Realtor helps rescue 300 Houston flood victims

“There is no real estate business happening in Houston right now,” said Nicole Lopez, a Realtor and team leader at Houston’s Intero Real Estate Services. But you won’t find her on high ground watching Netflix.

Lopez spent Monday in the trenches with her fiancé, Heath Cummins, helping the Houston Police Department save families, children and pets in Hurricane Harvey’s path from their flooded homes and ushering them to safety in a high-water rescue vehicle. And they’re on the job again today.

There were “too many dogs to count,” Lopez said.

Realtor/team leader Nicole Lopez with her fiancé Heath Cummins. Photo courtesy of Nicole Lopez.

She estimates they helped 300 people in the less-affluent Lakewood area of Houston yesterday. One man was so weak he had to be carried and held up out of the water before being lifted into the truck.

Nicole’s fiancé Heath Cummins helping a man to safety.

Many sick and elderly residents who couldn’t make it to the stores before the hurricane made landfall Friday have had very little to eat or drink over the weekend, and access to critical necessities like formula and medication aren’t a given in this harrowing crisis.

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Heath Cummins (back left), Nicole Lopez (back right) with Houston police in the high-water rescue vehicle. Photo courtesy of Nicole Lopez.

About six miles away, Lopez's own home has survived the flood; she purposefully avoided flood zones when she bought, hoping to eliminate the need for flood insurance. But she's thanking her lucky stars nonetheless, as Harvey's mammoth rainfall has shown little mercy for areas expected to stay relatively dry.

A number of Lopez's Intero colleagues have been forced to relocate to higher ground in the last couple of days. Her colleague Katie Maxwell moved to one of her rental properties in another part of town when her own home started flooding on the first floor.

On Inman Coast to Coast Monday, Maxwell, VP at Intero Houston, wrote: "My brother Cameron Brasier and his girlfriend Lauren Acuna (both fellow Intero Realtors) saved another Intero agent Oscar Olivares and his family last night from rising water and then were stuck all night waiting for the Coast Guard. Luckily they made it out.

Katie Maxwell Nicole has been out in the thick of it helping in any way that she can along with her fiancé Heath Cummins. They have been like Harvey Superherores and deserve a Realtor medal for all they've done. My fiancé Veso Kossev and I along with my daughter evacuated yesterday and we are safe for now but there is water all around us. My brother Cameron Brasier and his girlfriend Lauren Acuna(both fellow Intero Realtors) saved another Intero agent (Oscar Olivares) and his family last night from rising water and then were stuck all night waiting for the Coast Guard. Luckily they made it out. This is like the apocalypse. People are being told to evacuate and there is no way to get out unless they have a boat. Issue is there are not enough boats. People are on roofs with children. Senior citizens are alone in their homes in 3+ feet of water and it's rising. Please continue to pray for this amazing city.
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"This is like the apocalypse," she added. "People are being told to evacuate and there is no way to get out unless they have a boat. The issue is there are not enough boats. People are on roofs with children. Senior citizens are alone in their homes in three-plus feet of water and it's rising. Please continue to pray for this amazing city."

Maxwell and Lopez started a Facebook page called "Housing After Harvey" for Realtors and investors who are offering reduced or rent-free homes for displaced flood victims.

Katie Maxwell shared a group.
15 hrs

If you're a Realtor in Houston or if you know anyone with the ability to offer short term (assuming 3-6 months or more) Houston housing after the storm ends along with assistance with move in costs, reduced rent, reduced to zero deposits, etc. please join this group and comment with possible options. If you know of anyone that will need housing please tag them on the page as well. We want to assist in matching the right people together without the typical red tape & obstacles that delay immediate progress. Thank you!

Public Group
207 Members

+ Join Group

Like Comment Share

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Houston agents looking for ways to help should find a safe shelter in their local area to lend a hand and contribute clothing and non-perishable food, Lopez advised.

“People are coming into the shelters soaking wet,” Lopez said. “They need personal care items, toothbrushes, soap and shampoo. The water is basically sewer water in parts; people want to get clean.

“This will change the landscape of the city,” said the agent, who has lived in Houston for 20 years. “They are going to have to re-think a lot of things after this.”

Meanwhile she and Cummins are preparing for another day of rescuing. They use the Houston Area Off-Road Recovery Facebook Group to identify trouble spots. Next up is the community of Kingwood in northeast Houston where many are still stranded.

George Huntoon

In addition to Lopez, George “Local” Huntoon is another Realtor who is stepping up. The eXp Realty agent who works in the Katy and West Houston markets has been out with his boat the past couple of days doing rescue duty, a life-changing experience.

Last night he told CNN that people were “begging him for a spot on his boat.”

Email Gill South.

Source: click here