nuestra familia de RCMA. Charley, Frances e Iván no solo destruyeron edificios y vidas, pero también unieron a personas a través de todo el estado y a través del mundo para un bien común; ayudar a aquellos en necesidad y reparar lo que estaba roto. Para todos ellos y para ti, estamos muy agradecidos y orgullosos de que cada uno pueda ser llamado parte de la familia de RCMA.—Editor

Hurricane Heroes In and Around RCMA - From the Desk Of Barbara

This is a time that brings out the best in people. Let me share some of the stories I know, and if I miss some, I hope that others will tell me, in order to include them next month! Please note that the order in which the stories appear is just following my memory and nothing more!

■ **Regina Sousa**, also known as Superwoman, sat at her kitchen table doing the reimbursement for our School Readiness programs while the power went in and out (causing her to use unladylike language) and while her son's room filled with more water, due to a piece of missing roof, courtesy of Frances. The reimbursement was done on time. ■ **Irma and Jessie Chappa** were mother and father of the RCMA BethEl shelter for Hurricane Frances, spending their whole Labor Day weekend there in case our staff in DeSoto needed a safe place to be. The DeSoto people stayed home, but all the nearby families in Wimauma, who live in trailers, came out and enjoyed the security and hospitality. ■ **Myrta Rivera**, soul sister to Gloria Kendrick, came to Arcadia every single day to make sure Gloria could stay in Mississippi with her ill brother. Myrta helped run our informal distribution center out of the area office there. She also cooked big pots of rice for Irma and Jessie's BethEl shelter, so folks would have hot food. ■ Speaking of food, **Deborah Neverson and Alberta Roebuck** dazzled the Wauchula staff with their delicious meals, delivered to the Fred Dennis Center on time and hot! ■ Still on the subject of food, **Sharon Martin** found where all the churches were cooking and what restaurants were open to bring in Chinese and other great treats. ■ And **Savoyonne Green, Lucy Garcia and other core staff from South Highlands and Lake Placid** helped hold Hardee County together like the Wonder Women they are. ■ At nine o'clock one evening in the rain, **Lourdes and Rogelio Villanueva** drove to Dade City to take a borrowed generator to three families, who had been without power a good while. This after working all day. ■ **Prakash Mirkar** showed his muscles and how hard he could work loading and unloading, moving and arranging - the local staff were well pleased. ■ Our area maintenance men from the Ruskin and Wimauma areas, **David, Jose and Hector**, were the most patient men on earth, taking orders from as many as four women at a time, moving one office to another, sweating and being pleasant the whole time. ■ This after helping another hero, **Sergio**, our DeSoto maintenance super hero, clean up all the trees, and debris from the centers for many, long days. ■ **Tommy Estrada**, from Immokalee, and **Rolando Ramirez**, from Plant City, made many, many trips to both DeSoto and Hardee to get things where they were needed, and used their muscles loading and unloading while there. ■ **Susan Vega** took home 45 dozen of eggs from the Volusia refrigerator, concerned that they might go bad, and then brought them back the next morning when she cooked them with beans for the residents of the New Hope housing, who were without power. ■ **Maria Guerrero's husband and our Fidel Apolinar** wielded mean chain saws like pros, helping to free our playground from huge tree branches and be ready for the children to return. ■ The original Charley's Angels were **Ivette Cintron and Tijuana Clemmons**, who worked the Arcadia area with the local outreach finding all our families, assisting and pitching in while they burned off calories in the heat. ■ **Carla Stanton** was praised everywhere, not just for bringing in doughnuts and coffee, but also for using her mother as a free volunteer to make calls and get things moving! ■ **Bertha Hooks** never complained about her own home, never missed a day, and made sure we could always get through to the Arcadia area. ■ **Charlene Edwards** combed the neighborhoods until she made sure all the babies and our staff were safe, taught staff how to shower under the rain gutter spouts, shopped the Walmarts for what was needed, and loaded her car to dangerous capacity to make sure rice, beans, Crisco, spam, flour and seasonings were delivered to Wauchula in record time. ■ **Judy Brill, Sovy Estrada, and other Immokalee staff** organized a drive to get needed supplies and then drove over to Arcadia and Wauchula on a Saturday to deliver the items. ■ **Olga Hernandez and the HR staff** made sure no staff had to worry about their paychecks, whether that meant delivering ahead of the projected hurricane or releasing the checks early. ■ **Debbie Thompson and Shawne Thomas** spent time helping out in Arcadia and using their mental health skills to keep our senses of humor in tact. ■ **Gyla Wise** mobilized her church, family and Boy Scout troop to get trees and playgrounds cleared, classrooms cleaned and clothes for kids donated. ■ **Augie Montejo** hunted stoves, made calls, delivered ice, and raised money without ever complaining, even after an infected bite gave him some big trouble. ■ **Judy Burleson** gathered all the information on our staff most hurt by Charley, and got all of the families "adopted" by other staff or centers, so there would be some new school clothes for all the family members. ■ **Cletus Reeves**, our number one volunteer, drove stoves, gas tanks, roofing paper and other supplies to affected areas and hunted down generators in his spare time. ■ **Stan Wise, Alton Van Patton and Jordan Wise** all pitched in getting the things we needed together, picking up generators and using chainsaws as well as the professional dudes! ■ **Ed Dickerson, Ernie Reid, Nidia Conception and the rest of the MIS team** built a server and instituted a plan to make sure our key data functions, such as payroll would be covered, no matter what. ■ **Josh and the Immokalee School Age crew** helped Fred Dennis get ready to stop being a hurricane distribution center and become a Head Start center once again by moving supplies to another location, in the heat and rain, of course! ■ **Maria Sanchez and Alicia Rubio, along with other Nocatee staff**, ran a complete distribution center in Nocatee, including housing the Red Cross, Salvation Army, porta potties, mobile showers, USDA food teams, volunteers and tents. Their hours included Saturdays. This, in spite of their own homes being clobbered! ■ **Irma Chappa and Lourdes Villanueva** never missed a day in their adopted areas whether it was to clean, organize, listen, advocate and step in wherever needed. ■ **Gyla Wise and Dana Reeves** produced a three part series of helpful documents entitled, Getting Ready, In the Center and Recovering which were provided to all staff and discussed in weekly conference calls with all the RCMA areas participating. **Gyla's** hurricane leadership was overall OUTSTANDING. ■ **All our area staff in DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, Palm Beach, Indian River, Zellwood/Volusia, Putnam, Dade City, Hillsborough and Polk were absolutely outstanding in caring for the center's staff, their families, their buildings. They kept in contact with us, maintained such positive outlooks, were grateful that it was not any worse, and got their centers up and running in record time in order to serve the families to whom they are so dedicated.**

