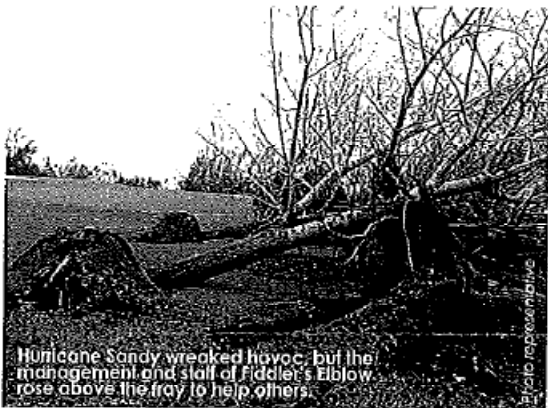


## Shelter From the Storm



Hurricane Sandy wreaked havoc, but the management and staff of Fiddler's Elbow rose above the fray to help others.

When Hurricane Sandy pounded the East Coast in late October, New Jersey was among the areas hardest hit—and not just along the famous shoreline. In central New Jersey, thousands felt Sandy's wrath, prompting Fiddler's Elbow Country Club in Bedminster to offer itself as a true port in the storm.

Operating off a generator, Fiddler's Elbow remained open even as the storm raged, providing food, shelter and other necessities for the community. Storm-weary members and local residents went to the club to take hot

**“It was a very rewarding experience.”**

showers, charge their cell phones and other electronic devices, log on the Internet, and eat a warm meal for up to a full week following the storm. (To make life easier, the club's dress code was temporarily suspended.)

“In the aftermath of the storm, helping our members seemed like the natural thing to do,” says Tom Hurley, general manager of Fiddler's Elbow. “The entire staff pitched in and took it to a level beyond my expectations.”

Hurley and his employees accommodated guests every way possible.

Businesses brought their employees in and took over the meeting rooms. The ballroom was converted into a social center where members could talk, watch television or simply rest. A full slate of children's activities kept youngsters busy, including pumpkin painting (the storm hit two days before Halloween) and movie screenings. And all the while, the club's kitchen kept hot coffee flowing and turned out a steady

supply of fresh-baked cookies so guests could enjoy something sweet among the sorrow and deprivation. Fiddler's Elbow was even able to accommodate a wedding on November 4 because the original venue was unable to open in time for the long-planned nuptials.

“It was a very rewarding experience, as it is any time you put your own cares aside and help others,” Hurley says. “In my mind, I believe our efforts caused the staff to bond and helped them to escape from their own personal situations. Most of our employees were having the same issues in their own homes—no heat, no hot water, no power—and really went above and beyond just to find gas to drive to work in order to help out others.”

When the roads were finally cleared and power was restored, stranded members and others returned to their homes and the club returned to business as usual. That's when the thank-you letters started pouring in. One note in particular captured the sentiments of the entire community:

*“We don't know what we would have done had you not remained operational during these last two devastating weeks. Being able to eat and shower at the club was a little bit of 'heaven' in an otherwise 'hellish' situation.”*

—Karen Moraghan