

Word
MS 1

Where Do You Go?

By Hal Peck

MS 1

With the wind howling around us, we left through chest-deep water: Cindy, the girls, two dogs and the cat on her boogie board. The lightening streaked across the sky, illuminating the horrors of the storm. I truly feared for my family. The river was engulfing our home, the trees twisting, the unnerving lightening, and the swaying power lines were frightening. "God," I prayed, "keep us safe and lead the way."

As we sat in our cars in the Edwards School parking lot, my mind raced. Where do you go when you can't go home? What could I do to keep us safe? I know God speaks to people in different ways and I am sure that he must have been hollering over the storm that night, because I heard him. I would go to the church.

My hand fumbled through the pocket of keys that I kept in the van. Would it be there? I told Cindy and the girls that I was going to try to get to the church, and would call them of the cell phone if I could make it.

Driving through a maze of flooded streets, fallen trees, and downed power lines, I searched for a clear path to the church. With the help of a local fireman, the Lord showed me the way. I called Cindy, described the turns that she would need to make, and then sat in the van praying that they would still be able to get through the streets. It seemed like an eternity, but they finally arrived.

The storm didn't seem nearly so bad from inside the Parish Hall. Merideth sat down at Lawrence's "choir practice piano" and started playing "Amazing Grace." I remember thinking how appropriate, for we were surely there by the grace of God.

It was still as they began to come. A young nurse returning from the hospital in Greenville, a single man who left Washington, D.C. and was trying to reach Jacksonville, a Rocky Mount grandmother and her family from Fayetteville – they had come to rescue her and now they found themselves stranded, two men trying to get back home to Emerald Isle. Each knocked on the door of the Church of the Good Shepherd seeking safety from the storm.

Cindy is kind of funny about things like this. She feels all things happen for a reason. Even the smallest and most insignificant decision is part of a greater plan. If I had not had the key, if we had not made it through the streets, or if we had gone to another refuge, then we would not have been at Good Shepherd to answer the knocks at the door.

We teased about “leaving the light on” as each new member joined the group. There were jokes about the many claims to be avid members of the Episcopal faith and the numerous offers to “instantly convert.” But the joking turned to amazement as each of our visitors realized just what the Church of the Good Shepherd had to offer them.

The new kitchen gave up its treasures. The Junior Choir “donated” snacks and cookies. The Interfaith Hospitality folks “donated” bread and cheese, and also towels, pillows, sheets, and blankets. The Day School provided mats and cushions. At what would have been a most distressing time, it was truly amazing how the Church of the Good Shepherd provided us shelter from the storm, material goods for our comfort, and the opportunity to nurture each other’s spirit.

As we talked and shared stories, we had other visitors who were stranded at the Carlton House. Each person was astonished at what they found ..the Church doors open in the middle of a terrible storm, the separate sleeping areas that we had been able to offer, and most of all, the very warm and positive bond that was being shared.

I know that many people have terrifying memories of Hurricane Floyd and the days that followed, but things are different for Cindy, the girls, and me. The Church of the Good Shepherd not only provided a safe harbor for my family during a horrible storm, but also offered a wonderful way to share what our ministry is all about. I will be forever thankful that I was part of His plan that night. Just don't tell Gwen and Fay about the cat staying in the Parish Hall bathroom.

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The Flad

I had a lot of deamg. I was lucky be cos the flad did not get us. I felt bad for the peple. My friend tyler get flad!

Zachary Green

[REDACTED]
Rocky Mount NC

[REDACTED]
Submitted by teacher Donna McBride

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Subject: Memories of the Flood of '99
Date: Sun, 22 Apr 2001 16:09:31 -0400

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Arnold and Cathy Worsley now live at a location that is NOT in a flood zone, between Tarboro and Rocky Mount. Arnold teaches computer studies at Edgecombe Community College. Cathy is a full time mother and housekeeper. Our son Joseph is now two years old.

Arnold Worsley

[REDACTED]
Tarboro, NC 27886
[REDACTED]

Cathy and Arnold Worsley's Flood Story

Cathy remembers waiting for the wind. We always worried about wind damage. We'd had several trees cut down near the house recently. So we waited in the hall for the wind and the rain. And the rain came in buckets. I kept asking my husband about the yard. First the grass was covered, then our driveway, then our boxwoods by the front porch. I looked out the back window and I saw the dog's igloo house floating near his pen. Luckily the dog was inside our house with our three cats, our toddler son, Joseph, who'd just had his first birthday two weeks before, and us. He didn't know that anything different was going on and, luckily, will never remember this horrible event.

Then the rain stopped, the sun came out, and it was gorgeous! We checked on those trees, "yay" no wind damage! The yard was covered in water that was about halfway up the tires of the cars. My husband Arnold marked a spot on the deck so we could check the water level. The water was dropping about an inch an hour. It was after lunch and we all took a nap. We figured we had weathered this storm. We figured by the time we got up from the nap the water would be low enough to drive the cars out. We got up, ate supper, had our usual routine. I got my son Joseph ready for bed. Just before 7:30 PM (Thurs., Sept. 16, 1999) my husband Arnold got up from watching the "Seinfeld" program on TV and went out to check the water level.

When he came back in he had a really sick look on his face and told me the water had risen two inches in less than one hour. He also told me that he thought we should leave. I don't know why but that made me so mad, and I asked him, "How are we going to leave?!" Arnold Called the Sheriff's dept. and they advised that if we had somewhere to go then we should leave, but didn't tell us how we should leave. I called a neighbor down the road and she told us not to come down Highway 33 because it was flooded. I called another friend across town because he owned a car business and perhaps he

could get a wrecker to get us out. Bless his heart and soul, he and another friend came in a Four Wheel Drive Suburban to rescue us. We had about thirty minutes to get out. It was beginning to get dark and we couldn't see our path out. We knew we were going to have to walk through the water in our front yard up to the road to get to the rescuers' car. Fear and panic began to seep through. Arnold and I were running around. "What do we do!?" Being a new mom I keep thinking, "The baby: diapers, baby wipes, food, and toys. I threw a few things in a garbage bag for Arnold and myself thinking we would get back home in two days at the most. We started putting things on top of the bed, on the counter tops, and on the couch. I couldn't think that the water would get any higher than that. Arnold put some videotapes in the attic along with his three best guitars and a box containing the currently due bills (OK, so we were crazy!), the checkbook and some floppy disks with music compositions on them.

When our friends arrived at the top of our driveway, we left the house with a couple of bags and our son and waded out into the cold, dark water. We left the three cats on the front porch and our dog on the side deck. As we departed, little did I know that would be the last time we would have a house. My heart has never beaten so fast. We got in the Suburban and headed back across town. The old 64 highway was almost impassable at some places. I remember looking out the window and all I saw was water. I couldn't tell where the road began or ended. I prayed to God to please not let us get swept away and we made it to our friends' house.

I remember that night as our son slept soundly on the bed, Arnold and I made a "to do" list for the next day. We would rent a car and go to the house and get a few things and check on our animals - just normal things. That next morning we learned how silly our list was. Princeville was under water, I mean under the water and they were our neighbors. The rooftops were being shown on TV. There were reports of people being airlifted by helicopters. Some of these people being rescued were our friends and neighbors. The sinking feeling began. The next couple of weeks were made up of survival tactics such as finding water, standing in line for bread, and trying to have a normal routine for my child. We were homeless for nearly a month, moving three times before we finally ended up in a used mobile home that would be our residence for nearly a year. We are now in a nice new house that is better than any house that either of us has ever lived in. I guess you could say we profited financially from this disaster, but I certainly don't recommend this as a way to get ahead! We lost so many things that money can't buy such as photographs, a grandfather's old fiddle, and books. Much of this could probably have been saved, but the task of going through it all was so overwhelming that we just chunked most of it by the roadside with the help of the crew from Chapel Hill. The stress of being homeless was awesome!

As difficult as it was to leave our house, in many ways it was even more difficult to return. A few days before we could return to our house, Cathy saw TV coverage of a lady from East Tarboro returning to her home. She watched with a special interest because she knew that she would also have to do that. The woman's attitude gave Cathy strength. (Her name is Mary and Cathy met her at Swamp Gravy.) However nothing could have prepared us for what we saw when we walked into our home. We had water almost up to the ceiling and the contents of the house looked as if it had been put through a blender. The refrigerator had floated up and busted a hole in the ceiling. Nearly all furniture was now worthless, having delaminated and separated into hundreds of little wood pieces. One small miracle was that our computer floated up onto a shelf and didn't get too wet. Arnold was able to salvage what was on the hard drive, mainly music compositions and some scanned

photographs for which there were no backup copies. There was a "Welcome" sign lying in our yard that had floated there from a mile up the road. Our 10 by 14 foot deck had uprooted and floated 50 feet from the house to settle in a wooded area. The power of nature is something man cannot contend with. We lost two of our three cats. They drowned by being trapped on the screen porch when the water reached the ceiling! The third cat and our dog were missing. We later found the dog in Raleigh at the Veterinary School. Our white kitty came back to the house where we rescued her nearly a month after we had abandoned the house. We were lucky that we got out when we did. One more hour would have been too late! Thanks to the many people, both friends and strangers, who helped us recover from this disaster.

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Strangers Come Together

MS
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I heard the steady chop chop of helicopter rotors over my apartment that morning stirring me from my slumber. Helicopter after helicopter passed giving a battleground feel. When I wandered out to the relief of the bright sunshine, my neighbor drew excitedly on his cigarette.

"Did you here what happened? Fifty people are dead. They are piling up at the morgue."

A cold shock stilled my body. Lamentation replaced my wonderment at the hurricane's power. What was excitement and diversion for me was horror and pain for others.

I put down the phone after my friend told me about his plan to sleep on the beach in Daytona. After hearing my concern about jeeps and trucks interrupting him, he promised to be careful.

"Hurricane Floyd, a category five storm, is bearing down on the Florida coast." I could only hope someone would wake him up.

Donny, Jarrell, and Claire arrived just before Floyd who decided to follow them up the eastern seaboard. We were safely ensconced in our sanctuary of brick and concrete when the hurricane struck. Later flood warnings had Jarrell wanting to bring everything to the second story, but luckily we were several miles from the cresting Tar. We amused ourselves with arguing about Doors' lyrics and other such important topics.

Donny was quite manic with his plans to move back to Florida and his procuring of his pet tarantula. Jarrell bickered with his wife and pondered ways to acquire marijuana. Cabin fever surely set in as I made regular rounds to the backyard and pool to get water for flushing.

We made a trip out in our cars to look for the all essential cigarettes, and were most fortunate to find a shopkeeper who was checking on his store, and was much obliged by a spontaneously developed crowd to open. Emergency needs for nicotine were taken care of courteously.

We passed by the golf course in Tarboro where the tiny stream had burst into a raging torrent ripping apart Wilson Street. The mild day so belied the destruction that lay out there.

My friends went back to the apartment to pass time since the police informed them that exit was impossible. I wandered across the street to learn that the helicopters were not airlifting people out of Tarboro, but into Tarboro, principally from submerged Princeville. Flooded folks were pouring in, quickly using up the small amount of reserve water. The Food Lion manager could not donate liquid without approval and the higher ups could not be reached.

The next day a supply helicopter came in and landed on the football field, where nine months later the vice-president and almost president delivered a commencement address. A line of people quickly formed to empty the helicopter of much needed water.

This and other situations were fine examples of the generosity and courage of people in a crisis situation. But I won't idealize it. There was a lot of chaos and suffering for another suffering people. I'm glad people were able to pull together, but saddened that it took a tragedy to do it.

Bill Gural, Tarboro

MS
75

HURRICANE FLOYD OPERATIONS SEPTEMBER 16, 1999

Fab-X Call

Written by Tim Turner

LADDER 20

CAPT. G.B. WOOD
F/E T.N. TURNER
F/E R. WALKER
F/F M. WOODLEY
F/F T. DREWERY

Boat Crew

CAPT. M. Tillery
F/F B. West

ENGINE 4

CAPT. R. V. PRIDGEN
F/E W.H. DAVIS
F/F C. BURGESS
F/F B. BATTLE

At approximately 0700 hours on the morning of Sept. 16, 1999, Ladder #20 was dispatched to a rescue call on N. Wesleyan Blvd. at the location of the Fab-X Company. The initial report consisted of a subject trapped by floodwaters and holding on to a tree. This dispatch was at the request of a National Guard unit and at the request of Engine #4. Engine #4 requested Ladder #20 because of the ladder device in hopes that the ladder would be able to reach the victim without risking anyone being put into the floodwaters at this location. In addition, a Rocky Mount Fire Department boat crew was also dispatched to the scene.

Our response was delayed because we had to change routes several times due to roads that were impassable from floodwaters. After arriving on scene and conferring with Engine #4's crew as to the situation at hand, we then decided on an initial plan of action. The plan was to set up Ladder #20 and extend the aerial device in hopes of reaching the victim, a middle-aged man, without jeopardizing any additional lives. At first we were very doubtful as to whether the ladder would be able to reach out far enough for us to reach the victim safely, and upon fully extending the ladder our doubts were confirmed. Capt. Gerry Wood ascended the ladder and tried to communicate with the victim. The subject had been hanging on this tree for a considerable amount of time and you could sense a feeling of hopelessness when he saw that our ladder was not going to be able to reach him. Capt. Wood reassured the subject that we were going to try and reach him with the boat and advised the subject to try and hang on just a little longer as we were going to get him out one way or another. The only part of the man that was visible was his hands and his head and it was obvious that he was rapidly becoming weaker by the second. Fortunately, the requested Fire Department boat crew arrived on scene at this time, which was a welcome sight.

After conferring with the boat crew and everyone else involved, it was decided that Capt. Wood and F/E T.N. Turner would don Class 3 rescue harnesses and personal flotation devices and enter the water on the boat. The boat would be anchored to the fire apparatus via a 150' utility rope and a 300' lifeline would be attached to Wood and Turner and, in turn, they would also be tethered to each other for safety purposes. The boat was a flat bottom boat and our only means of navigation was the utility rope and a pike pole that we carried with us. Each line was anchored to the fire apparatus and also four firefighters were assigned to each line for manpower. On the first attempt to rescue the victim, we continuously struggled with the current and tried unsuccessfully a number of times to reach the victim. Each time the current would just barely push us past the victim and then we would have the crews haul us back for another attempt. After several exhausting trips, we then decided that we would put the boat in a little further up in the current in hopes that we would be pushed a little closer to the tree that the victim was hanging onto. At first it looked as if this was going to make the difference, but as we got closer to the victim, the current again would kick us out further. After several intense attempts, by us and the men on the lines, it just was not working. On top of all this, the victim was getting noticeably weaker and the water was getting deeper and the current faster, which only added to our frustrations.

At this time, we decided that our only course of action was to try and enter the water without the boat and try to rescue the victim before he went under. His situation was becoming more perilous by the moment and time was not an ally of ours now. F/E Ray Walker ascended the ladder with the utility rope that was attached to the boat in order to try and position the boat close by the tree in the event we did reach the victim. As soon as we entered the water, we immediately had no control over where and what direction

we were headed in. Our only saving grace was the fellow firefighters that were manning the lifeline that we were attached to and some good luck. As they slowly let the slack out of the lifeline, it became apparent that we were going to reach him the on the first try. As we approached the victim, we were able to actually touch the bottom, which, in turn, gave us a little sense of control, although not very much. F/E Walker had maneuvered the boat into perfect position and we were able to grasp the boat and the victim simultaneously. As soon as we were able, we had the victim grasp the bow of the boat and we, in turn, were able to lift him into the boat at this time. When the victim was finally in the boat, he collapsed from exhaustion, which certainly was to be expected. He had displayed enormous strength and courage for at least two hours. The crews pulled the boat line and we hung onto the sides while they also pulled us back to safety. The sense of relief was enormous, and I'm sure it was an incredible relief for the man we pulled to safety.

We then rendered first aid to the victim and placed him in the cab of the engine with a blanket to help warm him, all the time monitoring his progress. Both companies then cleared from the scene and proceeded to Station #4 and were placed in a staging mode. At the station there were a number of people there who were being attended to by our personnel and Stony Creek Rescue Squad's personnel.

All in all, this incident personified the attitude of the personnel that the Rocky Mount Fire Department employs. The no-nonsense, workmanlike, never-say-quit approach to every situation, whether it be a hurricane or an every day type of incident, is exactly what makes this department an important ally in this community and one all the citizens can depend on at any time.

HURRICANE FLOYD: **SQUAD TWO ASSIGNMENTS**

Squad Two Personnel: **Capt. J. G. Pittman**
 F/E W. W. Lewis
 F/F L. T. Joyner
 F/F C. A. Woodard
 F/F M. A. Huddleston

1230 South Hornbeam:

Squad Two assisted with the removal of victims from the cul-de-sac of S. Hornbeam. Part of the rescue effort was stretching (1) 100 ft. piece of 5/8" life safety rope from a secure area to the furthest house in the danger area. We used this rope as an attachment point for harnesses and carabiners to secure firefighters from strong flowing currents. We rescued approximately 12 people from this area and evacuated 6 more families from the flood area before water entered their residence. As well as rescuing the people, we also removed a travel trailer and an automobile from chest high floodwater to a secure area.

