



### NEWS RELEASE

October 31, 2013

#### City and Partners Transition from Minami Shelter

The City of Santa Maria on Friday evening, November 1<sup>st</sup>, will close the sheltering operation at the Minami Community Center that has been operated by the Red Cross for those residents displaced by the October 12<sup>th</sup> Town Center Inn fire. A large contingent of those displaced residents will be returning to the north tower of the damaged Inn, where many rooms were quickly rehabilitated in recent days by the landlord and Arroyo Grande building contractor Brad Anderson. The north tower was spared significant fire damage and the contractor has cleared debris, installed new doors, and readied rooms. The south tower of the Inn sustained heavy fire damage and is not habitable.

Immediately after the fire, Red Cross volunteers were able to provide residents with shelter, clothing and food, and replace prescription medications that were lost in the fire. To-date, the Red Cross of Santa Barbara County has mobilized more than 80 trained disaster workers to assist in this effort.

Those displaced residents who are able to present a security deposit and their first month's rent will be returning to the Inn. Transportation from the Minami Community Center to the Inn will be provided by SMOOTH Transportation and the Salvation Army.

For those residents unable to return to the Inn, the City in partnership with the Good Samaritan Shelter will provide them an opportunity to stay at a short-term temporary center at the City-owned Newlove Community Center, 1619 S. Thornburg Street. The Newlove Center will be operated by Good Samaritan Shelter as a warming center and will be open only during evening hours, starting from 5:00 p.m. and closing at 8:00 a.m.

Santa Barbara County will continue to provide behavioral health and social services and for each of the clients from the Inn. Even after the shelter closes, the Red Cross has indicated their support to displaced Santa Maria residents as they continue to recover.

The City extended use of its Minami Center on three different occasions, to provide displaced residents with additional time to obtain long-term sustainable housing arrangements. The City closed and relocated several recreation programs operating from that building in order to provide shelter accommodations.

Questions may be directed to the City Manager's Office, 925-0951 ext. 372.

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