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# DISASTER RECOVERY CORNER

**St Vincent de Paul is actively participating and leading recovery efforts on the ground in Puerto Rico along with several National VOAD partners. Please continue to pray for the people of Puerto Rico as they recover from Hurricane Maria's destruction.**

AUGUST 23, 2018

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# VINCENTIANS COME TOGETHER IN STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS

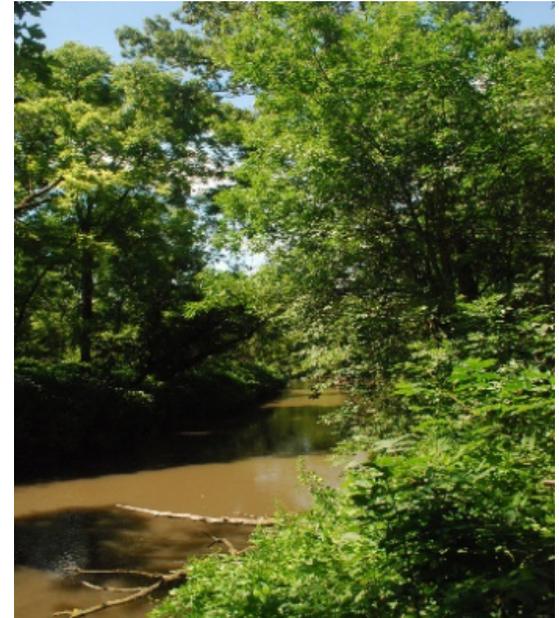
*Susan Wiland, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Rockford Council President*

The Pecatonica River, a 194 mile tributary of the Rock River flows through northern Illinois, through Freeport and Pearl City. The word Pecatonica is the English form of two Algonquian Indian language words which means "slow", and niba, which means "water", forming the conjunction Bekaaniba or "Slow Water". It was anything but slow in July 2017.

In July, in the Freeport and Pearl City area, the Pecatonica River crested at 15.86 feet after heavy rainfall and high winds. It left many residents on the east side of town with flooded homes and structural damage. Many homes were uninhabitable causing those homeowners to find shelters or alternative housing. On August 4 the emergency response commenced with the opening of a MARC (Multi-Agency Resource Center) at the local high school. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Central District members in the Rockford Diocese manned the center, recorded each household that visited the table, and distributed Walmart gift cards. 187 households visited our table that day.

The logical next step was that the local community organizations would band together to continue the task of assisting in longer term disaster assistance, i.e. assessing the damage and identifying funding opportunities. All of the local community organizations knocked on every door and assisted in one way or another, mucking out basements, replacing furnaces and water heaters, providing mold remediation kits, food, and financial assistance. Sadly, there was no further community assistance available long term and these 187 households continued to fend for themselves.

Continued...



# VINCENTIANS COME TOGETHER IN STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS

*Susan Wiland, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Rockford Council President*

Continued...

In September 2017, the Rockford Council began to make follow up calls to all persons on our list to determine the priority of their unmet needs. Of these 187, 34 were identified as emergency or high priority cases. Our one and only Disaster Case Manager, from the Peoria Council, began the arduous task of long term case management, tackling the emergency cases first. This continued until February 2018 where St. Vincent de Paul financially assisted two households.

Now fast forward to May 2018. Our only Disaster Case Manager was redirected to Watseka, Illinois where another flooding disaster had also occurred. So, long term case management in Freeport and Pearl City were abandoned. Our regional coordinator met with the emergency assistance manager and a couple of local organizations to follow up on the status of these households to solicit additional support. They were not aware of any households that required additional assistance.

Again, our Vincentian community stepped it up. 13 Disaster Case Managers were trained and assigned cases. All 187 households were called to identify those who still had unmet needs. Of these 187, 34 were identified as having unmet needs. The team is now in the process of making home visits to further assess the needs of these flood victims. We have identified 16 households with structural damage and have reached out to Belfor, a disaster recovery company, to assess the damage. The other 18 households are in need of appliances and other miscellaneous items.

In parallel, we continue to coordinate our efforts with the local VOAD in Stephenson County in the hopes that we will be able to make a difference in the victims' lives. We live by our Vincentian spirituality and know that no one person is exempt from our help. This is who we are. We make no distinction in those we serve because we see the face of Christ. And, these families are very grateful for our caring and have an optimism that has diminished over the last year.