Wellington Dr.

Upon our arrival water was flowing into a house approximately at chest level. We had two elderly adults and their teenage granddaughter trapped in the structure. We established lighting for the scene by the use of the generator and floodlights on Squad Two. We secured one main anchor line to the squad and a second safety line to a tree that was located on the premises. We then rigged the floating rescue basket with a lifeline and a safety line and proceeded to structure where the victims were waiting at the front door. We placed and secured the elderly lady in the rescue basket and carried an elderly man and granddaughter from the flooded area to Squad Two. We then performed a primary survey on the victims and awaited approximately 20 minutes before police arrived to transport victims to a shelter.

Pamela Ln.

Upon our arrival we had two structures that had victims trapped by rising floodwater. The water was approximately 5 ft. at this point. We rigged a floating rescue basket with a main haul line and a secondary safety line. We proceeded to the first structure to effect rescue. The first victim was secured in the rescue basket and the haul crew was instructed to pull the victim and rescuers to safety. We transferred first victim to Squad Two and proceeded to the second and last occupant in the structure. We accomplished this rescue in the same manner as the first. At this time the water level had

risen to the six-foot mark. We placed the second victim on Squad Two and performed primary survey on both victims.

The rescue of the victims in the second structure by way of floating rescue basket failed due to 6-7 ft. water and very strong currents flowing in front of the structure. At this point, we called for a boat to effect rescue, which arrived approximately ten minutes later. We attached a main haul line to the front of this boat. Due to the swiftness of the current, we had to place a change of direction pulley 150 ft. upstream to allow for a pendulum effect to combat the swift currents. The first rescue consisted of three rescuers being sent to the structure. At the structure, two victims and one rescuer were loaded onto the boat, while two of the rescuers stayed behind to secure a third haul line and prepare the other victims for rescue. After first victims were taken to safety, the boat was returned to retrieve the next and last two victims. The second set of victims was taken to safety and the boat was returned to retrieve the rescuers that were still in the structure. Once the victims were surveyed for any medical emergencies, two members of Squad Two were sent to evacuate other structures in this area that might be in danger of rising floodwaters. We transported all victims to Station Six to await transport to shelter.

Country Club Dr.

Upon arrival we had four feet of water and high winds at this location. We rigged boat with main line and safety line, while using Squad Two for an anchor point. We sent two rescuers on a boat to the structure to rescue the victims who were trapped in the residence. Secured victims in boat and the haul team pulled one rescuer and two victims to safety. We returned the boat to retrieve rescuer still at the structure. These victims were transported to Station Six to await transportation to a shelter.

Nashville Rd.

Upon our arrival, we found that there were two structures occupied by victims. The closest structure was being evacuated by two firefighters already on the scene. On the second structure, the rescue proved to be very difficult. At this point, winds were gusting in the sixty-mph. range and we were working under high voltage main transfer lines. The current was redirected and was now flowing at a high rate of speed near us and the structure that housed the victims. We attached a main haul line to the boat and anchored it to the Fire Department pickup truck. We placed two team members in the boat and positioned one team member, anchored to a tree, to assist the boat as it entered the current and to guide the rope upon retrieval of victims. First attempt to reach structure was successful. In the structure we found five victims, three adults and two children. One female was pregnant, diabetic, and hyperventilating. The elderly female had heart problems and was taking nitro pills at this point. Her breathing was very labored and shallow. On the first rescue the mother, grandmother, and granddaughter were hauled to safety. The second rescue retrieved the father and the son and was done in the same manner as the first. Water level at this point was exceeding the six-foot mark and the current was increasing in strength. Two victims that were trapped on the bridge started to enter the water at this time. Using the squad intercom, we warned the two pedestrians to stay put and we would try to rescue them. The female returned to the bridge guardrail,

but the male entered the water and was swept to a tree where he grabbed and held on. We re-entered the water to rescue this victim. The rescue was successful. We called for a motorized boat to rescue the female that was still trapped on the bridge. During this time, two Squad Two personnel transported eight victims to R.M. Wilson Gym. Squad Two returned and assisted with motorized boat rescue of the female on the bridge.

E. Duke/ W. Duke

We arrived on scene where rescues had already begun and assisted with these rescues. A city transport vehicle arrived and told us that they had a victim on board that was having a heart attack. We administered oxygen and took vitals. We stayed with this victim for approximately 45 minutes until Stoney Creek Rescue arrived and assumed patient care. At this point we were told to assist Stoney Creek with finding a route to the hospital. Before leaving, we assigned one member of the squad to a boat rescue crew and one member to assist with evacuation of Riverside Complex.

Assisted town of Nashville

Dispatched to meet police officers in the town of Nashville to assist with rescue on Benny Womble Rd. Squad Two arrived on scene and event was cancelled.

Greenbriar Rd.

Dispatched to three children trapped in a structure. The event was cancelled due to it being a false call. While on location, a pedestrian informed us that there were people trapped on a roof on Mockingbird Lane. We responded to this location and rescued four victims off the roof of this residence.

West Mount Dr.

Responded to a gas leak, which was deemed a false call.

Thorp Greenville Tobacco Warehouse

We assisted with the rescue of two victims hanging in a tree. These victims stated that they had been at this location for approximately 16 hrs. Due to the depth and swiftness of the water, a motorized boat had to be used for this rescue.

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The Great Flood of September 1999

Written by Captain Mike Doss

September 15 -16, 1999

Rocky Mount Fire Department did everything we could to prepare for Hurricane Floyd. Contingency plans were drawn up and Officers were briefed. My shift was put on alert and was ordered to be ready to report to duty at midnight if necessary. I came home and helped my family get prepared for the worst. We filled the bathtub with water, filled coolers with ice, filled our vehicles with gasoline – scrambling to cover all the bases before Hurricane Floyd hit. We watched the TV with despair as the weather forecasters all agreed the worst was coming. I got the call from Headquarters that my shift was needed and to report for duty at midnight. My family and I hugged each other and prayed to God for His mercy over each of us, the rest of the family, and our community. It was hard leaving my family knowing that Hurricane Floyd was on the way.

The winds were moderate when I arrived at Headquarters, but the rain was torrential. Fire crews were already out helping people trapped in low-lying areas. F/E Wayne Rhodes and I were assigned to drive the Department's 16-passenger van taking victims to local Red Cross Shelters. One of our first assignments was in the Maple Creek subdivision area. When we pulled down one of the streets, we could see the water already rushing through the neighborhood. Firemen were helping men, women, and children, through the rapidly rising waters. The winds were increasing and it was raining harder. People were screaming from the porches of their homes trying to get our attention, but the winds made their cries almost unheard. Some had flashlights flicking on and off or tried to get our attention by waving them around. As our crews got the residents to our position, Wayne and I loaded them into the van. The Firefighters appeared weary and tired, but turned around and headed back into the waters. When we were loaded, we headed for the shelter at Benvenue Middle School. While enroute, the van was buffeted by the winds and the road was difficult to see due to the rain. It actually took the both of us to keep the van on the road. The children were crying and scared, mothers tried to comfort children, and fathers tried to reassure mothers. Some discussed what was going to happen to their homes and belongings. This scenario was repeated many times throughout the night.

Wayne and I talked about our own families in between assignments and prayed they were alright. By now, all power was out and so were the telephones. Soon the Benvenue Middle School shelter was full and we were assigned to transfer people to the shelter on Virginia Street. On one of the trips to this shelter we noticed the water was approaching the rear of the apartments on Pinehurst Drive. A large number of senior citizens and children live in this complex. We advised Command that we were going to check the apartments in the low areas for residents. It was approximately two or three o'clock in the morning by now. We knocked on the doors of the apartments and you could hear the surprise of some of the residents when they discovered the water was in their homes. They were so shocked when they came to the door. We advised them of the situation and told them they needed to gather some blankets and other personal items and get ready to be evacuated. I radioed Command and advised them of the situation. No help was available at this time because of the devastation that was occurring throughout the City. Our entire Department was scattered throughout. Wayne and I carried the children in our arms, and senior citizens on our backs uphill to the van. Soon the shelter on Virginia St. was full and a lady informed us not to bring any more people to the site. She stated there were no more supplies. I told her we had no other place to take these victims. After reporting the situation to Command, we were advised that the City had opened the RM Wilson Gym as a shelter. On one of the numerous trips to this shelter, Wayne and I looked at each other and shook our heads as radio traffic warned that rising waters were encircling the City. Things were getting worse as the winds and rain increased. Our thoughts were increasingly on our families.

Daybreak was coming. After some rehab, Wayne and I were assigned to report to Riverside Apartments. A large number of senior citizens reside in this area also. On our arrival we found people wading through the waters to get to higher ground. Many were carrying trash bags with some of their belongings and medications in them. Engine #2 was at Dawson Place assisting senior citizens, but was soon forced out due to the rapidly rising waters. While loading these people into the van, you could feel their despair, many were crying, worried, and upset. These senior citizens, who were in the autumn of their life, were losing all they had in the floodwaters. The suffering was too great for some. One of the women was placed in the back of a flatbed truck suffering from a

possible heart attack. Another one in a police van was having difficulty breathing. Firefighters were administering first aid and oxygen and doing all they could for these people. Radio reports were coming in that EMS units were having a rough time finding a safe route into the City to help. The rain had just about quit, the wind was still gusting, but the Tar River continued to rise.

At Riverside Apartments, I asked to be relieved of the transport duty to give one of our guys a break. The residents were still coming out of the complex. Firefighter Dunavan and myself teamed up and started going door to door to check for victims. We used the two wheel trash carts to transport many of these senior citizens to higher ground. On one trip in, F/F Dunavan recovered a two-person sailboat floating by. Our joy was obvious to each other - we had moved up a notch in our rescue equipment. The sailboat made rescuing these older ladies so much easier. The water was now over the tops of cars in our sector. On one trip in, F/F Dunavan and I heard someone calling our names. As we looked around, we saw F/E Randy Smith holding up a frail white-haired lady. F/E Smith lived in the complex and his first thoughts were for his neighbors. He could have saved his belongings, but instead lost them all because his heart was focused on helping others. His lips were blue from his long exposure to the floodwaters and you could tell he was worn out. We caught the attention of a powerboat nearby and we helped Randy and this lady into the boat. Both were exhausted. Before leaving, F/E Smith advised that there were no more victims in our area that he could find. The current was becoming so swift and hazardous that F/F Dunavan and myself decided to abandon our search before we too became victims. Personnel with powerboats made secondary searches where possible.

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HURRICANE "FLOYD" OPERATIONS SEPTEMBER 16, 1999

LAFAYETTE CIRCLE CALL

Written by Captain Gerry B. Wood

The Fire Department was called to assist in the evacuation of stranded residents due to rising floodwaters from Hurricane Floyd. Upon the firefighter's arrival, residents of Lafayette Circle that had already been evacuated met them. They told the firemen about possibly seven trapped victims and which houses they were in. There was a boat at the scene with no working motor and with no paddles. The owner of the boat and other bystanders were preparing to attempt a rescue. The firemen talked them into waiting for another boat to arrive and letting them make the rescue. Captain Gerry Wood spoke to a man on a cellular phone that advised that he, his wife, and their three small children were at the bottom of Lafayette Circle on the second floor of a two-story house with approximately waist deep water. The resident sounded panicky and stated that he was preparing to place his family into the attic. Captain Wood assured him that the firemen would rescue them. Captain Wood told him to shine his flashlight at the firemen when he saw their light. Fire Engineer Ray Walker, Firefighter Maurice Woodley, and Captain Wood donned personal flotation devices and used the flat bottom boat that was on the scene, along with two twelve ft. pike poles and two paddles that were located, to begin the rescue efforts. On their first entry into the circle, they located a family of five. They also communicated with a couple that they passed that sounded as if they were located on the rooftop of their dwelling. The firemen flashed their light at them and yelled to them to assure them that they knew they were there and that they would return for them. The firemen loaded the family of five from a window and brought them out to safety. By that time, they had a motorboat on the scene that was owned by Firefighter Earl Williams. F/F Williams, Fire Engineer Brett Skinner, and Captain Wood went in on the motorboat to retrieve the couple that had communicated with the firemen on the first trip. They located them in the top of a tree instead of the rooftop. The firemen loaded the residents into the boat and on the way out asked them about other possible victims. The firemen had visual flashlight signals with another couple on the first and second trips. On the third trip, the winds had picked up substantially. The firemen located the couple with whom they had been exchanging flashlight signals and got them into the boat. They told the firemen where another elderly couple lived who could possibly still be in their home. The firemen proceeded there and located them by flashlight signals. One resident was still inside her home so we advised her husband to have her ready to leave when we returned. The winds were extremely strong at this time and the water was continuing to rise rapidly. The previously rescued couple was off-loaded and the firemen returned for the elderly couple. Huge pine trees were beginning to fall all around the firemen and residents. The firemen loaded up and fled the area immediately. In all, eleven residents were rescued by the Fire Department personnel from Lafayette Circle before having to leave the area. All the information gathered from the residents of that neighborhood and no more visual or audible distress signals assured the firemen that all victims that were in danger had been evacuated. We were able to get out on Piedmont Avenue toward City Lake. Only by the grace of God did we manage to escape this incident without any injured firefighters or victims.

Ladder 20

Capt. Gerry Wood
F/E Tim Turner
F/F Maurice Woodley
F/E Ray Walker
F/F Tracey Drewery

Engine 12

Capt. Larry Johnson
F/E Richard Coleman
F/F Larry Hill
F/F Darvin Moore

Other Personnel

F/F Earl Williams
Assistant Chief Keith Harris

District 2

District Chief Eddie Jones
District Chief Al Asby

Squad 1

F/E Jamie Vaughan
F/F Brett Skinner
F/F Bobby Wilson
F/E Brent Manning

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A RIPPLE IN THE WATER

During that night, as the river water slowly crept onto our backyard, my sister and I kept a vigil by our living room window. We were worried about the continuous rise of the water that was slowly surrounding our home. We ventured into our parents bedroom, located at the back of our yellow bricked home, to inform them of the water creeping around our home. After being politely received into our parent's bedchamber, we rambled on about what was occurring, the apprehension of our growing situation imprinted on our faces. My father anxiously rose, quickly dressed, and hurried outside to investigate. His investigation spanned an hour as he surveyed the area around our home, and then drove from end to end of our neighborhood. He returned with a sullen look, but informed us that our situation was not bleak and not to panic. My father stated, "Your mother and I have lived here for many years, through many small floods and have yet to have the waters rise to this house. I doubt this time will be any different." So with this reassurance, my sister and I returned to our vigil with calmer moods. If our father thought everything would be well, then everything would be well. After all, he has experienced this type of situation many times and knows what is best. So with a composed demeanor, I retired to bed. I awoke to my sister's hysterical screams. She was yelling at me to wakeup. She stated that the water had reached the top step of our home.

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I unnervingly followed her into the living room where I discovered my family gathered in a contagious state of alarm and uncertainty. It quickly spread me. I believe the time was 4:00 a.m.

My sister dialed the number for emergency and frantically related our dangerous situation. Replacing the receiver with slow, deliberate movements, she unhappily told us no rescue could be attempted until sunrise. Sunrise was approximately two hours away. Unable to leave our home without assistance, we anxiously awaited the glory of the sun which would bring with it escape from an agonizing, drowning death. Finally, we heard a hard knocking on our front door. Behind the door stood a young, black man dressed in army fatigues that instructed us to carry only small items of utmost importance and to hurry because the waters were quickly raising and the current was very strong. After stepping from our partially water-covered porch into the icy cold water below, my eyes explored my surroundings. As I assessed our situation, my heart plummeted to my feet. The horror of our grim reality suddenly gripped and paralyzed me with terror. The waters covered my body up to my mouth. I turned and glanced back after taking a few steps and saw, in what was a short span of time, that the waters had completely covered the front porch and had entered the house. The waters were quickly and steadily moving onward and upward. The force of the current was extremely strong, and I lost my footing many times before coming adjacent to the army's truck. As I stared at this small

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truck decorated with army fatigues, a piece of my small supply of hope crumbled away. How was this modest, fragile truck going to get us safety to dry land, which was approximately four miles from our present position, through this angry current? I struggled into the army truck to find it nearly full with other victims. At this time, it occurred to me that we might not have enough room for everyone in this tiny contraption. Other members of my family were still on their way. Finally, everyone was loaded into the truck. Thankfully everyone did fit, although the arrangement was most uncomfortable. I learned how animals probably felt while being shipped in large numbers in overcrowded metal-framed trucks. The truck started and we were on our way. Abruptly, the truck came to a halt after barely moving a few kilometers. The back door was opened, and to my dismay more people were being guided into the truck. We had no room. Somehow we created room. People inside the truck were arranged on top of others, children were held in the arms of their parents, and the smaller adults were placed on shelves positioned near the roof of the truck where one had to sit in a curled position to fit. I was one of those shelf people. This was a nightmare, and it was only the beginning.

