

TEXAS REALTORS® HELP AFTER HARVEY

TACTFUL WAYS TO MARKET YOUR COMMUNITY- SERVICE EFFORTS

Getting involved in your community is an organic way to grow your sphere. Not only will you meet people who may turn into referral resources, but you'll also attract likeminded consumers who choose you because of the causes you support. Make your sphere a little wider by letting more people know about your philanthropic activities. Here are a few tips for using your community-service commitment in your marketing.

Highlight your efforts on your website. Add a section to your website about your service activities. Make it just as prominent as any other section and don't bury it under "About me."

Share photos on social media. Don't just tell people you're involved—show them. You don't have to say much when you share pictures of you building a home, painting a school, or walking shelter dogs.

Ask others to get involved, too. If you're hosting a service event or even just planning your regular visit to the local retirement home, let your contacts know they are always welcome to join you and how they can help, too.

Tell us about it. Email editor@texasrealtors.com if you'd like to share the ways you help out and how it has benefited you and your business.

—Summer Mandell



Hundreds of Texas REALTORS® answered the call this summer to help those affected by Hurricane Harvey. Here's a sample of what REALTORS® have done throughout the state to help their fellow Texans. If you have a story you'd like to share, respond to our survey at surveymonkey.com/r/sp2cx2x.

Cindy Lance, an agent with Dewey Blanton Real Estate in Austin, volunteered through her church and headed to Beaumont. "We met up with an elderly couple who experienced flooding in their community," Lance says. "We took down all their walls, insulation, doors, and doorframes. ... I am still in contact with them and will be going to see the home when they have finished rebuilding."

Stephen Williams, broker/owner of the Stephen Williams Agency in Pearsall, recruited his wife, owner of Cowpokes BBQ, and her staff to prepare barbecue sandwiches to share with those in need. "We took 500 to an evacuation center in Cuero; 200 to an evacuation center in Gonzales; about 50 to a crew working on downed lines; about 100 to people in Refugio; and about 150 to people in Rockport. I was just the delivery guy, but glad to be a part of Texans helping Texans."

"I am matching donations to animal charities, dollar for dollar, up to \$5,000, to be donated to Houston Humane Society to help animals affected by Hurricane Harvey," says **Julie Yau Tam**, broker of Lyn Realty in Houston.

ERA Lone Star Realty in Tomball hosted a block party for a neighborhood

that experienced extensive damage. "The homeowners were able to visit with each other, sharing their stories and offering tips and tricks they had recently learned. Everyone was polite, grateful, and re-energized. It was a rewarding experience," says broker **Elizabeth Edds**.

RE/MAX Fine Properties in Sugar Land assembled care packages. "Brokers **Nimesh and Minesh Patel** and staff sought out items needed, packaged the items together, and called on the more than 200 REALTORS® within the firm to distribute the boxes," says **Chekiter Esther**, an agent with the brokerage.

David Thelen (1), of The Thelen Group - Keller Williams Premier Realty in Katy, bought a boat to help rescue homeowners from chest-deep water rising into their homes.

"I was deployed as a member of my fire department's Special Response Unit to the communities of Dickinson and Angelton," says **Moses Druxman (2)**, a REALTOR® for Briggs Freeman Sotheby's International Realty in Fort Worth. His unit completed around 150 rescues, delivered supplies, and provided drone operations for agencies including FEMA. "The effects of Harvey to communities in South Texas will be long lasting, and we cannot stop just with the rescues," he says. "Our crew plans to go back down to offer our skills to rebuild communities."

—S.M.