

## Evacuate Now

*by Ruth Delhay*

If I were to hear that siren, or a loud commanding voice over the loudspeaker telling me to evacuate now! I would ask myself, What is the disaster? Time is of the essence. Day or night, I must have my glasses, for without them I could see very little. And the hearing aids are vital, for how else could I hear the instructions? By all means, I must have my walker for I would not get far without falling on my backside and perhaps be trampled in the rush. Day or night, winter or summer, I must pull a sweater and some kind of headgear from the closet. Oh yes, a pair of shoes besides what I have one.

Trying to calm my fears I take a deep breath. I reach for my medications; thankfully they are all together, as are my legal documents, including the deed to my burial plot. Oh dear, I am afraid; I am shaking. I never thought I would ever have to do this! Oh yes, the envelope with some currency lies in the drawer nearby.

I take a moment to calm down and realize I can't leave without Grandma's handwritten diary and the family pictures. I must get my Social Security card and one credit card. In a brief moment I think of all I must leave, but no time to dwell on that now. I get some bottled water and a few crackers lying here, easy to pick up.

I leave my home – where do I go? Who is there to help me? Will I know what to do or how to handle the next few minutes? Merciful heavens, I am terrified not knowing what lies ahead. I pray for strength and courage. It is time to put my trust to work. I felt I could be strong when tried and tested. Is this the time to prove that to myself? The next few minutes may put me to the test – and what of my faith? I must be strong. I may need to help someone who is struggling and helpless. And I owe that strength for those in need. And always on my lips is the prayer for courage and trust.

Let us hope that we never hear that warning – EVACUATE NOW!