I struggled to inhale from the inadequate supply of air that remained inside the truck after they closed the back doors. We were all so tightly squeezed into our sardine can one could not move. Whichever way you came into the truck was the position in which you stayed. There was no room to

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maneuver. I remember thinking I may die from suffocation before reaching dry land. With a hard jolt, the tinker-truck can to an abrupt halt. I heard the straggled sounds of the engine's half-hearted attempts to start. It was almost like the engine of the truck was teasing us with the hope it would reclaim its life. But dead it remained. Eventually the driver heeded his vain attempts at restoring life. I could hear splashing outside of the truck and followed the sounds to the back doors of the truck. I also overheard voices of men murmuring nervously, sounds of splashing, a door opening, and then silence. There was complete silence inside and outside of the truck. I am sure I was not the only person who was wondering what in the hell was going on. The back doors of the truck were opened with a sudden movement that made everyone start. One of the gentlemen who were dressed in army fatigues told us the rising waters had washed out the engine, and we were dead in the water (*Dead* being the operative word). For a one horrifying moment, I believed the army gentleman intended to close the back doors, locking us in this sardine death trap. But to my deep relief, he removed his hands from the doors allowing them to remain open. Everyone inside the truck was still silent. Probably lost in shock and disbelief over our current dilemma. The waters were rising at a very steady and fast speed. We were unable to move from our current position, which was almost three miles from dry land. Yes, I believe disbelief was a good description of everyone's state of mind. The army gentlemen decided to float their way to

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safety using a small boat that was attached to the roof of the truck. They intended to float to dry land and return with help. This would have been a great plan if they were not missing an intricate piece needed for the plan to be successful. They had no oars to steer the small boat. But this did not stop our brave but extremely foolish army gentlemen. They floated in their small boat away from the truck being pushed by the current further and further away from us. Because they had no oars to steer their small boat, they became trapped by the current and floated even further away in the wrong direction. We watched our only chance at surviving float away with a sad silence until they could no longer be seen.

At this point, I reevaluated our situation. We were trapped inside a small truck in the middle of what was once a road, but was now a river; the current had stolen our only rescuers from us; and Hurricane Floyd was scheduled to hit this area in approximately three hours. Another thought suddenly came to me and filled me with such fear I nearly vomited. Were there others waiting for us up the road on dry land or were we out of options? I looked through the front windshield to see up the road to the dry land eons away. I did not see any other army trucks or army men. I remember hearing the army gentlemen saying as they were herding us into the truck that they needed to fit as many as they could for this trip because this was the only truck and it was unknown if another rescue could be attempted. I deduced from my observations that no one else

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knew we were stranded out here. Only those army gentlemen had come to our rescue, and no one other than them were aware of our current dilemma. The people who dispatched them did not know we had become stranded out here, and I believed it would be a long while before our floating army rescuers would be able to help themselves and therefore; they would not be of any further help to us. I believe this new obstacle to our dream of getting to dry land was my undoing. Whispers of someone else coming to our rescue was rapidly spreading from person to person inside the truck, but I felt in my heart no one knew we were out here and no one was coming to our rescue anytime soon, if at all. I screamed to my blind roommates that no one else knew we were out here. Our only hope had just floated away, and we were stranded with no hope of survival. I further explained that were going to drown in this godforsaking truck, pressed together like cattle, or worse, be toppled over during the coming hurricane. I began sobbing hysterically, which started a chain reaction of hysteria throughout the truck. My parents attempted to calm me so others would also become calm, but for a while their efforts were futile. I wrestled from my shelf confinement toward freedom from this death trap. I would rather take my chances in the water than to die in this truck without attempting to fight for my life. My stab at freedom was blocked by my father's iron grip on my clothing, which kept me from exiting the truck to my promising death. Slowly, I ceased my struggles and regained a semi-calm demeanor. Consequently, others within the truck also

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began to regain their composure. We forlornly waited for what seemed to be an eternity. The silence within the truck was interspersed with brief conversations. Gradually the winds gained strength and the noise outside of the truck became deafening. Objects snapped up by the powerful winds of the hurricane were being hurled at us from all sides. Picnic tables, telephone poles, tree limbs, gas tanks, and other large debris were loosed from their positions by the water and were floating at alarming speeds toward our defenseless truck. The smell of gas was very strong and overwhelming. An older gentleman was almost forcibly ejected from the truck for attempting to light a cigarette amongst the gas. The objects that I most greatly feared were the gas tanks. The gas tanks rolled along with the flow of the current threatening to collide with the truck at high speeds, and I feared the impact would set off an explosion. The storm finally passed, blessedly, leaving our haven intact. We were not toppled by the winds or flying objects, or blasted by the gas tanks.

Other victims of the flood could be seen on the top of cars and some could be heard calling out for help from within the attic of nearby houses. I had not realized so many other people were also stranded here. Many were still in their homes and others had traveled from their homes onto the top of vehicles that were scattered around the army truck. At this point, I believe the waters inside the truck were to our waists. There was still no possibility of rescue in sight. I was content to sit through this ordeal patiently waiting for my death.

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There was no longer any feeling in my limbs and now and then I would weep softly and pray for deliverance, but not truly believing it would come. Amazingly, my parents truly believed the Lord would deliver us from a watery grave, and they remained faithful in the belief we would be rescued. Their faith in the Lord was strong and I envied it. Hope was definitely in small supply inside and outside of that truck and it was very much needed to endure even another minute in this place. Their faithful reassurances gave our fellow occupants hope and with this hope they survived another minute, and then another.

Minutes slowly turned to hours. Every so often I would cry softly and allow fear to eat another portion of my hope. During one of my weeping bouts, I overheard a woman talking outside of the truck. As I pressed my ear against the cloth-covered wall of the truck, I could clearly hear her asking someone for help. I also overheard her yell at him or her that if we were not aided soon we would die. I learned she had called someone in the town of Pinetops on the cell phone she had somehow kept dry while traveling through the water to her car. Minutes after her call, I saw several cars pull up and gather at the beginning of the road. Shortly, there was a crowd of cars and people gathered there on dry land. Miraculously, we were going to be rescued. At this time the water was up to my chest.

Well, actually getting to dry land was slow in arriving. First, our brave heroes attempted to maneuver a tractor through to us, but hidden parked cars

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underneath the water were considerable obstacles for the tractor. The cars were an unseen barrier that tottered the tractor, almost overturning it. To our relief, people with powered boats from the town of Pinetops arrived to assist. But the number of boats was few and the number to be rescued was plenty. So our rescue progressed slowly with great apprehension felt among the people awaiting escape and joy felt by the people who had escaped. The people trapped in their homes were assisted first and after they were placed on dry land, we were next. The water came to my shoulders. The last one to be rescued from the truck was my father; and when I saw him step from the boat and realized everyone from the army truck had been safely removed, I wept. Joy, relief, happiness, disbelief, and remorse flowed over me in vigorous waves. The weight of these emotions pushed me to my knees where I remained until my father picked me up and carried me to into the home of a lady who had transformed her home into a rescue station for the victims coming out from the flood.

I lived in a lovely area on the outskirts of a small town called Pinetops in North Carolina. During this memorable day of September 1999, my home was covered by floodwaters formed from Hurricane Floyd. While describing the events of this extraordinary day in my life, tears formed and felled upon the sheets of paper as I wrote. These tears were not from the lost of material things

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that were destroyed by floodwaters. For these items were just things and could be replaced. My tears flowed from the lost of my intangible 'home'.

The 'home' I am referring to is a place where I played football, baseball, basketball, and kickball games into the night with kids in the neighborhood. These games were usually held in our backyard. 'Home' is a place where I developed from a child into an adult. This place holds these precious memories. The memory of my first kiss while sitting in one of my Dad's abandoned cars parked in our backyard. Memories of that only come alive again in my mind while I am at 'home' and cannot be revived anywhere else. 'Home' is a place of close family and long life friends and a place of familiar surroundings that brought to my soul a peace and a true feeling of belonging. I cry for my lost 'home' and mourn for a life I can never again return to.

I would like to thank everyone who has given time, money, shelter, food, or labor to help the flood victims. Your assistance is greatly appreciated and was greatly needed. Thank you for your kind words and kind smiles. I will never forget the compassion and caring of the people who have helped my family through this terrible ordeal in our lives. I doubted the Lord in that truck, and I forgot his promise and his great power. My parents never doubted him and stayed faithful and believed he would allow us to come through this tragedy. After witnessing the power of the Lord, my faith has not only been restored but it has also become stronger. I shall never again doubt him.

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FLOYD MEMOIR

When I awoke early on the sixteenth, I was curious to see what had happened. The power had gone out after we were in bed. We knew that because it had set off our security system. We had only lived in this house a few months and we still weren't used to all of its features. The house was built so well, we thought it would be impervious to any threat from a big wind storm like Floyd. And sure enough, the house seemed to have come through with no damage. A big tree had fallen in the front yard, but nothing had hit the house, or even blocked the drive way. Then I looked out the back windows.

The back of the house overlooks Stony Creek. The creek had been out of its banks and within about 80 feet of the house earlier in the fall. Now it was all the way up to the house. When I opened the door to the basement, even in the darkness of that black space, you could tell that water covered its floor. A flashlight confirmed that the basement was not only full of muddy creek water but that all of the items that we had stored there were now bobbing about, including a storage shelf of wine bottles, a mini refrigerator and a bushel basket of daffodil bulbs. The good news was that Joe had parked the new riding lawn mower in the garage which was still dry. The bad news was that the five gallon cans of gasoline were floating and evidently the gas was leaking out, from the way the whole place smelled.

By this time, Joe had joined me and we considered what was happening. We were both willing to write off any of the possessions that were afloat in the basement, but we were afraid that the gas would endanger the rest of the house. So Joe waded into Stony Creek in our basement to retrieve the gas cans and take them upstairs, and at the same time he unplugged the refrigerator. A few minutes later, after he had gone to shower off, I remembered an electronic device I had plugged in, days before. The water was cold, and so murky you couldn't see anything through it. Wading barefoot through three feet of it in the basement was an exercise in trying not to step on anything sharp or treacherous. This was not fun. One other fact became apparent as we explored our new basement pool. It was growing deeper. Even in the 15 or 20 minutes that we were in the basement, the water had inched up over another step.

Joe's mother, nicknamed "Big Momma" in spite of her 88 years and bird like 100 pound body weight, had awakened and she had come down stairs to the first floor to find out what had happened. We brought her to our house the night before because we felt she would be safer with us. It seemed like a good time to have some breakfast and make some plans. The telephone, which still worked due to a wonderful battery began ringing on a regular basis. Our daughters who were in Chapel Hill and Winston-Salem wanted to know what was happening. So did Joe's sister in Durham. So did other friends in and out of the area. It was gratifying to know they cared, and in some instances they could tell us helpful news, such as where they thought the eye of the storm was, but it was frustrating to have to stop everything to reassure everyone.

The sound of a buzz saw attracted our attention. Just beyond our mailbox it looked like men were working on a downed tree. They were trying to clear the roadway so that the wife of one of them could get to the hospital where she was a nurse. They did a fine job of clearing that tree, but to their dismay they soon discovered that the road would still be blocked. About a hundred yards down the road, Stony Creek was in control of Hunter Hill and Halifax Road. The rain seemed to have stopped, the wind gusts seemed to be less frequent, so we decided to move the mower and the cars up the hill—since it seemed that rising waters might be more of a problem than falling trees. As we walked down the driveway from reparking the cars we looked out over the brown sea of our back yard, where an eighty foot tall pin oak with an enormous canopy of wet green leaves swayed in the wind, and then just seemed to lie down.

We also got a phone call from Fred Park asking us if we were OK. We said we thought we were, but Fred knew that several families in his neighborhood were having to leave because of rising waters, and he thought we might be affected in the same way. He also knew that there were trees down and water blocking Hunter Hill Road. He told Joe about another way, that we could use to leave our area. With this information it seemed like it might be better to take Joe's mother back to her home in Englewood, and then to return to see what we could do for our house. We were able to get to NC 43 but on the way we saw enormous trees that had been up rooted, power lines that were dangerously close to the road, and one place where a small ditch seemed to have come close to undermining the road way. When we tried to use Winstead Avenue to get to Mom's side of town, we were stopped by the overflow of Stony Creek. We returned to 43 to get to

301 and Englewood, but again we were thwarted. We took 64 West back to Winstead and then doubled back East to the business exit at Stony Creek. Again, we were stopped by the Creek and our only alternative was to back up westward on the shoulder back to Winstead Avenue. At this point we decided the best place for Joe's mother to wait would be the hospital. We would leave her at the cafeteria, return to our home to pack, or if the water didn't rise, we would bring her back to our home.

The water kept rising. Step by step disappeared through the rest of the morning. We decided we needed to move some things to the upstairs. First, the computers. Then a TV. Some of the audio-video equipment, boxes of tapes, videos, CDs. Tools. Financial records. Lamps. Tables. Clothes. Bedding. Small appliances. Chairs. Rugs. Pictures. Anything that we could lift. Eventually we carried up a favorite dresser (one drawer at a time), most of our electronics, our china, crystal, silver and even the table we use for most meals. Finally, about 3:00 PM with about two feet of water lapping at our front steps, we packed what we thought we needed to get by for a week, loaded the cars with as many possessions as we could (including the dog), left food, water and litter for the cat upstairs (she doesn't travel well), and bid farewell to our home. We didn't know how much farther the water would come, but by the time we left it was within six inches of crossing the sills of our first floor.

It was also covering our exit route. At the dip in the road before the I-95 overpass, several inches of water were streaming over the roadway. A drainage ditch that rarely held water before had turned into a twenty foot deep lake, and Hunter Hill was its dam. Without fully knowing about the hazards of driving through moving water, we forded the stream. Fortunately, we made it. Then we began to understand why we had been hearing so many helicopters after the hurricane winds subsided. I-95, the main artery of north-south commerce was also underwater!

Joe had been in touch with his partner Bob Whitmore while our phone worked. Bob who had been on call the night before, was at the hospital and wanted to know what he could do to help. Joe asked him to take care of his mother. Bob offered to take her to his home, and Joe gratefully agreed. Our plan when we left was to go to Bob's home near Candlewood. Two hours later, after traveling all the way to Castalia, and then back to Nashville, and exploring every side road we could find that we thought might lead us to the southern half of the county, we couldn't get across Stony Creek. Finally, because we didn't know where else to go as the daylight began to wane, because we were hungry and tired and frustrated, we headed back to Nash General Hospital.

It was with both joy, and surprise that we found Joe's mother and Bob Whitmore at the hospital. Bob had also tried for the better part of the afternoon to find a way home, and when this proved impossible he brought "Big Momma" back to the hospital. He even got her a bed. Now, he was keeping busy by helping out with maintenance on the floors. He asked if we had eaten and we suddenly realized how long it had been since the cold cereal we had to start the day. We went down to the cafeteria and got a generous helping of a wonderful stew. There was even some salad and dessert. The head of the hospital, Rick Toomey was cleaning the floor in the serving area. Joe asked if we could also stay the night, and we were able to have rooms on the same wing with Joe's mother. I don't think any bed ever felt better. Everyone was gracious, and professional, and doing more than anyone should have to. Most of the staff of the hospital we talked to had been there since the day before. In many cases they didn't know what had happened to their homes, or those of their family and friends. But they kept the hospital going.

We have been able to put Floyd behind us, but I don't think we'll ever forget that day. Before I fell asleep that night it suddenly hit me that we might not have a home to go back to. Even if the house stood up to the flood, those brown murky waters might harbor chemicals or germs that would make the home unlivable. I thought of how I had organized my desk (the first real home desk I had ever had), and I thought of all the handy and useful gadgets and supplies that I enjoyed using. All the little things might be lost. We could be homeless. But faith and hope prevailed. I still like to remember all the people who kept in contact with us; the folks who tried to clear the roads, even before the state maintenance trucks could get in; the friends who helped us; and the staff of Nash General Hospital. We were in the company of people who cared and who worked hard. They were the best people in the world.

June 25, 2000
Proper 7, Year B

Let me begin this morning by saying just a bit about where we are in the Christian year. From today until the First Sunday of Advent on December 3 we will be marking time in the church as Sundays after Pentecost. It is a long time, and after the peaks and valleys he have had from Advent, to Christmas to Epiphany to Lent to Easter to Pentecost and concluding with the mind boggling feast of the Trinity last week, this time of year can seem like a let down. Sometimes this period of the church year is called ordinary time.

Be that as it may, it is a very important six months. We have heard the gospel, one hopes we have renewed our commitment to it, and now we are being asked, "What are we going to do about it?"

The Gospel lesson for today is the perfect story for us as we begin this journey, it is a perfect picture of the Christian life. The story of the calming of the storm comes from fourth chapter of the Gospel of Mark. Up to that point in the story Jesus has taught through parables, he has given sermons and he has healed people. Pretty heady stuff.

