

# THE NEW PALTZ ORACLE

THE OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF SUNY NEW PALTZ SINCE 1938

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## Red Cross Shelter Set Up During Sandy

🕒 November 15, 2012 👤 Bianca Mendez 📁 News 💬 0

The Athletic and Wellness Center and the Red Cross set up a shelter in Elting Gym for the New Paltz community and residents during Superstorm Sandy.

The shelter housed 11 residents on Monday, Oct. 29. The shelter was set up due to the prediction of heavy winds and rain that threatened to cause power outages, flooding and other damages.

"The primary purpose of a Red Cross shelter is to provide a safe but temporary place for people to take refuge from disasters if they have nowhere to go," Rachel Altvater, a fourth-year creative writing major and Red Cross volunteer said.

Altvater was one of the six students who signed up through the Department of Disaster studies to work with the Dutchess County Red Cross during the storm.

"Volunteers can generally be expected to assist with setting up and breaking down shelters, serving food and interacting with the shelter occupants as needed," Altvater said.

The shelter has the opportunity to open on campus because of an agreement formed by the Red Cross, the Ulster County Emergency Coordinator and the town of New Paltz. This agreement was monitored on campus by Mike Malloy, the director of Environmental Health & Safety and David Dugatkin, university police chief.

"The Red Cross through the Ulster County Emergency Coordinator reaches out to us for the availability of that shelter space prior or during a local event when they are determining their shelter needs across the county or state," Malloy said.

Stuart Robinson, director of athletics on campus, supervised the space to make sure everything was running smoothly.

"We only provide the space for the Red Cross to set everything up," Robinson said. "It is their job to bring equipment, and then leave it the way it was found."

Robinson said staff from the Red Cross were brought in from different areas of the United States to help out. They brought cots, food and medical equipment.

Although all residents were welcomed to take cover in the shelter, animals were not permitted. The shelter suggested those taking advantage of the shelter's benefits should bring their pets to local veterinarians and kennels, Altvater said.

The day after Sandy, the shelter closed.

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👤 BIANCA MENDEZ   CATS   DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER STUDIES   DOGS

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