**June 2018 –  
Damaged furnace**

# PUERTO RICO UPDATES



DSC's Board approved a \$11.6 million FEMA Cooperative Agreement for DSC to conduct Disaster Case Management in Puerto Rico. With the confirmed death toll now over 1,400 casualties, and with the ongoing challenges to restoring the infrastructure, the DCMP will be a great resource for Puerto Rico and enable SVDP to help over 5200 households. These images were taken in an area where DSC-SVDPUSA conducted a Parish Recovery Assistance Center and where our Vincentians are working with Team Rubicon to get basic structurally needs in place. like roofs. to stabilize families.

# VINCENTIANS RESPOND CALIFORNIA WILDFIRE RECOVERY

Message from Judy Dietlein

I guess there is a reason we call August the "Dog Days of Summer". Definitely a hot and sultry month. This year with the fires burning all over California it is truly one of the hottest, most uncomfortable summers in memory.

The National Meeting in San Diego is just around the corner and I have been looking forward to going and attending the Disaster Relief Training as I am the Western Region Lead for Disaster and I need lots of training! Little did I know I would be getting on the job training in Redding earlier this month at the Carr Fire. Peggy Niswander, St. Joseph's Conference President in Redding was also thrown into handling her first disaster and did an amazing job. She assembled more than 40 volunteers in less than a day to man the table at the Local Assistance Center (LAC). Thanks to all the Vincentian and Knights of Columbus volunteers who were available to help assist in some way

We were blessed with the help of SVDP-USA Disaster Services which guided us every step of the way. Liz Disco-Shearer, CEO, and her team provided all the necessary guidance to aid us in helping those victims of the fire. A member of the Rapid Response Team, Tom Link, traveled 12 hours from Seattle to help us get organized so we could be ready at the LAC at Shasta High School when it opened. Through Disaster Services we received a grant of \$20,000 in Walmart gift cards to give to all we spoke to during the week the center was open. Thanks go to St. Dominic's Conference in Benicia which provided face masks and \$1,000 in gas gift cards. They too were distributed during our time at the LAC.

One of our National Partners, D&W Sourceall, Inc., provided 3,400 hygiene kits for men, women, and children. Unfortunately they arrived too late to be used in Redding, but they were greatly needed in Lake County where many evacuees are living in tents at campgrounds. They were diverted to our Thrift Store and delivered to the LAC in Lucerne on Sunday August 12th.

Now, Longterm Recovery steps in providing help to those with unmet needs. Many will be eligible for our House in a Box Program - another step in our learning curve for disaster relief.

As always Vincentians have stepped up to the plate and many donations in the form of twinning have gone to Redding and Lake County. We keep the victims of this terrible disaster in our prayers and hope their journey back to some sort of normalcy in their lives returns soon.



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# SHONDA LONG

## DISASTER CASE MANAGER



Shonda Long is a Disaster Case Manager for St Vincent De Paul, USA. Shonda is originally from Monroe, Louisiana. Shonda's previous employment experiences were a Medical Services Manager with the Department of Defense for over 10 years, a Senior Operations Specialist with JP Morgan Chase for over 8 years and before that a Manager in the Food Industry.

Shonda was informed of this job from a good friend, and after hearing of the job requirements was interested because the idea of helping those who were in need from the devastation of hurricane Harvey. One of Shonda's passions is to help those in need in any way possible. So without further thought, there was not too much if at all any hesitation in applying for this job as a Disaster Case Manager. Shonda look forward to the opportunities and the hopes of spreading joy to the communities of those in south Texas and surrounding areas.

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# VERONICA MARTIN

## DISASTER CASE MANAGER

Veronica G. Martin is the DCM of Disaster Services for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul-USA for the Galveston County area. She works with 2-1-1 calls, Mainland Community Program referrals, FEMA referrals, outreach clients and the Long-Term Recovery Program.

Currently she is assisting families and individuals in the Galveston County area affected by Hurricane Harvey Floods. She also participated in the outreach programs for the Santa Fe shootings survivors. These shootings occurred on May 18, 2018 in Galveston County leaving eight students and two teacher fatally shot.