Then Jesus and his disciples get into the boat and start to cross the lake. Jesus falls asleep. This is something of a test or a trial run to see how they do more or less on their own. When a storm arises and the boat starts to fill with water, they are understandably upset. The disciples wake Jesus and say, "Master, do you not care? We are lost! We are perishing." Jesus speaks and says, "Quiet now! Be calm!" "Peace, be still." And then he says to the

disciples, "Why are you afraid, Have you still no faith?"

In the very earliest preaching of the Church this story was used to convince pagans that Jesus was master of the physical universe. But very quickly the story took on further meaning. Jesus word's "Peace be still" were understood to be spoken as much to the people in the boat as to the wind and the waves.

The church as a whole has found strength in this interpretation of the story and through it remembers that in every time of distress Jesus is Lord and he is present to his disciples.

Individual Christians have also held this story near and dear. In times of (fear and stress), we can see that it is a natural human reaction is to wonder whether God is aware of our problems. We cry out to God in the midst of our storms, 'Don't you care'

"...At such times, for the church and for each one of us, the story speaks to our (hearts). It pictures Jesus in the boat with his disciples, present with us and concerned for us even when we do not perceive his care."¹

Well we know something about storms in Rocky Mount, don't we? When the wind and the waves ripped through our town burying nearly a fourth of it, we were terrified. We were shaking Jesus, asking him to wake up. We wondered if he cared.

And Jesus woke up, didn't he. He came to us when people showed up with drinking water, or a cell phone so we could keep that vital communication going. He was there when volunteers came to help clean up or to serve a meal. We all have

¹ This and previous three paragraphs informed by Lamar Williamson, Interpretation Series, Mark, copyright 1983, pgs102-103. Uses direct quotes and paraphrases.

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our stories to tell of God's angels.

But there are times, and this may be one of them, when we feel Jesus is asleep. Here we are, with the Flood nine months in the past, yet we still struggle with recovery as we fill out form after form after form. And not only that we are heading into yet another hurricane season. Couldn't we just opt out this year, let someone else have the privilege? Don't you think Jesus could wake up and take care of this for us? Well, these feelings and thoughts are natural.

As a matter of fact, whenever we face challenges or hard times, and it can happen in our business, in our marriages, in our friendships, in our families, with the death of someone we love and in any number of ways...at such times it is natural to feel abandoned and to say to Jesus "Don't you even care."

But just remember, Jesus is there even when we don't necessarily perceive it. We must trust in that, even when it is contrary to appearances. Things will turn back around. In Christ we will find a way. And in the meantime, we are being given a tremendous opportunity. In those times when we feel like Jesus is asleep, we might just find that we grow more than ever in the faith.

I am reminded of C. S. Lewis' book, *The Screwtape Letters*. It is a series of letters from Screwtape, who is a head devil to Wormwood, "a junior colleague." The senior devil is giving the younger devil his take on things. Screwtape says that humans often feel like God is asleep. And in fact, God does this on purpose because God wants people to love him of their own free will. And if he was always wowing them with a sense of his presence or with miraculous displays, they wouldn't really be giving themselves freely to

him.

Screwtape concludes: Do not be deceived, Wormwood, Our cause, the devil's cause is never more in danger than when a person looks round upon a universe from which every trace of God seems to have vanished, asks why he has been forsaken, and yet still obeys.²

So whether Jesus seems to be asleep or if we have managed to stir him with our panic, he is in the boat. He is with us in our lives. We can certainly celebrate those times when he his presence is real. But, we can also make good use of those darker, more desperate times when we perceive the absence of God. And when we do that, we enter into the most extraordinary of times, right in the midst of the day to day. And we also begin to see once again, not just the hard cold realities of life, but God's promises, God's wonders, God's love in and through it all. Jesus speaks and says, "Peace, be still. Why are you afraid? Don't you know you can trust in God, now and for ever." Amen.

*Sermon by Rev. Bobin
Hillner - Church of the
Good Shepherd*

² This quote and the previous paragraph paraphrased from C.S. Lewis: *Readings for Meditation and Reflection*, ed. Walter Hooper, publ by HarperSanFrancisco

M5
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Start-Up of the Sunset Avenue WTP after Hurricane Floyd Flooding

Jay W. Van Hoose, Superintendent*
City of Rocky Mount
Water Treatment Plants
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Rocky Mount, NC 27802-1180

ABSTRACT

This paper will discuss what steps were necessary for restarting the Sunset Ave. water treatment plant after it was flooded with 4 to 8 feet of water from Hurricane Floyd. This information may help those who may experience a catastrophic event.

INTRODUCTION

The Sunset Ave. water treatment plant is located 370 feet east of the Tar River. It was originally constructed in 1934 with a capacity of 3 MGD. Since then the plant has been expanded twice. Once in 1942 to 9 MGD and in 1956 to a total capacity of 12 MGD. In 1989 the plant was renovated and upgraded to a capacity of 18 MGD. This process included rebuilding all 15 filters and converting from single media sand filters to dual media of sand and anthracite filters. New electrical systems were installed, new filter control systems, installation of filter sweeps, new turbidity meters on all filters, renovations of all office spaces and modernizing of the drinking water lab located at the plant. In 1995 an ozone system was added as a pretreatment of TTHM's.

TIME LINE OF THE FLOOD

On September 16th the plant was operational until we lost power for the electrical substation across from the plant. The plant called for the generator technician to start the peak shaving generator so they could start the plant back up. When the technician arrived the water level in the Tar River had started to enter the substation and it was decided not to start the generator due to the apparent danger. It was 6:30 AM when the plant was notified of the situation with the generator by the electric department.

The river continued to rise and by 10:30 AM that morning the water began entering the water plant. By 12:00 noon the water had risen to over four feet in the main lobby of the plant and to chest deep in other areas within the plant. At 2:30 PM that afternoon the plant personal were evacuated out of the plant via boat from the back door. During that time we had to travel to the bulk chlorine storage building behind the plant by boat and turn off the two ton cylinders that were still hooked up the chlorine header and still in operation. The cylinders were hanging upside down by their pigtails to the header. Gary Weeks, Lead Mechanic, entered the building and standing on the frame of the chlorine header turned off the ton cylinders at the tanks.

FIRST INSPECTION

We entered the plant on Saturday the 18th in waist deep water to retrieve supplies from the lab. We had reactivated the lab at our second water plant so the lab personal could begin taking water samples through the city. During that time the Lead Mechanic, Gary Weeks, and I made a quick inspection of the plant and began planning our attack of what we had to do to get the plant back operational.

That first inspection revealed some startling discoveries. Water depth in the bulk chlorine storage building was 7'11". In our bulk chemical storage building 3 out of 6 bulk tanks had floated and

broken the pipes attached to them. One 20,000 gallon schedule 80 black iron caustic tank and caused damage to the roof of the building along with the end panel of the building and had come to rest by pushing a 20,000 gallon alum tank off its base. We later discovered that the caustic tank had hit the fiberglass alum tank so hard that it had factored the windings in the tank. This caused us to replace the tank.

Our 10,000-gallon bulk fluoride and phosphate had also floated and were lying on their sides inside the building.

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 18TH THE WORK BEGINS

We decided the best way to handle the different systems was to set up teams to tackle each problem. Each team would be made up of outside contractors headed up by water plant personnel. This was felt to be the best solution because we did not have the available resources to get the plant operational in a timely manner. So the following teams were developed:

- Motors
- Pumps
- Electrical
 - Main Switch Gear
 - Bulk Chemical Electrical for chemical transfer to day tanks
- Bulk Chemical Building and Tanks
 - Right Tanks and Re-pipe
- Chlorinators

TEAM MOTORS

Because the crane in the main plant was not operational all of the motors had to be removed by hand. This task was completed on September 19th. All of the motors were inspected by the motor shop, cleaned, backed, MEGED, rewound if needed and new bearings installed in all motors. The motors were returned on September 22nd and installed in the following order. Backwash first, then the low duty pumps that transfer water from the filter flumes to the clearwells and finally the finished water pumps.

TEAM ELECTRICAL

Because the main electrical distribution had 4 plus feet of water in it we were advised that the main gear had to be rebuilt and that two 2000 amp distribution breakers, a 1200 amp breaker for low power distribution and a 600 amp breaker all had to be replaced. Work started on September 21st and was completed on September 22nd at 9:30 PM. We had main power back in the plant.

TEAM BULK CHEMICAL BUILDING AND ELECTRICAL

The first order of business was to right the tanks that had broken loose. This was accomplished by removing the roof of the building and attaching a crane to the tanks and removing them from the building. After these temporary connections were made to the tanks remaining in the building so we could get chemicals into the day tanks located on the third floor of the main building. We also had to make temporary electrical connections to the transfer pumps with the use of a 430v 3 Ph generator. This setup allowed us to get chemicals into the main plant and be operational while we could plan for more permeate repairs to the chemical handling system. We had the chemical transfer pump and motors repaired and installed by September 21st.

TEAM CHLORINE

We contacted an outside contractor to perform a de-watering of the chlorine system and to replace and or repair any part they felt necessary to insure safety and safe handling of the system. The system was available on September 22nd.

PUMP WELLS AND CLEARWELLS

Because of the flooding of the plant we had no choice but to pump out the filter wells in the plant. We also inspected the clearwells across the road from the plant and discovered evidence that the water inside had become contaminated so we pump them out also. This was performed during the night. This process started on September 19th and was completed on September 21st.

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 22ND, 1999 - ALL SYSTEMS GO!!

By 11:00 PM that night we began operating the plant again at the rate of 6 MGD. We started the chlorine feed to give us 5 mg/l of free chlorine in the filter flumes. When the flumes were full we began filling the clearwells. This process continued until Thursday September 23rd when we started back washing filters and filling the clearwells.

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 23RD

We continued to operate and monitor the plant with out and problems except we had filter rate controls fail on two of the fifteen filter. However we were able to maintain a filtration rate of 6 MGD per day with the remaining filters.

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 24TH

On Friday we took bacteriological samples off each filter, from the filter flumes and the clearwells and lowered the free chlorine level from 5.0 to 4.0 mg/l. We continued to operate and monitor the plant with out and problems except we had filter rate controls fail on three more of the filters. This left us only 10n operational filters. However we were able to maintain a filtration rate of 6 MGD per day with the remaining filters.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 25TH

On Saturday we read the bacteriological samples and all returned negative. At 11:00 Am we started the finish water pump and began pumping 6 MGD of water back into the system. The plant was out of service for a total of 196 hours or 8 days. It was the first time since 1934 that the plant had missed a day providing water to the City.

HEROES

I would like to mention what I feel are the true heroes who got the Sunset plant operational in such a short period of time.

- Gary Weeks - Lead Mechanic. Gary worked closely with me in getting outside contractors on site and supervising the individual teams to see that all of the necessary work was being performed.
- Jack Evans - Chief Operator, Sunset Ave. WTP. Jack was at the plant when the flooding started. He and the operators protected as many systems in the plant before they were stopped by rising water.
- J.C. Spell - Chief Operator, Tar River WTP. J.C. worked round the clock in keeping the Tar River plant operating during the storm and flood. During this time he had to be taken to the hospital because of a kidney stone. After a short visit to the emergency room he returned to the plant to aid his operators during the time when the Sunset plant was offline.

- Greg Mann, Jason Friedrich, Emanuel Shell and Joe Arrington, Operators at the Sunset Ave. WTP. All of them worked around the clock without complaint to get the plant back operational.
- Paul Dages, Ronnie Taylor, William Tucker, Robert Tisdale Jr., and Jimmy Lynch, Operators at the Tar River WTP. All worked around the clock without complaint at the Tar River WTP. Some of them had to drive 1 or more hours to get to the plant to relieve their fellow operators. No one missed a shift.
- Butch Smith, Raymond Ingram, William Bridges, Ben James and Earl Manley, Maintenance Staff. All worked around the clock not only at the Sunset WTP but also at the Tar River WTP to keep it operational during the flood.
- Mike Hicks, Superintendent of Kerr Lake Regional Water Plant. Because we were unable to get alum from our supplier Mike arranged transportation from his plant to our Tar River plant so we could still operate. With out his aid we would have run out of alum and had to shut down the Tar River plant.

CONCLUSIONS

We feel that we were able to get the Sunset Ave. plant back on line as quickly as we did for several reasons. We were the first to have the flood water recede. This allowed suppliers, vendors and contractors to call on us and to volunteer their help and resources.

We also overlooked two very important areas when you are dealing with a disaster of this magnitude. One is feeding your people on site. Providing a hot meal is very important if you expect you employees to perform at their best. We decided that the best thing to do was to assign one person to be a cook and go and gather all the supplies they needed to cook for all of the employees. This worked out very well.

We also learned that getting sleep is always over looked. For the first 24 to 48 hours you are running on pure adrenaline. After that time you power to reason and to make good decisions becomes very suspect. Getting sleep is very important. You will be surprised how fast people will go to sleep after 48 hours of no sleep.

Hurricane Floyd, the storm of the century, THE FLOOD of '99, the 500 Year Flood; whatever anyone connected with Rocky Mount, Nash or Edgecombe Counties wants to call it, it was an experience none of us ever wants to go through again. I sort of backed into it, as I was out of the country at the time. My friend from Tarboro and I left for France two days before the storm was predicted to hit the area. Since Floyd was described as a hurricane 600 miles in diameter, we were fairly sure it would affect Rocky Mount and Tarboro, but were glad to be scheduled to get out of the area before flights out of Raleigh were possibly cancelled.

When we arrived in Paris we called home to see if, indeed, the storm had hit, and how extensive the damage was from wind. I finally was able to reach my son, Hal, and the news was stammering. He had gone to my house to assess the damage, expecting to see trees on my house, as in Hurricane Fran two years earlier, and found water from Stony Creek to the steps of my back deck. Thinking it could not possibly rise any higher, he left but returned two hours later to find the water to the top of the deck. When I reached him by phone at my house, he and a friend were in the house watching the water come up through the floor vents. He assured me that there was nothing I could do at home and to continue my trip as planned. They moved my most valuable furniture up onto higher surfaces and left the house. It took them two and a half hours to get from my house to theirs, normally about five minutes away. Rocky Mount was divided into three islands, and it seemed impossible to get from one to another.

Meanwhile, my friend and I turned on the TV in our hotel in Paris, and CNN was full of news from Rocky Mount and Tarboro, North Carolina. We were amazed as we continued our visit in Paris and on into Provence, then London, to have people, on hearing where we were from through general conversation or credit card information, expressing concern and interest. This was a far reaching catastrophe, not only in this country.

When we returned home ten days after Floyd's visit, Hal met me in Raleigh and spent the drive to Rocky Mount preparing me for what I would see at home. Nothing he described was near what I saw as he took me past friends' homes in West Haven, Riverside, Candlewood and my neighborhood of Creek's Bend. Never could I have imagined the extent of the damage to property and, as I realized all too soon, lives. My damage was minimal, thanks to my family and many friends, compared to so many others, and yet, I was overwhelmed. My home is on one level and was covered with enough water to require all floor surfaces and everything under the house to be replaced. This was a shock to me, but it helped me realize what so many others had lost.

I think the greatest impression this whole experience had on me, aside from the devastated homes, the misplaced families, the overwhelming stench from the contaminated water, the free tetanus shots issued to everyone, the constant lines of enormous trucks hauling refuse away, or the ever present waterlines on buildings, trees and shrubs, was the unbelievable heart and soul that emerged from this community. I actually felt left out because I was not here to witness and help. So many of my friends and family were doing for me what I felt I should have been here doing for them and myself. I was fortunate enough to have family to stay with while my home was restored, but this, too, left me with a certain degree of guilt as I looked at those who were forced to rent or otherwise relocate while their homes were, hopefully, repaired. There was a definite feeling of guilt. This is another side of this nightmare that is different but

important. I actually felt cheated, because I had to ask questions of those who should not have had to answer. Now, a year and eight months later, there is never a conversation that does not include some mention of “the flood”, and we are still reminded by remaining signs of something we will never forget.

HURRICANE FLOYD RESPONSE

On 16 Sep 1999 Hurricane Floyd began devastating eastern North Carolins. Rocky Mount, NC has entire streets with destroyed homes; two-story apartment houses are now abandoned. Some streets have piles of destroyed furniture, insulation and debris still waiting to be picked up by overwhelmed city services. Mobile homes lie in a heap ater floating away and crashing in to some barrier. Storage buildings and many tanks just floated away.

The Adventist Church is organized to respond to disasters; the Michigan Conference has a trailer with a complete kitchen to prepare meals which is taken to the needed area. FEMA has requested that this church handle the relief effort in North Carolina. Pastor Ken Ford has been asked to lead the effort and has been on the scene for weeks. The Adventists have four warehouses in Rocky Mount with the 180,000 square foot Paragon Building as main headquarters; it is located on the north side of US 64 at Winstead Avenue.

On 15 Oct 99 there were nine tractor-trailers lined up for inbound deliveries of donated goods--two were BROYHILL. What a testimony to the benevolent spirit of the American conscience. Inside the building twelve forklifts and twenty pallet jacks were in constant motion.

Between 9 Oct-16 Oct, volunteers numbered 115 to 148 each day--bringing morale as high as a Carolina pine with them. But it is work, some heavy dock jobs.