It is an honor to be able to work at RCMA with the hundreds upon hundreds of "above and beyond" human beings on our staff. *Thank you all.*

Many Thanks / Muchas Gracias! - We want to thank all of those who provided assistance to RCMA whether with money, supplies or manpower, we thank you all very much. If we miss your name, we apologize, and hope that you know that your contribution is greatly appreciated! On behalf of all those you have helped, we thank you all so very much!

◆ 1st National Bank of South Florida ◆
 A C D M - CBS., Inc. ◆ Alger Farms, Inc. ◆
 Atlantic-Florida East Coast Fertilizer &
 Chemical ◆ The Bailey Family ◆ Bonnie
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 School ◆ Eileen Bayer
 ◆Michael Bayer ◆ Jack
 Brady ◆ Brooks Tropical,
 Inc. ◆ Shawn Buller ◆
 Dot & Don Burt ◆ Gayle
 Canfield ◆ Christ the
 King Catholic School –
 Tampa ◆ City of North
 Lauderdale ◆ Elyse
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 Toys – Sarasota ◆ Marie Donuhue ◆
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 ◆ S.K. Freudenberg ◆ Gold Medal
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 Steven Gonzalez ◆ Grace United Methodist
 Church ◆ Dr. Mimi Graham ◆
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 Snider ◆ Paul Symes
 ◆ Tampa Catholic
 High School ◆ Helen

Tateo ◆ Melissa Terzi ◆ The
 Sports Authority - Fort Myers ◆
 Trinity Presbyterian Church –
 Venice ◆ Trinity United Methodist
 Church – Arcadia ◆ United Way of
 Hillsborough County ◆ Madelaine
 Volum ◆ Wal-Mart ◆ Maribel
 Weigering ◆ Ray & Diane Welty ◆
 Vicki Willard ◆ Neal Zipper



Help For Everyone / Ayuda para todos

Fear of deportation is one of the many obstacles preventing illegal immigrants who lost their homes or jobs during the recent Hurricanes from seeking disaster relief. The language barrier is also a problem, and undocumented workers can't apply for cash assistance, although they are eligible for food and temporary shelter.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency limits cash-assistance and unemployment programs to U.S. citizens and qualified aliens, however, undocumented residents can get non-monetary help such as ice, water, shelter, food and counseling. Those who have children born in the United States can apply for cash assistance on their behalf.

"The fact that you're undocumented doesn't mean you can't get assistance," said Justo Hernandez, deputy federal coordinating officer for FEMA. The U.S. Small Business Administration administrator Hector Barreto conceded that illegal immigrants are limited in the aid they can receive from the department, but he said the state and private groups such as the Salvation Army and the American Red Cross may offer financial help.

