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UAE gift: \$2.7M for Irma aid in Collier

Relief money goes to school district, United Way, Grace Place

Liz Freeman
Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Collier County is receiving \$2.7 million from the United Arab Emirates to help with Hurricane Irma recovery for families still hard hit by the storm.

The Collier County School District and Grace Place for Children and Families are each receiving \$1 million, and the United Way of Collier is being awarded \$700,000.

The funding comes from \$10 million the United Arab Emirates is dedicating to Florida as part of a tradition of helping communities in the United States that are devastated by natural disasters. Another \$10 million is going to Texas.

Dana Al Marashi, head of Heritage and Social Affairs at the UAE Embassy in Washington, D.C., said Tuesday the UAE reached out to Gov. Rick Scott's office after Irma to see how it could help with relief.

From there, Volunteer Florida officials said Collier was hard hit by the September storm, and connections were made to the United Way, she said. The decision to earmark funds to Collier was made in December, and a site visit was done in January.

See IRMA AID, Page 5A

RSW scores nonstop flights

Frontier adds Las Vegas, Phoenix and four other cities for airport. 1B

Calif.'s biggest fire still growing

14,000 firefighters called on to tackle roaring blazes in state. 12A

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SLEEP THERAPY CAN SAVE LIVES



Liz Freeman Naples Daily News | USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Robert Mayer knows he's lucky to be alive, and it's due to a sleep study that could just as easily not have happened.

It led to a diagnosis of congestive heart failure for the 69-year-old retired New York City police officer who spends part of the year in Naples. His only symptom was a little fatigue and shortness of breath. But his wife noticed he would stop breathing at night.

He was diagnosed with a less common form of sleep apnea associated with heart failure, and he spent months on an external heart defibrillator until he had a defibrillator implanted recently at NCH Downtown Baker Hospital.

"They said there is a chance the sleep apnea could be a control factor why my heart got the way it is," said Mayer, who has been fit and athletic all his life.

A good night's sleep is no longer about counting sheep; the science behind shuteye and its impact on health is tremendous, experts say.

See SLEEP THERAPY, Page 4A

Watch interviews with two sleep study patients. naplesnews.com

Robert Mayer, at his home on Friday, said that after feeling fatigued, he participated in a sleep study. His doctor scheduled further tests, which revealed a life-threatening condition. MORIAH RATNER/NAPLES DAILY NEWS

Another medical marijuana center opens in Naples

Liz Freeman
Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Two patient advocates stand ready at the recently opened Liberate Physician Center in Naples for patients to

gain access to medical cannabis, but there still is no dispensary in Collier County.

For many patients in pain or suffering from symptoms or side effects, mainstream therapies don't work anymore — or never did — and they are

anxious to try medical cannabis products if they qualify with any of the dozen medical conditions under Florida law where it is legal to use medical marijuana.

See MARIJUANA, Page 4A

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SpaceX

Continued from Page 3A

Ocean. The upper-stage continued into orbit, firing an engine twice before releasing the roughly 12,800-pound “Merah Putih” satellite 32 minutes after liftoff. The launch was SpaceX’s 15th of the year, just three shy of last year’s total, and the 60th overall by a Falcon 9 rocket since its debut in 2010. With the introduction of the upgraded Falcon 9 and its successful re-flight, SpaceX begins in earnest its drive to transition reusable rockets from an experimental project into something more routine, like aircraft operations.

If successful, that innovation over time promises to lower the cost of launches that SpaceX now advertises online for \$62 million. CEO Elon Musk ultimately hopes to make it economical for an even bigger rocket — the Big Falcon Rocket, or BFR — to transport human settlers to Mars.

Another company, Blue Origin, backed by Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, has launched and landed its smaller, sub-orbital New Shepard booster up to five times. The company also plans to reuse larger New Glenn rockets to be built in a new factory at KSC’s Exploration Park, possibly launching by 2020.

SpaceX’s latest Falcon 9 booster should return to Port Canaveral within three or four days, and will then undergo inspections to determine its fitness for a

third launch. Tuesday’s launch delivered a much-needed satellite to orbit for PT Telkom Indonesia, that country’s largest telecommunications and network provider. Formerly designated Telkom-4, the satellite renamed Merah Putih — representing the Indonesian flag’s red and white colors — will replace the Telkom-1 spacecraft launched in 1999. After 18 years of service, beyond its design life, Telkom-1 suffered a fuel leak a year ago and began to break apart in orbit, disrupting services. Flying 22,300 miles over the equator, in an orbital slot at 108 degrees East longitude, the new satellite, built by California-based SSL, will improve phone and internet service to the more than 17,000 islands of the Indonesian archi-

pelago, as well as India and other parts of South Asia and Southeast Asia. “Satellite plays a vital role in our telecommunications infrastructure,” said Zulhelfi Abidin, Telkom’s chief technology officer. SpaceX is aiming for another commercial satellite launch from the Cape later this month — potentially its fourth launch in as many weeks. For now, the Eastern Range will prepare for a second launch in just over four days. A United Launch Alliance Delta IV Heavy rocket is readying to launch NASA’s \$1.5 billion Parker Solar Probe mission to study the sun, targeting a 3:48 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 11, liftoff from Launch Complex 37. Contact Dean at 321-917-4534 or jdean@floridatoday.com.

Irma aid

Continued from Page 1A

Al Marashi visited Grace Place on Tuesday to see how it serves local families to help lift them out of poverty through early childhood education and other services.

“I just love its ability to give families an opportunity to learn and improve their lives and enter the school system and be on par with their fellow peers,” she said.

Al Marashi said she envisions the relationship with the Collier grant recipients to be long-term; she said she will return to see how the UAE donations are benefiting the community.

The Collier school district will use the funds to provide students in Everglades City and Immokalee with internet access, namely through Wi-Fi hot spots. New Wi-Fi transmitters on the tops of towers at eight schools will replace technology damaged, or wiped out, by Irma, according to a news release.

The schools are Immokalee High School; Bethune Education Center; Lake Trafford, Highlands, Village Oaks and Pinecrest elementary schools; Eden Park and Everglades City School. Grace Place will use its \$1 million to

help families in Golden Gate recover from the storm, such as with roof repairs, and to help Grace Place enhance its campus to be stronger in the event of another hurricane, said Tim Ferguson, chief executive officer of the educational center in Golden Gate. Some of the funds will help restore the center’s playground and soccer field and upgrade technology.

Some of the funds will be used to install a generator at the center’s food pantry so there is no down time to help families with emergency food after another disaster, Ferguson said.

Besides managing the awards to the school district and to Grace Place, the United Way is receiving \$700,000 to help families not recovered from Irma, said Steven Sanderson, president and chief executive officer of the United Way.

The United Way will help families who don’t have the means to pay insurance deductibles for home repairs and for other needs.

There are families who will be in recovery mode for five to seven years, he said.

“This is a huge gift to accelerate our recovery,” Sanderson said.

Two other regions in Florida, Jacksonville and Tallahassee, are receiving a share of the \$10 million to Florida, Al



Jesusita “Susanna” Rodriguez hangs wet clothes in her camp in Immokalee on March 8. Rodriguez was left homeless after Hurricane Irma hit Southwest Florida six months earlier. DOROTHY EDWARDS/NAPLES DAILY NEWS

Marashi said. Hurricane Sandy, along with funding to Joplin, Missouri, in 2011 after one of the largest tornadoes in U.S. history. The UAE stepped in with relief funding to help New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and to New Jersey after

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