Outside there are six diesel Ryder straight trucks manned by volunteers making constant sorties to locations from Roanoke Rapids to Wilmington. Also cars and vans come to deliver donations, and church pickups and private trailers are loaded with orders from morning till night for outlying distribution centers. One owner-operator from Coastal Carolina Trucking had been on the scene for 30 straight days, donating his time and his tractor-trailer hauling water one load after another for Disaster Relief.

Among the inbound tractor-trailers on 16 Oct 99, there was one driven by six foot-nine inch Twiggy Saunders, an ex-player for the Harlem Globetrotters!

Yet with a warehouse full of thirty million dollars worth of goods, Disaster Response is still short of FEMA designations #104, #105, and #106 (canned fruits, cereals, canned meats). Hard times have now set in on a pressed people.

In nine days, not one single case of pilferage was even suspected; what people donated ultimately ends up with the intended recipient. The efficiency rating is estimated to be .998--the remaining .002 (two out of a 1,000) is lost to accidental damage--an accomplishment that would be the envy of any corporation. Even seasoned guards who man the gates smile at the smoothness of this operations. Ken Ford of the Hickory, NC Seventh Day Adventist Church and his team deserve our gratitude and thanks for doing an A+ job under trying and stressful conditions.

John S. Edwards

C;aremont, NC
28610

Addendum: Personally, I have driven a tractor-trailer for 32 years in long-distance hauling--a total of 3,727 trips. I have seen all the "hot-shot" terminal managers, "geniuses" and hordes who thought they were tough, but in all my three million miles, I never saw a pressure-packed operation run as efficiently and smoothly as that run by Dr. Ken Ford and the Disaster team in Rocky Mount. Another modern miracle performed by the LORD Jesus Christ.

PERSONAL MEMORIES

One can still see Dave Sharpe of Raleigh whizzing along on his golf cart to a needed point to co-ordinate the movement of goods; and Mike Ortel, a dynamo in constant motion from point to point.

There was R.A. George of Berrien Springs, Michigan running his forklift and Curtis Chubbuck of Aiken, S.C. who was a master of the "Towmotor".

And there was big Dave Eaton of Raleigh who was ^apublic relations professional at the delivery points. There was Jason Sumpter of Elkhart, Indiana who was a work-horse on delivery schedules.

When it came to tact, the right guard was on duty at the gate with the name of Paul Burns. Paul could have sold you a straw hat and made you think you had bought a Stetson.

It was most valuable to have Merv & Wilma Falor of Decatur, Michigan serving our meals from the 28 foot Utilimaster kitchen trailer they had towed all the way to Rocky Mount.

Too the unforgettable, easy-going Ed Holloman of Rocky Mount and his wife who kept this trucker in fresh clean clothes.

A retired professional trucker from Carolina Freight Carriers ^{Arnold Whitaker} was there on a regular basis. David King of Raleigh was a rodeo trucker who could back a trailer into impossible positions--from the "blind" side--wow!

On my table is an autographed print of Twiggy Saunders (#42) of the Harlem Globe Trotters. When he retired from roundball, Twiggy bought his own tractor-trailer and was on hand to make many deliveries.

And also serving was Class VI, Red 6 of the Americorps--similar to the Peace Corps. These young folks adjusted instantly to a very strange environment and helped run the show. My immediate boss-ladies were two recent college graduates: Claire Petite from Chicago and Allyson Klebes from Cleveland. All were a joy to work with.

As the giant warehouse of supplies dwindled down around 6 Nov 1999, only two items of consequence remained--water bottles and used clothing. But FEMA needed the water supplies for the newly-created FEMA village, and Adventist Disaster Response was setup to receive and process clothing for use at other areas. So the last truck loads of material was sent to ADRA in Washington. So everything that was donated was used and accounted for. The trucks were turned in to Ryder and this phase of response came to an end. But the rebuilding of the eastern part of North Carolina continues in 2001...

John S. Edwards
22 May 2001

ADDENDUM

MS
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19 Jun 2001

I have a 1963 aluminum hull shed on a trailer in which has been a shelter on over 200 man-nights. This was pulled to the parking lot at the main warehouse and with the line of port-o-jons nearby, I had my own comfortable "Silver Marriott" for 34 days.

The "Rolling Wheels Motel" contained a two-burner gas burner Coleman stove and a 39 X 84" sleeping bag that was rated down to 10⁸ F...all the comforts of camping.

In early November the weather was forecast to dip into the thirties. When I came in one night, my conscientious co-volunteers had man-handled the little trailer to a location inside the building. This situation really turned out to be pleasant.

Thanks to all the great folks that worked on this important project.

Regards,

John

John S. Edwards

[REDACTED]
Claremont, N.C.

28610
[REDACTED]

Toomey, Rick

MS
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From: Lewis, Charlene
Sent: Friday, May 25, 2001 2:27 PM
To: Toomey, Rick
Cc: Wood, Susan
Subject: RE: Hurricane Floyd Stories

THIS WAS INTERESTING TO ME HOWEVER LIGHT HEARTED....AS WE ALL KNOW SUSAN WOOD LPN LOST HER HOME TO FLOYD. SHE WAS ABLE TO COME TO NASHVILLE TO HER NIECES AND STAY IN A TRAVEL TRAILER PROVIDED BY SOMEONE AT HER HUSBANDS WORK. ON SUNDAY AFTER THE STORM HER HUSBAND AND NEPHEW HAD BEEN OVER TO THE HOME TO TRY TO RETRIEVE ANYTHING THAT COULD BE SALVAGED. SAM BROUGHT MOST OF HER CLOTHES, PICTURE ALBUMS, AND HER COLLECTION OF TOM CLARK GNOMES. WE SENT THE CLOTHING THAT WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO KEEP TO EVERYONE AVAILABLE TO BE WASHED IF THEY COULD ACTUALLY CARRY THE BLACK BAGS OF CLOTHING LACED WITH WATER, MUD AND WHO KNOWS WHAT ELSE. AS THE CLOTHING CAME IN WE DID TRY TO HANG AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO AT LEAST LET IT DRY OUT A LITTLE PRIOR TO DISPENSING TO TRASH OR WASH. CAREFULLY, WE SEPARATED THE PICTURES FROM THE ALBUMS AND LAID THEM OUT ON THE DECK AND ANY HORIZONTAL SURFACE POSSIBLE. NOW CAME TIME FOR THE GNOMES.....HAVE YOU EVER SEEN LITTLE GNOMES THAT HAVE BEEN SOAKED IN MUD? NEEDLESS TO SAY WHEN WE LOOKED AT THE GNOMES (AN NATURALLY SUSAN HAD THE COMPLETE COLLECTION OF THE "THIMBLE GNOMES") THEY APPEARED TO HAVE NO COLOR. WE FELT THAT THE COLOR HAD ACTUALLY SOAKED OFF AND SUSAN PRODUCED ENOUGH WATER FROM HER TEAR DUCTS THAT COULD HAVE CREATED ANOTHER FLOOD. BEING THE PERSON THAT I AM BELIEVING THAT "IT AIN'T OVER TO THE FAT LADY SINGS", I BEGAN TO RUN CLEAR WATER OVER ONE OF THE GNOMES AND SAW SIGNS OF LIFE UNDERNEATH THE MUD. A SPARK CAME UP IN SUSAN EYES. WE THEN PROCEEDED TO GET A FEW POTS OF WATER AND EVERYONE STARTED SCRUBBING TOM CLARK GNOMES WITH TOOTHBRUSHES. NOW DO YOU NOT THINK THAT THIS IS A FUNNY SITE? THREE WOMEN SITTING IN THE MIDST OF A YARD FULL OF BLACK BAGS, HANGING CLOTHING, PICTURES STREWN EVERYWHERE, SCRUBBING TOM CLARK GNOMES WITH TOOTHBRUSHES. WE SCRUBBED EVERYONE OF OF THOSE 30 SOME GNOMES UNTIL THEY WERE JUST LIKE NEW. THE ONLY DISASTER DURING THE CLEANING PERIOD WAS WHEN SUSAN THOUGHT OF HER OWN COLOR AND REALIZED THAT SHE HAD JUST REPLENISHED HER MAKE UP KIT FROM MERLE NORMAN. IT WAS THEN THAT SHE REALIZED THAT SHE COULD NOT GO AROUND WITHOUT ANY MAKE UP ON AND BEGAN TO REALLY PANIC. MONDAY WAS SUCH A TRYING DAY THAT SHE DID MISS WORK THAT DAY AND WE WERE SOMEWHAT RELIEVED BECAUSE SUSAN WITHOUT MAKE UP IS JUST NOT "HER". THE DECISION WAS MADE, THE MAKEUP WAS TOO FRIVOLOUS AT THIS POINT IN TIME TO WORRY ABOUT SO SHE STARTED JUST TRYING TO MAKE DO WITH THINGS FROM OTHER FRIENDS. WOULD YOU BELIEVE THAT SOMEONE WENT STRAIGHT TO MERLE NORMANS WHERE THEY KEEP EVERYTHING INDEXED AND PURCHASED SUSAN HER COMPLETE MAKE UP KIT IN HER SPECIFIC COLORS. IT WAS DELIVERED TO HER ON MONDAY NIGHT. SO EVEN IN THE MIDST OF DESPAIR SHE WAS ABLE TO LOOK LIKE HERSELF. IT REALLY DIDN'T BRING BACK ANYTHING BUT IT DID KEEP HER FROM BEING A LITTLE LESS MISERABLE. AND SHE COULD FACE THE REMAINING TRYING TIMES WITH A LITTLE SELF ESTEEM. LUCKILY, I WAS IN ATTENDANCE WHEN SHE RECEIVED THE PACKAGE. NO CHRISTMAS WILL EVER MATCH THAT MOMENT AND AS MANY GIFTS THAT I EVER SEE, I KNOW THAT I WILL NEVER SEE ONE AS APPRECIATED AS THAT ONE LITTLE BAG OF MAKE-UP. SUSAN AND SAM NOW HAVE A NEW HOME AND IN MAY 2001 THEIR OLD HOME OR ELSE THE SHELL OF IT WAS FINALLY SETTLED IN THE BUY OUT. THERE'S MANY THINGS THAT SHE COULD NEVER REPLACE BUT THE ONE THING THAT SHE DIDN'T LOSE WAS THE LOVE FROM HER FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND HER DOG...

-----Original Message-----

From: Toomey, Rick
Sent: Thursday, May 24, 2001 11:21 AM
To: Managers Distribution List
Subject: Hurricane Floyd Stories

Please remember to write down any interesting Floyd stories for Dr. Thorp's wife Alice.

She and others associated with Braswell Memorial Library are attempting to write a book about Hurricane Floyd, which will be presented to the new library.

If you would like, you can type them in outlook, forward to me and I will send them to Alice Thorp.

thanks rick

MS
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Rick Toomey
FROM: Robert Flowers
DATE: September 24, 1999
SUBJECT: HURRICANE FLOYD

HURRICANE FLOYD SUMMARY

- 09-13-99** Rain bands from Floyd were over the area, some were quite heavy. Checked supplies that might be needed. Measured fuel in emergency generator tanks.
- 09-14-99** Moved items that could be blown around, checked roof drains and storm sewer drains, removed debris from roofs. Filled all vehicles with gasoline.
- 09-15-99** Picked up additional supplies, flashlight batteries, duct tape, rolls of plastic, etc., and continued to watch progress of Hurricane Floyd. At this time Floyd was supposed to make landfall and start effecting the Rocky Mount area around 0600, September 16, 1999. The department was instructed to report to work at 0400 or earlier if conditions worsened.
- Conditions worsened and the Maintenance Department Personnel started coming in around 1000.
- 09-16-99** Checked all areas, ready to repair damage as needed and assist as needed. Strongest winds came between 0530 and 0830. No major damage. River and creeks continue to rise. Roads and streets in low areas are flooded, some Maintenance personnel are stranded, no way out to go home, spent night at Nash General Hospital.
- 09-17-99** Maintenance Department is now divided, some at home and can't get to work, some at work and can't get home. We had adequate number at work to take care of problems. All equipment functioned normally. Low water pressure was our main concern, but remained adequate.
- 09-18-99** Saturday - Work schedule same as week day.
- 09-19-99** Sunday - Work schedule same as week day. Things slowed considerably, kept two (2) men, sent others home at 1200.

The needs of the Maintenance Department were so well met you would never have guessed that a disaster was taking place all around us. We had plenty of food and drinks. I was proud of our Department, as well as all of the others for a job well done under trying conditions.

RF:ej

Memo

To: Rick Toomey
From: Beth Gore
CC:
Date: 09/29/99
Re: summary of "Floyd"

I have finally got to a point that I could remember the events of our visitor Floyd. The "Only Thing" I see that could have been improved was communication. Staffing the unit you didn't know what was going on with the outside world. Also when I talked to the supervisor Friday she did tell me we were in a disaster and it had been announced and of course that what I told my staff.

Rick, that is truly the only thing I saw that could have been improved. But the positives are so numerous, I get teary every time I think about the "teamwork" and pulling together that went on. If it hadn't been for employees coming from other departments pediatrics wouldn't have been able to survive with our increase census and our decrease in staff. It really goes beyond "teamwork" it is more like a family with concerns and caring about everyone's well-being including the patients. It was truly amazing to see when one person got weak someone would come in to ease the burden.

The cafeteria response was great and the extended hours was great for staff and pt's families. CSS, Linen Services and Supply Distribution did an outstanding job keeping the clinical areas stocked and being in extra supplies when indicated.

I feel like it well as it could considering the devastating situation we were in. I have been here over 22 years and I continue to feel blessed to be member of this family. I was impressed over how well operations went during the disaster and I remain impressed of the support that continues to be given to our employees after this devastating situation. I would like to thank you and your leadership and also how you can pull a helicopter out of your hat. Thanks for the ride.

I would like to share thoughts that I have received from one of my staff, Anne Chappell.

The hurricane Floyd provided this hospital, this staff, this community with a new opportunity to show how well we do what we say we do, which is of course care for the welfare of all the members of this community. Floyd was a hurricane of such depth of destruction, the likes of which we have never seen in our life times, most of us have felt overwhelmed personally, but the good news is that we all pulled together to help everybody that we could. The staff made great efforts to get here so they could provide the care needed by the pts. and to provide relief for those already working. Some of the staff actually risked life and limb to come. Others on this staff made sacrifices of staying and working almost continually knowing that there some people who could not get here and who were experiencing the

powerful destruction first hand. Lots of staff members of this hospital were experiencing the powerful destruction first hand. Lots of staff members of this hospital were asked to perform in roles they had never imagined but did so with a cheerful heart. The staff that reported to pediatrics were wonderful .our hats off ,especially to Marion Pridgen RN, who normally works radiology, who came and assisted for several days. Also especially appreciated are the staff members who doubled for housekeeping/dietary/pharmacy deliveries etc. Susan Driver,RN ,who normally works IV was helpful to our staff one day. Everyone that worked was great and went the extra mile.

There was some disappointment with some staff members that did not seem to realize the seriousness of this event, and did not make much effort to call in and check with the dept.

However after one has gone through a difficult event, reflection is always a good tool to look back and see what could have been a weakness and what could have been done differently , lack of communication is always a problem but at this time more distressing than usual.

**Nash Health Care
Systems**

Memo

To: Rick Toomey
From: Beth Gore
CC:
Date: 09/29/99
Re: summary of "Floyd"

10/22/01

Alice:
Please note
change:

I have finally got to a point that I could remember the events of our visitor Floyd. The "Only Thing" I see that could have been improved was communication. Staffing the unit you didn't know what was going on with the outside world. Also when I talked to the supervisor Friday she did tell me we were in a disaster and it had been announced and of course that what I told my staff.

- Rick, that is truly the only thing I saw that could have been improved. But the positives are so numerous, I get teary every time I think about the "teamwork" and pulling together that went on. If it hadn't been for employees coming from other departments pediatrics wouldn't have been able to survive with our increase census and our decrease in staff. It really goes beyond "teamwork" it is more like a family with concerns and caring about everyone's well-being including the patients. It was truly amazing to see when one person got weak someone would come in to ease the burden.

The cafeteria response was great and the extended hours was great for staff and pt's families. CSS, Linen Services and Supply Distribution did an outstanding job keeping the clinical areas stocked and being in extra supplies when indicated.

I feel like it went well as it could considering the devastating situation we were in. I have been here over 22 years and I continue to feel blessed to be member of this family. I was impressed over how well operations went during the disaster and I remain impressed of the support that continues to be given to our employees after this devastating situation. I would like to thank you and your leadership and also how you can pull a helicopter out of your hat. Thanks for the ride.

I would like to share thoughts that I have received from one of my staff, Anne Chappell.

