

## Miami Attorney Drives U-Haul With \$25,000 in Supplies to Panhandle for Hurricane Relief

by Zach Schlein

For Stephen “Steve” Cain, there was never a question as to whether he’d miss his 18th wedding anniversary to help with Hurricane Michael relief efforts.

“My wife supported it wholeheartedly,” Cain says of his decision to depart Miami for his hometown of Panama City only one day after Hurricane Michael made landfall in Florida on Oct. 10. “We spent \$25,000 to get up here with supplies.”

“My boys wanted to come up, but they need to stay in school,” he added.

Cain is a Miami personal injury attorney and law partner with Stewart Tilghman Fox Bianchi & Cain. He has been distributing resources and helping out wherever possible



PHOTO: STEVE CAIN

Steve Cain, Stewart Tilghman Fox Bianchi & Cain loaded up his truck delivering water, generators, chainsaws, gas cans and other essential items to anyone in need in the Panhandle.

since arriving in Panama City on Oct. 12. Cain left South Florida for his childhood home in the Florida Panhandle just one day after the deadly storm made landfall. He stopped to rest one night in Orlando, reaching his destination two days after the storm.

“I’ve been tarping roofs all week and chainsawing. ... It’s

getting better but they’ve got a long way to go,” Cain told the Daily Business Review Wednesday morning. “It’ll be years before they get back.”

Although he had left Miami with a U-Haul truck already packed with emergency equipment and supplies, Cain stockpiled more while winding his way through the state.

“I probably hit three more Home Depots on the way up because [the U-Haul] wasn’t full yet,” he said. “I knew that the roof damage would be extensive, and I wanted to get those people as many tarps as we could get. ... Those seem to be the toughest things to find when these things happen.”

Cain told the DBR that his parents, sister and other family still reside in the area, and that although the scene is “utter devastation,” he’s been inspired by the acts of charity and community he’s witnessed over the last week.

“What I told people when I was heading up is that if you give these people what they need, they’ll do it themselves,” he said. “I’ve watched friends I haven’t seen in 20 years using chainsaws to get through the streets.”

On Tuesday Cain helped deliver food to a childhood friend’s church, feeding more than 500 people. But even with the displays of charity, he is well aware that “it’s going to be a long road” paved with difficul-



PHOTO: STEVE CAIN

ties for the residents of his hometown.

“There’s a lot of people up here who don’t have a lot of money,” Cain said. “There [aren’t] enough construction workers in this area, and I’d say ... more than 50 percent of the houses in town are damaged in a significant way. The government is doing a good job, but the scale is just shocking. ... The resources up here are a little bit different than South Florida.”

In addition to arranging for further trucks to deliver additional supplies, Cain has also set up an online fundraiser with the help of the Florida Justice

Association to assist Panhandle residents with recovery efforts. He remains confident Panama City will rebuild.

“These are proud folk up here,” Cain said. “It’ll take years for them to come back, but they’ll come back. They’re not going to leave.”

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