

St. Augustine Parish Hosts Red Cross Shelter Operations Training Course

Thanks to all the parishioners who were able to attend Red Cross Shelter Operations Training Course at our parish on Wednesday evening, April 14, 2010. 20 parishioners attended, an excellent turn-out for a Wednesday evening. This 4-hour training class qualifies participants to be Red Cross emergency shelter staff workers.

Alberto Torres, a St. Augustine shelter team member, as well as representing the Hispanic Community at St. Augustine's, and the Parish Council, served as interpreter for the Red Cross instructor. He and the instructor were well received by the participants. To our knowledge, this was the first time the Shelter Operations course has been presented as bilingual. The St. Augustine shelter team supported the class by providing a demonstration of how the team uses our parish building space to operate an emergency shelter.

We hope that you, as new Shelter Operations graduates, will stay connected to our St. Augustine shelter team. We look forward to your participation to build your shelter skills, and trust you will respond to our call for help, should the Red Cross call on St. Augustine Parish to open an emergency shelter.

You are very welcome to attend our team meetings (the next one is Tuesday, May 11th, 7:00-8:30 PM in classroom 18/19). Look for announcements in the parish bulletin (Justice & Peace section) and check out the latest information on the Emergency Shelter link to the Parish Website (this page); (save it as a Favorite Link). Also, contact the team through Paul at any time (paulbedard42@verizon.net); or call Paul 751-0007 or the Parish Office (275-7962): ask for Katharine Anderson or Fidel Rubio.

Thanks and Peace,
Paul

Thanks to the St. Augustine Shelter Team and Parishioners

They participated in the Red Cross Disaster Simulation Exercise on March 13, 2010 at Bon Air Baptist Church. The shelter team supported the Bon Air Baptist shelter team as co-hosts for the exercise. The Red Cross requested St. Augustine support, as the Bon Air shelter team did not have prior shelter experience. This was the largest exercise ever conducted by the Red Cross in Virginia, as over 90 shelter workers from shelter teams across the region and 200 volunteers who played the role of evacuees, participated in the exercise.

Thanks to the St. Augustine shelter team for your sterling performance. You had a distinct challenge in organizing and managing a shelter team of 90 members in two shifts supporting 200 clients. The surge at 9:00 AM was massive, followed by another at shift change at 12:00. You handled the initial surge of shelter team members and clients extremely well, as well as the second influx of team members and clients. Kudos to shelter team members who managed registration, health and mental health, shelter operations, food service, information and communications; and to John Callear who managed logistics support for the Red Cross. The Red Cross has a high regard for your expertise, well earned over these past three years of participation in their annual shelter exercises, and confirmed again by your performance this year.