The hurricane Floyd provided this hospital, this staff, this community with a new opportunity to show how well we do what we say we do, which is of course care for the welfare of all the members of this community. Floyd was a hurricane of such depth of destruction, the likes of which we have never seen in our life times, most of us have felt overwhelmed personally, but the good news is that we all pulled together to help everybody that we could. The staff made great efforts to get here so they could provide the care needed by the pts. and to provide relief for those already working. Some of the staff actually risked life and limb to come. Others on this staff made sacrifices of staying and working almost continually knowing that there some people who could not get here and who were experiencing the

It is one year and nine months since Hurricane Floyd and the ensuing flood. A lot of things can happen in one year and nine months. We have learned that in that period of time, one can literally start over in establishing a home, and slowly, methodically reach a state of being settled once again. It's not easy when you are in your mid-seventies, but it can be done! When we review that time and try to distill all the thoughts and emotions we have felt during the flood and since, we find that we must say first of all, that we are THANKFUL. We feel blessed to be where we are at this time, to have weathered the storm, (no pun intended), and to have reached this plateau of our lives, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and medically intact.

To recall our feelings, we will be brief. First of all, we were completely awe-struck with the suddenness of the flooding. We did not know that so much water could envelop a house so quickly and do so much damage so fast with its angry, roiling, crashing, swirling force. We were literally unable to leave our home by the doors because of the intensity of the rising water, so we went back upstairs to wait...what? We did not know, but hoped for some miracle to save us.

Secondly, we were touched by the continuing love shown us by our immediate family. They came at once, helped day after day, and supported us with their caring devotion. We had no place to go at first except to a community shelter, but they came for us, housed us, and supplied every need we encountered day by day. We will never forget the kindness shown us by our family, as well as our friends. We truly believe we could not have made it without our loved ones.

Thirdly, after our rescue by brave firemen, we were stunned by the kindness of people. We heard from so many people who wanted us to know that they cared about us. We were brought food, clothing, money, and we received notes, visits, and phone calls to cheer us. People, both known and unknown, showed up at our flooded house to help us reclaim what we could and to help us trash the wasted relics of our 34 years of living in that one place. Somehow, when we needed a certain kind of help, it appeared out of nowhere. When we needed a large truck the most, one appeared from another town, wanting to help in any way possible. When we needed a large group of people to help carry heavy loads and empty vile-smelling, bacteria-laden, awful stuff, a large group appeared from a neighboring church, wanting to be of help in any way they could. We were astounded at the kindness manifested in so many different ways.

Our church came forth with so much help and support that we were overwhelmed again with that avenue of love-in-action. There were dirty jobs to be done, but they were there to do them and to help us in ways we never dreamed we would need.

My father always told me that there is humor in every situation if you look hard enough to find it. I thought we had come across the one situation in which there would be NO humor. However, two days after the flood, when we got a random wrong-number phone call in the middle of the night and a voice said "Is Floyd there?", we all had a good laugh. Especially when our granddaughter answered "He was!!"

We have a new respect for the Rocky Mount community, which has shown its worth in a hundred ways since the flood. There has been a caring, loving attitude prevailing in our city, and people helping people has been the norm and not the exception. We have appreciated so much, the efforts of Rocky Mount employees who have tried in every way to assist flood victims.

A friend told me that she hesitated to talk about the flood to anyone who had not experienced it as she had. She said she did not feel that anyone understood her feelings except someone who had known those feelings personally. This is true, to a certain extent, and sometimes, it is clear to us that people simply can NOT understand what it was like. It is beyond normal

understanding to picture what really happened and to empathize, although people are so well-intended. I know that I would never be able to picture the situation in my mind if I had not seen it for myself, for it was a unique experience, unlike any other we have known.

Nothing is the way it used to be for us....but we are beginning to feel "at home" here in our new place. We try to forget what we have lost. We try not to focus on family heirlooms that are gone forever. We try not to go back in our minds to what WAS, but to think instead of what IS and what will be. We are so very thankful to have our lives here and now and to be moving forward with everyday living. September sixteenth, 1999, is a date we cannot forget.....but we are grateful for today, and for the days ahead of us that we shall enjoy as stronger people than we were before.

Ida and Bill Stanley

June, 2001.

①

It had been raining all day - so hard I never ventured out at all. I noticed that the drainage ditch at the bottom of my back yard was overflowing, and when I went to bed it was within about 10 feet of my house.

The electricity went off soon after that but I was able to read by the light of several candles. I woke up once in the night & looked out a back window but I could see nothing - there was no light anywhere. I had candles & a flashlight and was confident that by morning the lights would come back on & the telephone - which had gone dead sometime after midnight - would be working again.

~~At about~~ I was awakened by my cat - ~~at~~ about 5:30 - and heard water dripping. I got out of bed to investigate & stepped in water up to my ankles. At that point, instead of being frightened & becoming panicky something else took over my life & I began to assemble things I would need in this emergency. I could only dress the top part of me as the water was rising rapidly so I just put on a blouse & a sweater & pulled up my pajama pants. I put ~~a~~ ~~change of~~ underwear & a pair of slippers in a plastic bag & ~~put on~~ ~~the~~ ~~few~~ ~~pieces~~ of jewelry that ~~were~~ ^{were} valuable to me - ~~for~~ put my medicine in my purse, & took 3

(2)

books - my Bible, prayerbook & daily office book in a bag.

By that time the water was up to my waist - I managed to pull the front door open - Somehow managed to position a chair - which wanted to float away - so I could climb up on the kitchen counter, the highest place in my house. I had dropped my flash light so I was in the dark for a while. When day light came, I could see my furniture turning over & some of it floating. The water had risen up to the counter where I was sitting & was moving fast just like a river. I was afraid I would fall down if I got off the counter. I was worried about my cat but I couldn't go back to the bedroom to get her.

~~But~~ I never doubted for one moment that someone would come for me. Sure enough, about 10:30 a fireman, Vernon Lynch came in a flat bottomed boat & carried me out of my house. A kind person at the end of Loom Street had opened her home to the refugees from the storm. There was hot coffee for everyone and wonder-of-wonders - a working telephone! I awaited my turn - then

③

called my son Tom Rosny. I caught him first as he & Peggy were leaving their house to look for me. I told them where I was and shortly they came for me. We had to walk out because the whole area was flooded. It was fortunate I had included a pair of shoes in my bag as we had to walk a long way.

It was all a bad experience but the hand of the Lord was on me the whole time. So many people were so kind to me - some I didn't even know. Tommy & Peggy took me into their home & were so good to me. I stayed with them for four months. My daughters even here to help with cleaning out my house & my son Albert [REDACTED] came when he could get here. Every road from where he ~~lived~~ ^{lived} was flooded so he couldn't get to work for several days.

Incidentally, Tommy & my daughter from Chapel Hill went back to my house in a boat after four days - the area was still flooded but the water had receded enough so they could get in the house. And there was the cat? I am sure she has mud up round all her lines. Kathy & Jim Wood took her in and kept her until I could provide a home for her.

Am 1

(4)

There were so many little worries and annoyances connected with losing papers. no bank records. Lost insurance records and no jacket coat had to be replaced. Tommy helped me so much as did Peggy. What does one do without family?

For a long time I had nightmares and I still do not sleep well. My health is ruined - but I am blessed to still be alive in a comfortable dwelling with good friends who are always so kind and helpful, and my wonderful family. Tommy & Peggy visit often as does Albert and my girls - one in Chapel Hill and ~~the~~ one in Augusta, Georgia, keep in touch by telephone. Also they visit when they can. I try not to think about the parts of my life that have been swept away - books collected over a lifetime, papers, photographs that I no longer have.

However I have so much to be thankful for. All through this ordeal the Holy Spirit has sustained me and provided true comfort. The third person in the Trinity is rightfully called the Holy Comforter.

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Yes, I had seen water creep into my back yard at Riverside twice in the fourteen years I had happily lived at 482 W. Duke Circle. Therefore, I was not overly concerned to see water creeping nearer and nearer as Floyd raged..

I even waded out and moved my car at 4AM up to Lee Street and waded back to enter my apartment and continued putting things as high up as I could, preparing a "tote" bag all the time.. Finally, when water got up to about a foot into the apartment, my neighbor, ^{*Anna Murphy,} and I decided it was time to leave. So, with ^{our} tote bags slung over our shoulders, we waded up to Lee Street. Water was just under our armpits. My little 99 lb body wanted to bob out of the water.. Was horse foaled, I kept us on the side walk by feeling for the grass on each side of the walk, knowing if we got into the street the water would be over our shoulders. The force of the water was pretty swift at times. Even though I cannot swim, I was not frightened. We finally reached Lee Street where we were picked up and carried to temporary shelter at the Old R.M. Wilson School building. We spent the entire day

* Anna Marriott

there. Then late that afternoon we were carried to Parker Jr School which was an official shelter. Spent the night sleeping on the floor. We were fortunate that Louise Janelle knew where we were. She came for us late Friday afternoon and took us to Anna's great niece in Nashville. Then on Saturday I was taken to ^{my} nephew where I remained about three weeks. We spent days in the soggy apartment saving what we could. Much time was spent re-finishng furniture that had ben given to me.

The hardest thing for me was to learn to accept monetary Contributions - which were so generously given. After moving into a new apartment in October, I started moving and giving my many flowers from Riverside. I was content when they were all moved on given away. Was so happy for them to find a home. Even though I lost so much, everyone was so kind and thoughtful and generous with their money, food, clothes, etc that I feel I lost "nothing"

It was quite an experience but I don't believe I would come to repeat it

It will soon have been
two years and I am happily
working in my new flower garden.
As long as I can grow flowers,
things aren't bad at all.

Elmer B. Boswell

Elmo Boswell

[REDACTED]
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27804

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It was quite an experience but I don't believe I would care to repeat it. It will soon have been two years and I am happily working in my new flower garden. As long as I can grow flowers, things aren't bad at all.

MS
24

THIS PAGE IS DEDICATED TO THE FLOOD VICTIMS OF HURRICANE FLOYD IN ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK AOL FOR ALLOWING ME TO USE THIS SPACE ON THE WEB TO LET OTHERS EXPERIENCE THROUGH MY EYES WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE FLOOD OF THE CENTURY....

I HAVE ONLY WRITTEN SOME OF THE THINGS THAT HAPPENED DURING THIS ORDEAL, BUT I HOPE IT GIVES SOME IDEA OF WHAT WE EXPERIENCED...

ON SEPTEMBER 15, 1999 WE PREPARED FOR HURRICANE FLOYD TO PASS OVER US. MY FAMILY AND I EXPECTED THE WINDS TO BE THE WORST. WE HAD NO IDEA HOW HORRIBLE THE RAINFALL WOULD BE. WE ALL STAYED UP MOST OF THE NIGHT WAITING OUT THE STORM. AT 5:30 AM ON SEPTEMBER 16, 1999 ONE OF OUR NEIGHBORS CALLED, HE ASKED IF HE AND HIS FAMILY COULD COME TO OUR HOME AND STAY BECAUSE HE WAS KNEE DEEP IN WATER. WE IMMEDIATELY TRIED TO SEE OUTSIDE, WE HAD NO POWER AND OF COURSE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING HOW BAD IT ACTUALLY WAS. WE RAN OUT TO SEE WHAT WE COULD SEE AND THE ROAD WAS COVERED IN WATER. AFTER OUR NEIGHBOR ARRIVED WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN, HE AND MY HUSBAND WENT OUT INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD ALERTING OTHERS. THERE WERE PEOPLE COMING FROM EVERYWHERE. MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN, DOGS AND CATS. SOME OF THE PEOPLE WERE CARRYING TRASH BAGS FILLED WITH WHATEVER THEY COULD GET IN IT. I WILL NEVER FORGET ALL THESE PEOPLE WALKING DOWN THE ROAD, KNEE DEEP IN WATER CARRYING ANIMALS, CHILDREN AND WHATEVER THEY COULD. IT JUST BROUGHT TEARS TO MY EYES, AND STILL DOES AS I TALK ABOUT IT. WE ENDED UP WITH 9 FAMILIES AT OUR HOME. BELIEVE IT OR NOT ALL THE ANIMALS EVEN GOT ALONG. SINCE IT WAS STILL RAINING OUT WE KEPT ALL ANIMALS INSIDE AS WELL. WE LIVE ON A VERY STEEP HILL, THE HIGHEST POINT IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD. IT WAS SO WONDERFUL AS NEIGHBORS CAME TOGETHER TO HELP ONE ANOTHER. THEY WERE ABLE TO GET TO A BOAT AND USED OUR DRIVEWAY TO DOCK THE BOAT AND STARTED SAVING PEOPLE THROUGH OUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD. IT REALLY BOTHERED ME TO SEE GROWN MEN STAND ON MY FRONT PORCH STARING DOWN THE STREET AT THEIR HOMES, CRYING BECAUSE EVERYTHING THEY HAD WAS UNDER WATER. IT MADE ME FEEL GUILTY BECAUSE I HADN'T SUFFERED ANY FLOOD DAMAGE. DON'T GET ME WRONG I WAS GLAD OUR HOME WAS A SAFE HAVEN FOR EVERYONE, BUT I FELT SO SORRY FOR ALL MY NEIGHBORS. MOST OF THEM CAME WITH JUST THE CLOTHES THEY HAD ON AND THEY WERE WET. SO MY CHILDREN STARTED FINDING SOME OF THEIR DRY CLOTHES FOR THEM. WHEN IT FINALLY STOPPED RAINING AND THE WATER STOPPED RISING, NO ONE COULD GET OUT OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD. WE WERE SURROUNDED BY WATER. IT WAS LIKE WE WERE ON AN ISLAND. I STARTED WORRYING, THEN I BEGAN TO PRAY. WE HAD NO IDEA HOW LONG WE WERE GOING TO BE STRANDED OR HOW BAD OTHER PLACES WERE.

WE CALLED 911, THEY TOLD US TO STAY PUT THAT IT WAS BAD EVERYWHERE. THEY TOLD US THEY WERE MAKING RESCUES THROUGHTOUT THE WHOLE CITY AND FOR US TO SIT TIGHT AND THEY WOULD GET TO US ASAP. WE HAD NEIGHBORS WITH BOATS THAT WERE TAKING PEOPLE OUT TO DRY LAND. THERE ARE APROXIMATELY 200 HOMES IN MY

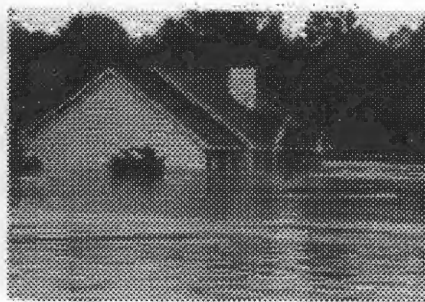
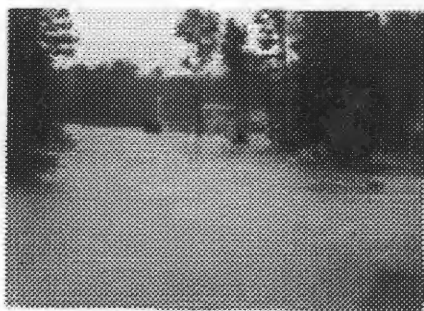
NEIGHBORHOOD, AT THAT TIME WE HAD NO IDEA HOW MANY OF THEM WERE DAMAGED. THE WATER CONTINUED TO RISE, WE MADE AN AGREEMENT TO PACK OUR STUFF UP IF THE WATER ROSE OVER OUR MAILBOX. BECAUSE OF US LIVING ON A HILL OUR MAILBOX WAS HIGHER THAN THE OTHERS, WHOSE HOMES WERE ALREADY UNDER WATER. WE COULD LOOK DOWN THE STREET AND THOSE HOMES HAD WATER UP TO THE ROOFTOPS. THERE WERE CARS, DECKS, OUT BUILDINGS AND ALL KINDS OF OBJECTS FLOATING IN THE WATER. IT WAS THE WORST THING I HAVE EVER EXPERIENCED.

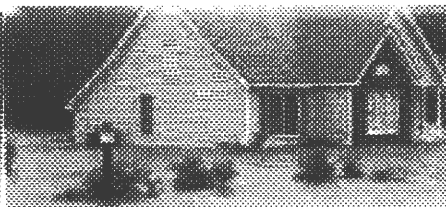
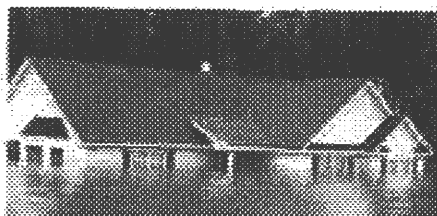
BY THAT AFTERNOON THE WATER HAD COVERED OUR MAILBOX, I STARTED GETTING UPSET, KNOWING WHAT OUR AGREEMENT WAS. THE NATIONAL GUARD HAD HELICOPTERS FLYING OVERHEAD, IT WAS LIKE A WAR ZONE. OUR NEIGHBORHOOD IS RIGHT BESIDE HIGHWAY 95 AND PEOPLE WERE STRANDED ON HIGHWAY 95. WE WITNESSED A RESCUE, THE NATIONAL GUARD PULLED THESE PEOPLE TO SAFETY BY AIR. THAT IN ITSELF WAS SOMETHING I HAD NEVER SEEN. THE NATIONAL GUARD WAS WONDERFUL. THEY HELPED IN SO MANY WAYS. THEY HELPED SO MANY PEOPLE. AS TIME WENT ON WE NOTICED THE WATER HAD STOPPED RISING, WE KEPT A CLOSE EYE ON IT AND DECIDED TO STAY. OF COURSE WE DIDN'T GET MUCH SLEEP THAT NIGHT, WE TOOK TURNS WITH THE REMAINING PEOPLE IN OUR HOME WATCHING THE WATER.

THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS WERE HARD BECAUSE THE WATERS WENT DOWN AND PEOPLE WERE SURVEYING THE DAMAGE. THERE WERE 52 HOMES IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD DESTROYED COMPLETELY. THE WORST THING WAS NO ONE HAD FLOOD INSURANCE. THEY WERE ALL DEVASTATED. AREA CHURCHES STARTED COMING INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD BRINGING FOOD, CLOTHES, AND MANPOWER TO HELP. WE ALL PULLED TOGETHER TO TRY TO DO WHAT WE COULD. IT TOUCHED MY HEART TO SEE THE WHOLE COUNTRY SENDING THINGS TO MY NEIGHBORS AND EVERYONE IN EASTERN N.C.

A YEAR HAS PASSED NOW AND MOST OF THE HOMES IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD HAVE BEEN REBUILT AND THE PEOPLE ARE JUST GETTING BACK INTO THEM. SOME OF THE HOMES ARE UP FOR SELL AND SOME HAVE ALREADY BEEN SOLD. THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT WILL NEVER BE THE SAME, A LOT OF BUSINESSES HAD TO SHUT DOWN FOR GOOD. ONE OF OUR MALLS WAS COMPLETELY UNDER WATER. TO THIS DATE IT STANDS EMPTY.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL THOSE PEOPLE THAT HELPED, FROM THE PEOPLE THAT DONATED CLOTHES AND FURNITURE TO THE PEOPLE THAT CAME AND WORKED. THANKS TO ANYONE THAT DID ANYTHING.. I ESPECIALLY WANT TO THANK THE NATIONAL GUARD, FEMA, AND THE RED CROSS. THANKS FOR ALL YOUR PRAYERS AND MAY GOD BLESS!!!!





These are just some of the pictures taken the day after the flood in my neighborhood. The waters rose higher than is in the pictures.

It has been 2 yrs. now and I am updating the info. pertaining to the flood of the century. They began last week to down the homes that were under water due to the flood. They will be tearing a number of those homes down and clearing the lots which will never again have homes on them due to the rezoning of the flood plains. This has been a very sad and horrible experience for all of the residents of our neighborhood especially the owners of the homes that were destroyed. My heart goes out to all of my neighbors that lost their homes... I love you guys and wish you the best in life..


Try some of these links:


[info on flooded vehicles here](#)
[check out the weather](#)
[a link to some flood pictures and info](#)




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 **W&MD**
Height: **5'4"** Weight: **140 lbs.** [GO](#)


Donna Coleman


Rocky Mevnt

Downloaded 8.10.01

MEMORIES
Of
HURRICANE
FLOYD
BY
Naomi Brown

Naomi Brown



Rocky Mount, North Carolina
27801

Why an urge to write memories of Hurricane Floyd, the Flood of the century?

On Sunday, September 19th, I walked as far as I possibly could around the ^bBlocks of Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Atlantic Avenues. The water had covered over half of the seventh hundredth blocks. Many individuals were also viewing the areas of these avenues, ~~Some were~~ ⁱⁿ on boats, others in automobiles as far as they could drive. It was all unbelievable. Those who were not flooded out were standing and looking in amazement. A gentleman by the name of Mr. Raymond Lucas was also observing a house that he owned on the six hundredth block of Atlantic Avenue. He stated that no one living has ever experienced anything like this and if they had they were ^{old} to remember or relate it.

I instantly thought that I could write about this flood and leave it in the libraries for generations unborn. It became a challenge for me. I have been most excited to record this information ⁱⁿ on day by day accounts.

I have kept all of my local newspapers, taken hundreds of photographs, ^{and} interviewed several individuals ^{whom} that you will read about in my account, ^{and} that is being recorded.

In the book of Esther 2:15 it reads, "And Esther obtained favor in the sights of all them that looked upon her," Who knew that God would want me to record these accounts in such a time as this. The challenge gives me ^a go-ahead and a joy as I write.

"Memories of Hurricane Floyd"

Day I

This was
September 15th ~~A~~ day primarily spent in preparation for Hurricane Floyd *just* as we *done following warnings of hurricanes.*
~~had been warned from previous floods and this one.~~ No one became too excited. A few necessities of canned goods, bread, batteries, and the like were purchased. No one became too cautious of the storm or flood that it turned out to be. (even though it was much talked about). The wind blew fiercely and violently for much of the night.

The next morning my neighbor was unable to go to work in Ahoskie, North Carolina. He informed me that highways 95, 301, *and* 64 North and South were closed.

Day ~~1~~ 2

September 16th On Thursday, September 16th, echoes came that water was rising in the park next to our residences on Carolina Avenue. My neighbor phoned me and asked if I saw the water. *// //* I replied, yes, with not much concern because I had witnessed water rise there before from Flood "Fran" and other floods. Then, my neighbor called me and asked if I *was* ~~were~~ all right, and I replied *// //* yes. She then informed me that she had sent down to have Dorothy and her husband evacuated. I said, "this must be serious."
As the day of September 16th progressed, I heard many had gone to shelters near

their neighborhoods. I began to listen to news reports on television and radio but not on cable. Cable programming never stopped playing during the storm.

I sort of stayed quiet during the day. That afternoon, my cousin from the Gloverdale Community called me and stated that she and her daughter had to be evacuated.

They were taken away in a boat. I asked where they were. She proceeded to tell me that she was with some church friends on Ashland Avenue. I inquired, "Did you panic?" She replied, "A little bit." I obtained all the information that she could give me and I told her I couldn't come to get them that night, but I would be there the next morning, which would be Friday, September 17th.

Day ~~17~~ 3

September 17 - I arose early in the morning, prayed and walked around the block of Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Atlantic Avenues. The water was over half-way of each of the 7 hundred blocks of these Avenues. That's when I saw Mr. Alton Barr near his avenue, Atlantic. He told me he had seen them take Mrs. Grimes away in a boat. I really began to get a funny feeling and realized this was serious. I ~~arrived~~ ^{went} back home and proceeded to drive to get my cousins at 116 Ashland Avenue. My neighbor informed me that Fairview road was closed. He said you probably can cross East Grand Avenue and make your way over to Glendale Avenue and find Ashland Avenue. I followed instructions and went over to Tarboro Street made a left turn on to Glendale Avenue ^{and} asked different individuals where Ashland Avenue was. Their directions were ^{clear} good and I found the Avenue without difficulty.

My cousin ^{were} ~~was~~ there and many other individuals. Her expression was one of jubilation when she saw me. ~~We~~ ^{she?} thanked everyone for shelter and departed. We arrived at my home ~~ate~~ breakfast and shared what they felt like sharing or discussing. This was Friday, September 17th and we still had no knowledge of my dear friend, Mrs. Grimes', whereabouts. Her daughter had called ^{Pastor} Rev. White, her pastor. He came by 731 Carolina Avenue after her daughter had called from Augusta, Georgia. I informed him ^{that} I had tried the shelter, police, and neighbors to no avail. By the time Pastor White had reached his office at Mt. Zion, Mrs. Bessie Dean's daughter, Rachel ^{had} called and informed me Mrs. Grimes was with her mother at 1000 Rosewood Avenue. She was fine and asked that ^{had} ~~she~~ ^{Rachel} call me. We passed this word on to Pastor White. He in turn informed her daughter. As the day progressed, ~~People~~ [?] came down to see the water and how it had reached the entire area ~~as it had just like the Hudson river~~. Photographers came repeatedly. Joyce, my cousin, and her daughter were showing signs of anxiety as to what was taking place at their home. We walked around the blocks near 731 Carolina Avenue and photographed pictures of the flood that was continuing to proceed from [?] rivers, lakes, and creeks. Joyce's husband drives a long-distance truck. He was trying to make his way to Rocky Mount from Chicago. He was experiencing difficulty en route to Rocky Mount and her not knowing his whereabouts gave her more concern. Ernest, her husband called ^{at} approximately 7:45 p.m. on Friday, September 17th from the hauling alley area of Rocky Mount. ^{From} ~~That~~ ^{it} distance took him more than an hour to ^{get} ~~get~~ to Carolina Avenue. When he arrived, there was another family reunion.

Day 4

September 18th After breakfast, we set out to visit Mrs. Grimes. Upon our arrival she began to cry I said, "I am going right back if you greet us this way as blessed as you are." Are you not glad to see us? I asked. She was naturally expressing joy to see us. Then my cousin like so many others was determined to go to his home on his four-wheeled drive and he did. Nothing was damaged at 1900 Cloverdale. Another celebration. I sprained my foot while being helped from his truck. I was hampered for a month or more; yet I kept on moving. At this point on Sunday the 19th of September, I decided to record some of this history.

Day 5

September 19 A Mr. Raymond Lucas who owned property on Atlantic Avenue was checking on his house on this particular Sunday and inspired me to write. I am very enthusiastic about the challenge and it has gone well. I have photographed hundreds of flood sites and interviewed many people and plans are to share this with family within a year if all goes well. This experience has been one that will always remain with me. The helicopters were flying over our homes and seemingly into the waters surrounding the neighborhood. Nightly it was a frightening experience. I slept only two hours per night for three weeks or more. Curfew was enforced in the City of Rocky Mount from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. You couldn't drink the water other than the

water that was given to you or bought.

~~You were asked to take tetanus shots for all who had been exposed to the flood.~~

Stores opened at certain times during the day. Even though you may not have experienced physical damage ^{to your home} your heart went out to those who did ~~endure such~~.

For the next two weeks everything became ^{worse} ~~worsy~~ instead of better.

Day 6 - September 20, 1999 - no travel was permitted through 95, 301, or 64 North or South for ~~at least~~ two weeks or more. Shelters were set up at various locations for people to come and receive food and other needed supplies. Rocky Mount, Wilson, Tarboro, Greenville, and Princeville, North Carolina were the target cities and towns for flood relief. Governor James B. Hunt declared North Carolina a disaster state. We were losing lives daily and discovering bodies daily. It all ^{seemed} ~~sounded~~ unbelievable. Accounts were given today that 13 were dead and many more missing.

Day 7 - September 21st - Princeville, North Carolina

President Clinton, his chiefs of staff, Governor Hunt and his staff along with North Carolina Representatives talked with Tarboro residents at Martin Middle School emergency shelter in Tarboro. President Clinton promised that Uncle Sam would help and stick with them through it all.

September 30th - Jesse Jackson came with a message of hope. He came with Mayor Fredrick Turnage to speak at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Rocky Mount after his visit in Tarboro. Vice-President, Al Gore and ^{Senator} ~~Congressman~~ John Edwards visited area churches and gave words of encouragement. All area public schools were

closed for two weeks. North Carolina Wesleyan and East Carolina University were closed for two weeks also. Fema opened three centers for assistance.

4 days later - Day 11 -

On September 25th, teams were ready to recover bodies. The flooded town of Princeville was sealed off from the media. Officials refused to confirm or deny that the bodies of more drowning victims had been discovered. Nash-Rocky Mount Schools reopened Tuesday, September 28th, with an hour delay. Many of the schools were asked to ease in with patience, counselors, and adjustments where needed. Area pastors try to explain "Why?" Rev. Jody Wright of Lakeside Baptist Church in Rocky Mount says, "Hurricane victims will be tempted to ask God ^{W. Hay} ~~What~~ have ~~they~~ done to deserve this punishment".

Day 12 - Today, September 26th ^{reverend} ~~He~~ assured ~~them~~, his congregation that they had done nothing wrong. Each day something good would come ^{26th} this 26th of September; Good News: Water on in Tarboro. ? Late

Day 20 - October 4th 1999, Braswell Library ^{was} back in business. Families ^{ed} open their homes and hearts. Hurricanes make heroes. The Carleton House Restaurant served as a much needed place for ~~flood~~ victims and local residents. The motel was unable to accommodate many individuals for a few days or until conditions improved. Tarrytown Mall was completely destroyed or covered with water. The K & W cafeteria could no longer provide for ^{the} many hundreds of customers who dined there daily and for many, this was their only meal for the day. They were invited to go to the K & W Cafeterias in Wilson or Raleigh for this service.

The Mall lost many other stores: Montgomery Ward, Goody's, Dollar General Stores and Auto Express to name a few. The charter school was also housed at Tarrytown Mall, ^{It, too, was ruined.} 2320 Sunset Avenue, Rocky Mount, North Carolina. The Christian Bookstore on Sunset Avenue was also destroyed. The Advance Auto Parts suffered loss, as did businesses, ^{lost and many others not named.} One could drive through before the mall area was sealed off. Candlewood in Rocky Mount received minor damages during Hurricane Floyd. Lincoln Park, Cloverdale and some of the other areas did not fair as well or lost everything. By Tuesday, September 27th, there were three hundred disaster homes placed at Industrial park, Fountain's ^{Near CORRECTIONAL CENTER} convention center for victims of the Flood for an 18-month period or aid for recovery.

not certain
of the
official
name of
what was
Fountain
Correctional
School -
It now
houses
women
prisoners
I think
it's
F. Correctional
Center

(DAY 15-) On Wednesday, September 29th, exactly two weeks ^{from} to the date of terrible Flood ^{had passed.} Floyd, The media ^{one could foresee} well warned the public of the hurricane but no ^{knowledge of the} terrible Flood. Everyone at the Carleton House seems happy to be alive and well on this particular day.

Mrs. Ruth Walker who worked at the Carleton House for many years as manager of catering parties and conventions, [?] she was joined by Mrs. Kelley whose late husband was Father Kelley, [?] Priest in charge of Christ Church of the Episcopal, 601 Fair View Road. Two others friends joined them. Mrs. Alice Van Der Yeer, 305 E. 11th Street, Washington, North Carolina 27889, [?] She was boarding the Amtrak train to Middlesex, New Jersey ^{near Plainfield, N.J.} She now lives in Little Washington, North Carolina. She was attending her brother's funeral on Saturday the 2nd of October in Middlesex, N.J. The encounter with Clientele that day was most memorable and enjoyable.

not clear

rework
this -
not clear

? call name & client this name
Gleno Horne
Princeville: *Gleno Horne* of Hunter-Odom Funeral Services supplied this information. There were two hundred and twenty-four bodies to be identified. One hundred and seventy-six were identified by families. Forty-eight were not identified. Those ^{un-}bodies ~~not~~ identified were buried in a mass grave.

The homes with an X on them indicated that the homes had been searched and there were no bodies ~~were~~ found in them. *the X did indicate* (Not that the homes had been condemned).

There were other homes in Princeville that were not (X) ~~exed~~ out. There were one or two homes in the area that were viewed ~~there~~ as homes. ~~However, there was debris~~ *in* and some conditions that would sadden your heart. On another occasion, Princeville had decided not to be bought out. The town showed hope and is fast being re-built.

The school was being rebuilt and other signs of progress were made. All didn't seem to be lost. U.S. Representative, Eva Clayton brought her District and Washington staff members to Rocky Mount for a two-day gathering with state officials to discuss the progress of Flood Relief in Eastern North Carolina. She stated that "Just building things back to where they were doesn't solve the underlying problems."

check
ago?
Princeville Montessori School, which was going through some problems before the flood is still facing problems under its present constructions. In 1958, 41 years passed, Princeville was under water. U.S. Representative L.H. Fountain and his right-hand administrative assistant, Ruth Ballard secured federal funds to build protective dikes along the south of the river in Princeville.

January 11th - 2000

Many facts ^{about} of Princeville are still in the news of ^{aid} Aid from ^{various} sources.

Prince helps Princeville, a pop-rock music celebrity donates \$37,000 to buy building materials. The pop-rock music celebrity responds after reading articles about the devastation in this flood ravaged town of 2100 residents. The music artist formerly known as Prince wanted no publicity about his \$37,000 gift to Princeville.

Princeville was incorporated by blacks in 1865 on what was known as Freedom Hill,

The first town to be known of for blacks in history.

Punctuation ??

Texas



CAROLINA CONFERENCE
of Seventh-day Adventists

MS
80

P.O. BOX 560339 CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA 28256-0339 (704) 596-3200 FAX (704) 596-5775

April 11 '01

Dear Carol,

I trust your "Special Project"
is coming along for you.

Enclosed is the first, of I hope, many
copies of chapters for your book. It is
a neat project for which you need to
be commended.

I hope to be sending you more

Mike Ortel

DISTANT NEIGHBORS

When I walked into the warehouse that first afternoon, I intended to spend a few hours helping in any way I could. My son and several of his high school classmates had volunteered there several times and he told me about the sorting and re-packing operation going on. That afternoon, I could not have imagined that those few hours would turn into five or six weeks, which will remain some of the most memorable of my life.

