



A WORD FROM JAKE KALLIES

First off, I would like to begin by extending my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all the workers that volunteered to go to Florida. Just as importantly, I want to share my gratitude with all the managers, coworkers and family members of these individuals as well.

Put simply, it was truly an awesome group of men that stepped forward to go work in Florida. It was my honor going with this group and I would do it again at the drop of a hat. That group effort extends beyond each individual worker to their loved ones, bosses and coworkers – people who had to take on the burdens of an extra work load at home or work while worrying for the guys as they embarked to unfamiliar territory.

Our group ran the gamut of experience ranging from a first day apprentice to a lineman in his last year of work before retirement. With such a range of knowledge and personalities it was an experience that I wish everyone could get. They did everyone in Wisconsin proud even though most of them will just tell you they were doing their job. I know that each and every single one of them wished they could have done even more while they were there. They didn't want to leave until every person in Florida had their power restored.

We learned some new things while working in Florida and had to add in some rather odd safety reminders to the morning tailgates. Cottonmouth snakes are mean, will strike at you and are currently in areas they shouldn't be due to the hurricane. If bitten, call 911 for a ride to the hospital and a large dose of antivenom. Great for a bunch of boys from Wisconsin! While climbing poles make sure you keep a hammer with you to take care of the scorpions that live in the holes – they come out as you climb! Finally, my favorite, there are gators everywhere and when or if you come across one, do not run straight away. You must zig-zag because of the way their eyes are on their heads, they must turn their body to see you and that slows them down. Apparently, they can catch you on a straight away even with those short stubby legs! All I can picture with this is two of us taking off to run and going smack dab into each other and becoming gator food. I will take the bears and wolves here in Wisconsin any day!

Overall, the people of Florida were great and very appreciative of the help. Most were amazed at the amount of work the crew did while we were there. We even heard a comment that the group was crazy for going at the pace they did for so long. What we were able to accomplish is the result of the work ethic instilled in us here in the Midwest and the drive of our guys to help those in need.

However, it would not have been so successful without the foremen in charge of the crews and the extra work they put in. Those foremen stepped up and ensured that everyone worked safe and efficiently on the crews and put up with the constant phone calls and extra duties of the crew leader position. Thank you to those foremen and their crew members:

**Tony Schuchardt (Mike Parker, Steve Attoe, Ryan Rhoehrborn, Tony Luell, Neil Jack, Corey Huntley, Barry Breitrack, Ben Samsa, Austin Neis, Dennis Duren)
Jim Seefluth (Robert Olwell, Jon Vissers, Jared Hartl, Brad Wood, Scott Miltimore, Luke Heideman, Aarron Reichlin, James Bleeker)**

Adam Carrol (Aaron Retzlaff, Gage Wainio, John Salscheider, Justin Bearman, Jacob Zipperer, Matt Kiecker)

Troy Murphy/Shawn Dilley (Dave Koenig, Dylan Severson, Curt Krielkamp, Keith Priesgen, Matt Robison, Jordan Robertson, Carl Deans, Kurt Meyer)

Also, we can't forget the Plymouth Tree crew. They worked with every one of our crews, always did what was asked of them, whether it was trimming or being a ground man for the lineman, and they worked hard at it. Thank you, Gary Schallock, Mitchell Krewald, Bruce Pfeifer.

So, in conclusion, I can't put into words how grateful I am for all these professionals and the work they did. My number one goal was to go down there, be safe and bring everyone back in the same shape they left. My second goal was to help as many people as we could in our time there. I believe that we greatly exceeded both of those goals and everyone should be extremely proud of all those that went.

Thanks So Much!

**Jake Kallies
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