Veronica has a B.S. in Health Care Administration and is currently enrolled at the University of Houston-Clear Lake MBA with a Concentration in Information Technology Degreed Program. She has over 15 years of management experience and is a former Case Manager, Claims Analyst, Administrative Assistance, Sergeant in Corrections for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Prison System, and the assigned unit safety officer. During Hurricane Rita and Hurricane Ike, she was instrumental in the offenders' prison relocation efforts transporting all offenders to safe environment.

She is currently, a member of the North Texas Chapter Lupus Foundation, in Dallas, Texas, has volunteered for the Crisis Center of Southeast Texas, Rape and Suicidal Center of Southeast Texas, and has volunteered for Paul Mitchell, Ogle, and Salon Academy Boutiques to assist in homeless shelters and schools providing skin care and haircuts.



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DELIA GARCIA  
DISASTER CASE MANAGER



I love to volunteer and participate in any outreach program that will serve the community. I started working as a Disaster Case Manager with the Mainland Community Partnership for Galveston County Long Term Recovery Group. Many of the cities around me were impacted extremely by Harvey.

I began with Disaster Services St. Vincent de Paul in June 2018 since the Mainland Community Partnership program was an initial program and was beginning to downsize. I continue to volunteer at outreaches and often assist with Spanish speaking clients. I enjoy working as a Disaster Case Manager and I hope I am able to assist as many survivors as I can.



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# CINTHIA ROSS DISASTER CASE MANAGER

Cinthia Ross is a Disaster Case Manager for St. Vincent de Paul Disaster Services. Cinthia has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Sociology and a minor in Family Consumer Sciences from Lamar University.

Cinthia has many years of experience working in the helping profession. Previously, Cinthia worked as a Case Manager serving handicap and mentally challenged individuals. Cinthia came to St. Vincent de Paul after feeling the effects of Hurricane Harvey in her own home. Cinthia enjoys helping others and she is grateful to be of assistance in the recovery process.





# DISASTER PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP

Annual National Assembly  
in San Diego

08. 29. 18  
9 AM-4:30 PM

HILLCREST A - B

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9:30 am - 9:45 am

Welcome and Introductions Joe Williams & Jim Butler-DSC Board Members

9:45 am - 12:00 noon

How to run a Parish Recovery Assistance Program- Dan Buchanan- Associate Training Specialist - Emergency Training Institute, Texas A&M

12:00 noon - 1:00 pm

Lunch

1:30 pm - 2:45 pm

Panel on Long Term Recovery-Father Bruce Anderson, USVI, William Rodriguez Maldonado, Council President SVDP Puerto Rico, Jack Tibbitts, Executive Director, SVDP Sonoma

3:00 pm-3:30 pm

Overview of DSC Programs Jim Butler and Elizabeth Disco-Shearer

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Tabletop Exercise on "What happens when a Hurricane hits your Council". Joe Williams, Jim Butler, Elizabeth Disco-Shearer and audience members

[WWW.SVDPDISASTER.ORG](http://WWW.SVDPDISASTER.ORG)

# FOR MORE INFORMATION



Please stop by our newly updated website: [www.svdpcdisaster.org](http://www.svdpcdisaster.org)

An online store and training resources will soon be available exclusively for Vincentians active in disaster recovery.

Follow us on Twitter: [@svdpcusadisaster](https://twitter.com/svdpcusadisaster)

Follow us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DisasterServicesCorp/](https://www.facebook.com/DisasterServicesCorp/)

Follow us on LinkedIn: Disaster Services Corporation, SVDP-USA

Monique Brent, [mbrent@svdpcdisaster.org](mailto:mbrent@svdpcdisaster.org)  
Manager, Volunteer Resources and Deployment

**Please consider supporting our mission by donating your time, providing financial support, and/or becoming active in your local community on disaster preparedness and recovery as a Vincentian.**

For those of you interested in volunteering, please stop by our website at [www.svdpcdisaster.org](http://www.svdpcdisaster.org) and click on the volunteer button at the top right corner. It will take you to a webform to complete. This information will help us gain better insight on you and be able to better pair you with what we have open and available to volunteer with. We will set up a one on one phone call shortly after the form has been completed. As a reminder, we cannot continue all these great works without your help. Please consider donating to the general disaster fund at [www.svdpcdisaster.org](http://www.svdpcdisaster.org) to keep our programs running so that we can in turn support those who have been impacted by disaster here in the United States.