The warehouse was located in the old Lowe's building at the corner of Falls and Hunter Hill Roads. It would later be moved to the abandoned Paragon building on English Road and two smaller warehouses on Boone and Peachtree Streets. It appeared to be a simple repackaging operation. Donated products came in one end, were sorted into several logical categories, and were re-boxed for distribution locations, such as churches and community centers. In retrospect, it's hard to remember how my thought process advanced in real time. In the first few days I never imagined how large an operation it would be. No one knew at the time it would become, according to FEMA, the largest operation of it's kind in the history of U.S. disasters.

I arrived at the Lowe's operation about a week after it was started. The building was relatively empty and the majority of activity centered around a sorting area made up of a dozen or so large plywood and cinderblock tables. Local volunteers manned the sorting area and as goods were unloaded from trucks the enthusiastic volunteers moved them to the appropriate table and began their work. When enough boxes of like items, canned vegetables as an example, were assembled they would be moved into a storage area to wait for shipment.

I should probably interject that the Seventh-Day Adventist Church's Disaster Response Team was managing the operation, called a Multi-Agency Donations Warehouse. This remarkable group of people is prepared for handling emergencies and natural disasters. Teams are pre-trained and have processes in place to move quickly. I learned little by little, over the course of my time with them, how well organized they are and what incredible contacts and support they have from the American Red Cross, FEMA and State Emergency Management officials. They had an office established at the warehouse and as needs arose they got on the phone and set about finding what was needed. And they did it with amazing success.

After a few days passed the once half-empty Lowe's building started to fill. Much more product was coming in than going out. Local volunteers sometimes numbered in the hundreds and they were getting very good at their jobs. Schools and many businesses were still closed so many volunteers were coming on a regular basis. When enough volunteers were in place, a floor-loaded tractor-trailer could be unloaded, sorted and warehoused in less than an hour. However, the locations that would eventually distribute the products to those in need weren't yet as organized. Tractor-trailer loads were coming in and pickup trucks were going out. As the building filled, product began to fill the work

areas and it became more and more difficult for volunteers to work efficiently. It had been about a week and a half since the flood and groups from all over the nation had had an opportunity to collect food, clothing and supplies and ship them to us. On our end; however, the devastating impact of Floyd had slowed the establishment of distribution sites.

Just in the nick of time, two events occurred which saved the day. Additional warehouse space was secured in the vacant Paragon warehouse on English Road and a group of young volunteers from AmeriCorps arrived. It is impossible to overstate the importance of the warehouse space – it literally permitted the continuation of operations. But the real blessing – the answer to prayers – was in the form of a small group of men and women dressed in gray T-shirts and black cargo pants.

The vast majority of volunteers were local folks, like me. But I was especially touched by the number of volunteers who traveled hundreds and in some cases more than a thousand miles to help. It's not that our local volunteers weren't important, in fact they provided the majority of labor used in fulfilling the objectives of the effort. But we were impacted personally by Floyd. None of us was untouched by the devastation. We all had family or friends or neighbors, or perhaps ourselves, affected by Floyd. We were truly a community embraced in need during that time. But when the long days were over we went home to our families. We saw our kids or parents or spouses. We jumped in our own showers and slept in our own beds. We ate many of our meals in our own houses.

Those who traveled miles to help us had no such luxuries. The lucky ones had motel rooms, but many slept in tents and trucks and campers and dorm rooms. They used "borrowed" showers. They went weeks without seeing their families. Some worked 12-hour days and finished their evenings at a coin-operated laundry. Most of their meals came in boxes or bags and were eaten in the warehouse.

Much will be written about the hard work of local volunteers, as it should be. In no way do I wish to diminish their contributions, but I do think it would be proper to mention just a few examples of the many who came to us from great distances. They had no dog in the fight but they came anyway.

Representatives of the Adventist Community Services Disaster Relief Team were present throughout the relief effort. Literally dozens of people from this agency came to Rocky Mount to assist, some from as far away as Michigan. As I mentioned earlier, the initial teams that established the Lowe's operation were from this group. But dozens followed and their presence, training and experience was the foundation upon which the operation was built. When one group had to leave another was there to replace them.

The first group of AmeriCorps volunteers, those I mentioned earlier, filled a huge void in the organizational ranks. Each was assigned to an area and told the objective and their responsibilities. For the duration of their stay, they provided the continuity necessary to maintain order and organize the hundreds of volunteers who were arriving daily. The

groups members were from Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida, New York, Arizona and Iowa. In their early twenties, most were through or nearly through college, and they had given up a couple years of their lives to work in service to America. We were fortunate because this group had already served a stint with AmeriCorps and re-upped to become team leaders. They were battle tested and, quite literally, the cream of the crop. They worked 12-hour days, seven days a week. They worked when they were sick. They worked through blisters and aches and frustrations. They arrived each morning with a positive attitude and left each night exhausted. In all, about three dozen AmeriCorps volunteers worked at the facility, many in the later stages, but none had more impact than the first crew.

The event that caused the most attention and fanfare was a convoy of 51 trucks of product collected at a NASCAR race. They arrived together with a police escort at about 1:00 p.m. on a Wednesday. But what was even more impressive, and more welcomed, was the convoy of cars and trucks full of volunteers – several hundred from all over the state – that came with them. They hit the warehouse with the trucks and in less than seven hours all the trucks were unloaded! When forklifts weren't available they formed human lines, which sometimes stretched close to a hundred feet, and moved the product directly from the trucks to the sorting line.

A smaller group that made a lasting impression came a great distance to help. A mother and her three sons traveled from Maine and stayed about 2 weeks. To say a mother and her sons really doesn't paint the picture. It was a mother and her three *bulls of sons*. During their entire time here they were among the first to arrive and the last to leave every day. They drove trucks and forklifts but generally spent hour after hour, day upon day, doing the heavy work of unloading one truck after another. While the sons worked in trucks and the warehouse, their mother worked all day on the sorting line. The day they left I cried – and looked for 16 people to replace them.

Another man and his wife stayed a week in a tent under a shelter attached to the back of the warehouse. Every morning, as the first sounds of the operation cracked the dawn, they emerged from the tent to work at whatever task awaited. They worked until the operation quieted for the night and then retired to their tent to mend their wounds and prepare for the next busy day.

One Sunday evening, just a few minutes before the warehouse was closed for the night, a small tow truck – not much bigger than a standard pickup – backed up to the dock. A young couple climbed out of the cramped cab with two adorable little towheaded boys. Four boxes were tied to the bed on the back of the truck. While I helped the man untie the ropes he mentioned they had driven from Nashville. I have to admit to a bit of frustration that they had come so late in the day. We pulled the few boxes off the truck and talked a bit. At some point in the conversation I found out they had indeed come from Nashville – *but the one in Tennessee!* They had driven all day, jammed in a tiny old truck to bring four boxes to us.

There are innumerable stories of drivers who, on their days off, brought trucks of product hundreds of miles, unloaded it, and returned home the next day. There were sometimes buses of volunteers from other areas in the state who made the trip to work for a day. There were countless people who traveled many miles and worked unnoticed in the throngs and left without fanfare. In some cases the only ones who knew their names were those working right beside them.

Volumes could be written about the efforts and sacrifices of our local volunteers, but I'll leave that to others. Posterity should remember how large our community became when we were in trouble. We should not forget, that for a brief time after the flood, our neighbors weren't just the people next door, or down the street or on the next block. Our neighbors were from Maine and New York and Pennsylvania. They were from the Midwest – Ohio and Michigan and Kentucky. They came from the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina and Virginia and West Virginia. They drove from Alabama and Florida. None of them was forced to leave their families and comforts behind to come to our aid. But they did. And that is what I'll most remember.

Gary Heschl

Who Would Imagine

MS
81

My name is George. I'm just a plain, simple person. I would like to tell you about something that changed the way I saw many things in my life. This thing was a very bad flood that came to Nashville, North carolina. It was something that this little town had never seen or thought would happen. Sometimes I think things happen for a reason, but we just do not know why.

The floodwater invaded the Winwood Community where I live. The waters came in very quickly, so much was lost. When the waters settled back in their banks, the homes were a mess. People did not know what to do or how to get started. However, you know we all have friends that we do not even know.

There were churches who came to be in our circle of friends that I never even paid any mind to. I knew they were churches, but nothing else did I know about them. The flood waters came, and so many of the people in the United Methodist and United Baptist of Nashville helped us out. Pastor Allen and Pastor Douglas, two men that I had never seen in my life, came out to help our community

There were lots of churches that helped through these two churches. Who would imagine that people that I would just pass by on the street, and probably not even wave to, are now very close to me? Pastor Allen and Pastor Douglas helped people they never even had known. This is something that I would never have dreamed of. People helping just because there was a need. This really changed my outlook on life itself.

I now know that there are still some people in this old world who will reach out their hands, not for money or profit, but only to help give a hand to hurting people. And the two churches that I used to just pass by: I now look to see if there are some of my friends standing outside so that we can exchange a wave and a smile. Sometimes I even join them in worship. Who would have imagined that they would be "a friend indeed" when we were in need?

George Jefferies

■ ■ ■ ■ ■, Nashville, NC ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

A Time To Act

MS
82

The flood water was rising out of the once peaceful pond in the Winwood community. It had started from the dead-end road and was moving forward. There were three homes already flooded and more were sure to be.

A woman named Ann came up that dead-end road screaming that her mother (Alperata) and her niece (Loretta) were in a house across that rising flood water on the other side of the neighborhood. With the water now waist-high, there seemed to be no way to get to them. Ann was still screaming and crying for someone to save her family.

Someone got a boat from somewhere, but no one knew how to handle it. Three men stepped up (Tim, Ronnie, and George) to try a rescue. We tried to row the boat, but the current was too strong. The only way was to walk across through the water, pulling the boat. We knew there was a big pond on one side and a very deep ditch on the other. With the water so high, it was not possible to tell where either was.

Tim got a stick and walked with it in front of him, feeling his way, while Ronnie and I followed with the boat. The only thing we had to guide us were the trees across the water in the other yards. With the trees as our guide, we went forward. Slowly we walked, following each other closely through the water. The water got higher and higher as we walked along.

Getting to the first home, we saw people coming out that we didn't even know were still there: a family of four (mother, father and two children). They got in the boat and we headed towards Ann's family. When we got to the house, Alperata was in a wheel chair with water up to her waist. Her handicapped niece (Lorretta) was standing there unable to help Alperata or herself. We lifted both of them into the boat and headed back.

Now the water was very high, and the only thing we had for a guide were the people on the other side of the rising water standing watching us from the, as yet, uncovered part of the road. The walk back through the water was very bad. We knew the people on the road were pulling for us. With them as our guide, we got back to dry land with our neighbors in the boat. It was a wonderful feeling to have been able to do this.

There was one thing none of us even thought of while we were in that deep flood water. Not a one of us knew how to swim!

George Jefferies

██████████, Nashville, NC

██████████

Winwood News Letter
"Remember When"

Remember When: we all have seen people on television in floods and thought how bad it must be? Well, now we don't have to wonder what it is like, because we know first hand that it is very bad.

Remember When: the flood waters came our way, all we had was each other for awhile? Neighbor reached out to help neighbor. I know we lost a lot of material things, but we had each other.

Remember When: Thanksgiving and Christmas came and things were so upsidedown for us? We were at home, but in small trailers. But we still had each other.

Remember When: all the help came in from some people we didn't even know? They were helping us tear out and rebuild our houses to turn them back into the place we called home. And we still had each other.

Remember When: some homes were repaired and the trailers began to leave? That was a great day! Your neighbor would look at you and smile, because, still, we had each other.

Now a whole year has passed since the floodwaters came through. There are still come things that were lost and that will never come back. But let's remember all the things that we were given and all the help from new friends who came to us. Let's think about where we were then and where we are now and be ever thankful. God has seen us through some very bad times. He gave us the chance to start over and rebuild. He let us know that there are still people willing to help their fellow man.

Step next door to your neighbor on both sides of you and shake each other's hand, remembering all the people and churches that gave us help in our time of need. Some people gave money, some gave physical help, and some gave a smile of encouragement and a rub on the back, saying "Things will get better." Some got down on their knees and put us in their prayers. All these things we needed. Aren't we greatful that we still have each other?

Merry Christmas
And
A
Happy New Year!

George Jefferies

██████████, Nashville, NC ██████████

The Drying Out Was So Sad

My name is Alice. Yes, I remember the flood coming on down the street toward our house. Later on I asked Jr., "Is the water still coming down the street?" He said, "No, Mom, it is backing up." I said, "Praise the good Lord." So the flood did not reach our home, but we helped some of them that were in it, and we did not mind it at all. We did all that we could to help the people in Nashville who could not get to Rocky Mount; and there were people in Rocky Mount who could not get home to Nashville, too. What a time it was, but it drewed us closer together. Praise the Lord! It looked so bad to see people's clothes hanging out on the bushes and on clothes lines to dry them out: bed matters and furniture and all kinds of things, trying to dry them out. I could not help from crying and praying for these people. I am George (Jr.) Jefferies' mother, Alice Jefferies.

██████████, Nashville, NC ██████████

Nancy and Lewis Thorp's flood

In spite of similar circumstances it seems that everyone's flood story is different. Ours started a month before the flood when we began an addition to our house and it continues until this day. Through it all we see the fine hand of the Lord making the best of a bad situation.

The addition to the house caused us to move to a bedroom down the hall, to hang our clothes on tall rolling racks and to pack our pictures and records into large plastic bins with waterproof lids. Instead of storing these downstairs with every thing else we put them under beds upstairs. When the water came up they were available and portable.

Our home is built into the side of a hill so we live upstairs and have garages, storage and a play room downstairs. One corner of it rests in the floodplain and, even though in 21 years the water had never touched the house, we were classified in A11 – a high risk flood area. The flood, which came with Floyd, put 15 feet of water in the house, two feet in the upstairs area.

On the Wednesday of Sept 15, 1999 we had just come home from a trip and were unpacking. The storm promised for that night was one of many we had weathered in this house, occasionally losing a tree but never troubled with water damage. We taped up the windows and retreated to our downstairs room to ride out the night. I was haunted by a persisting feeling that I should stay dressed and awake and watch for water, which I did.

Around midnight, as the storm blew in typical fashion outside I realized that the rising water from Stoney creek was threatening our motor home parked at the end of the drive. I put on foul weather gear and went outside at the peak of the storm and proceeded to back the motor home up the inclined drive in spite of a canopy, which covered it. Enroute a pine tree fell with a loud crack about two feet away from us and where I had been three minutes earlier. Then I realized that the motor home could be used as storage if I took the canopy off – of course in the fierce wind it hung on the air conditioner – so I climbed up to the roof and freed it in winds recorded at 70 knots. It was then that I realized that our cars were at risk so I backed both of them up the drive to safety and went back to our safe room where I collapsed. A short time later Nancy roused me to announce that water was coming into the room so we proceeded to stack the furniture and take portable objects of value upstairs. Within about an hour it was evident that we would be trapped in the downstairs room so we went upstairs. I noticed

the water on the second step as we started and the fifth step by the time we reached the top , not a minute too soon.

Upstairs we started the same procedure of stacking furniture and I called neighbors Fred Dunston and Dennis Culpepper to come over and help. By this time the water was knee deep in the front yard . Our kayak floated by so I captured it and we began transporting things to the motor home high and dry outside. By noon on Thursday we had done as much as we could inside and the water was covering our hardwood floors and running into the furnace vents. Somehow Nancy and I had rolled and lifted a large carpet and put it on top of a table. It survived and next day two big men could not lift it. Finally we were able to sit down on the sofa and watch the final destruction of our home as water came up to knee height. Then we gathered boards and paddled in the kayak to the "Candlewood Beach" about two feet from the street out front. By this time there was a swift current and chest deep water in our front yard , difficult if not dangerous to wade.

For four days we lived with the Culpeppers and with a multitude of generous neighbors went back into the house as the water receded' Carpets were cut into three foot strips and hauled out to the street, things were declared useless as the mountain out by the road grew larger. As the water went down and access to the outside world improved our family gathered and we began what would become a 15 month effort to restore order and get back into the house.

We cannot say enough about the Candlewood neighborhood. All of us were trapped , men could not go to work and children were out of school. Teens gathered and helped us pack fragile china and books, the "dry " neighbors had flood dinners every night to which we went as we were , ate, and came back to work. As the roads opened and others could come we had the church people and friends from all over join in . Our family gathered and pitched in. Lots of furniture and other things were discarded because they were covered with mud. In retrospect there was just not enough time or energy to sort things out so tools and furniture went out because they were muddy. The interior of the house was a disaster. Downstairs where the water filled to the ceilings everything was covered with the white mud of wallboard dissolved . Glued furniture sat in heaps of boards where it had come apart. The storage room was a cavern of broken furniture covered with mud and the garage had leaking gas cans and boxes floating around and out the doors as they were opened. Upstairs, where water came to almost two feet there was a fine covering of white silt. A massive dresser had floated and overturned in the bedroom. A pair of Nancy's shoes had floated together from the bedroom to

the living room and a plastic box of genealogy records, sans top, had floated around as dry as a bone.

Fortunately we had a builder under contract and he appeared next day with his crew to begin the long process of restoration. