

## *Another Hurricane*

Just three weeks after being devastated by Hurricane Charley, Florida is bracing for an onslaught by his deadly sister, Frances. Nearly half a million people have been ordered to evacuate as the storm takes aim at the state's east coast. It could be the most powerful one-two punch to hit a state in at least a century.

Forecasters said the still-strengthening Category 4 hurricane could hit on Labor Day weekend as early as Friday night. Charley raked Florida's west coast with 145-mile-per-hour wind, causing billions of dollars in damage and killing 27 people. "I can't emphasize enough how powerful this is," said Max Mayfield, director of the National Hurricane Center. "If there is something out there that's going to weaken it, we haven't seen it." Gov. Jeb Bush declared a state of emergency, and activated the National Guard.

Late Wednesday afternoon, Frances was on a course that would take it to the central portion of Florida's east coast. Residents of Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina are watching the forecast closely in case Frances takes a sharp turn to the north. Life Care centers along the coastal areas are making preparations, in consultation with Chief Operating Officer Cathy Murray, Bryan Cook, Eastern Division vice president, and others.

An irony is that many of our residents who were evacuated from Life Care Center of Punta Gorda may have to go through another trying storm experience three weeks later.

In a visit last Friday, August 27, I asked several associates in the lobby of Life Care Center of Punta Gorda if there was panic in the building when Hurricane Charley struck with all its fury. "No," they replied. Was there panic among the residents? I continued. "No," they said. One associate spoke up: "And here's the reason: Our residents have been through many storms and adversities in their lives, and this was just one more storm to ride out."

Let's all pray that God will deliver them -- and all other Florida residents -- from this trial by directing Frances north and east, back out into the Atlantic.

--Beecher Hunter