RCMA served as a link to some of those organizations. Please consult the following links for more information

http://www.fema.gov/txt/about/process/help_after_disaster_english.txt

http://www.redcross.org/services/0,1103,0_313_00.html

El miedo a la deportación es uno de los muchos obstáculos que impiden a los inmigrantes ilegales que perdieron sus hogares o trabajos durante alguno de los huracanes (Charley, Frances o Iván) buscar ayuda. La barrera del lenguaje es también un problema y los trabajadores indocumentados no pueden pedir ayuda en efectivo a pesar de que pueden hacerlo para comida y refugio temporal.

La Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) limita la ayuda en efectivo y programas de desempleo a ciudadanos norteamericanos y extranjeros que califiquen, sin embargo los residentes indocumentados pueden obtener ayuda no monetaria como hielo, agua, refugio, comida y conserjería. Aquellos que han tenido hijos nacidos en los Estados Unidos pueden aplicar por asistencia en su representación.

"El hecho de que sea usted indocumentado no quiere decir que no pueda obtener asistencia", comentó Justo Hernandez, Coordinador Federal para FEMA. El administrador de la Agencia Federal para el Desarrollo de la Pequeña Empresa Hector Barreto comentó que todos los inmigrantes ilegales están limitados en la ayuda que pueden recibir de las agencias gubernamentales pero también comentó que los grupos estatales y privados como el Ejército de Salvación y la Cruz Roja Americana pueden ofrecer ayuda financiera.

RCMA sirve de contacto para algunas de esas organizaciones. Por favor consulte las siguientes ligas para más información.

http://www.fema.gov/txt/about/process/help_after_disaster_spanish.txt

http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0_504_00.html

NOTES AND NEWS - Words from Around the State!

RCMA Charter Schools has much to share. Let's start with the **Wimauma Academy Dolphins**, who is celebrating an "A". Yes that is right! Our very own Wimauma Academy received an "A" for its school grade. RCMA is very proud of the faculty, staff and students of the Academy. The Academy is currently serving students in grades K, 1,2,3,7 and 8. This new school year we expanded the grades served to include third grade, and added Art and Algebra I to our curriculum. The school is still accepting students in all grades, if anyone is interested in enrolling or referring students please contact the School Counselor: Marcela Estevez at (813)672-5159. To learn more about our school, visit us or call the School Director, Daniel Ocegüera.

The **Immokalee Community School (ICS) Dragons** have also started the year in a great way. We have expanded our third and fourth grades and added a fifth grade for a total of 150 students. If you need more information about ICS contact Maria Jimenez, Charter School Coordinator at (239)867-3220.

As FCAT became to be the most important test in our State, both schools have already begun preparing for this type of testing. We have coined the term "RCMA Writes!" a monthly FCAT writing simulation designed to help students practice and be ready for the real thing. Additionally we have also added a system to help students prepare for the reading and math sections of the FCAT: Simulation Tests for Analyzing and Monitoring the Progress of Students (STAMPS). These simulations take place monthly and are designed to help the teachers monitor student preparation and progress.

Escuelas Charter de RCMA tienen mucho que compartir. Comencemos con los **Delfines de la Academia de Wimauma**, que están celebrando una "A". ¡Así es! Nuestra Academia de Wimauma recibió una "A" por sus calificaciones escolares. RCMA esta muy orgullosa de los profesores, staff y estudiantes de la Academia. La Academia actualmente esta sirviendo a los grados K, 1,2,3,7 y 8. Este nuevo año escolar expandimos los grados para servir al tercer grado, y agregar Arte y Álgebra I a nuestro curriculum. La escuela aun esta aceptando alumnos en todos los grados, si alguien esta interesado en inscribirse o en referir estudiantes por favor contacte al Consejero Escolar: Marcela Estévez en el (813)672-5159. Para saber mas acerca de nuestra escuela, visítenos o llame al Director Escolar, Daniel Ocegüera.

Los **Dragones de la Escuela Comunitaria de Immokalee (ICS)** también empezaron el año de una excelente manera. Expandimos nuestros terceros y cuartos grados y agregamos un quinto grado para tener un total de 150 alumnos. Si necesita mas información acerca de la ICS contacte a Maria Jiménez, Coordinadora de Escuelas Charter en el (239)867-3220.

FCAT se esta convirtiendo en el examen mas importante de nuestro estado, ambas escuelas ya comenzaron a prepararse para este tipo de examen. Hemos acuñado el termino "RCMA Writes!" (¡RCMA escribe!) una simulación mensual del FCAT diseñada para ayudar a los estudiantes a practicar y estar preparados para el examen real. Adicionalmente se agrego un sistema para ayudar a los estudiantes a que se preparen para las secciones de lectura y matemáticas del FCAT: Exámenes de Simulación para Analizar y Monitorear el Avance de los Estudiantes (STAMPS por sus siglas en inglés). Estas simulaciones se hacen mensualmente y están diseñadas para ayudar a los maestros a monitorear la preparación y el progreso de los estudiantes.

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