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Patriot Storage inspires with food drive



Lorraine Schneeberger column

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You've got to hand it to a business that comes to town and immediately gets involved in the community that it serves.

Patriot Self Storage, which held its grand opening in April at two locations -- on Bobcat Village Center Road off Toledo Blade Boulevard and on Talon Bay Drive across from Ortiz Boulevard -- has done exactly that.

It held huge events at both locations, with raffles all day, petting zoos, bounce houses, clowns, games for kids, food and entertainment. Residents won prizes in the raffles ranging from golf balls and T-shirts to free storage space to an iPod and a big-screen TV.

Patriot also has a special discount for veterans and active military members. Also, for every unit rented at either location, \$5 goes to the Fallen Patriot Fund, which awards grants to the families of U.S. military personnel who have been seriously injured or killed in the line of duty.

Jill Luke, property manager at the Talon Bay location, said at the time, "We want to inspire North Port."

Now, they hope to do it again -- with a giant food drive they'd like to see evolve into a permanent fixture at their business.

The food drive, which will benefit the local chapter of the Salvation Army, will be held on Flag Day, June 14, at Patriot's Talon Bay location, running 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

"There are several businesses that are coming together to show North Port community care and compassion," Luke said.

ReMax will be on site in the morning hours with its hot air balloon, giving free lifts, weather permitting. Sunny Days Ice Cream and Miami Crepes will serve customers and donate a portion of proceeds to the food drive as well.

"The emphasis is on the food drive," Luke said. "We are encouraging everyone who can, to drive by and drop off any food or personal hygiene items."

The items will then be dispersed by the Salvation Army to those who are in need in our community. Items sought include canned goods like soup and vegetables, boxed cereals, pastas, rice -- basically anything that doesn't have to be refrigerated -- as well as toiletries like toothpaste and toothbrushes, floss, soap, shampoo, razors, shaving cream, cloth wipes, diapers and hand sanitizer.

"With many young, old, singles and families in our community needing more to eat, we are wanting to do something to help make a difference for them, and the Salvation Army distributes to all groups, not just a segment of the community," Luke said. Their hope is that residents will come out and share with those who aren't as fortunate as they.

Contributors don't even have to get out of their cars, Luke said, as employees from several local businesses will be on site to receive the items and put them in the warehouse -- Shake It Up, The Medicine Shoppe, Curves, Serenity's Touch, Premiere

Graphics and FPL.

Patriot management's goal is to use the location as a drop-off point for food and other items for any point in time, then give the goods to the Salvation Army for distribution.

"We know with this economy, there's a lot of families struggling," Luke said. "There's a real need for food in North Port."

For more information, call Patriot Self Storage at 941-429-6800.

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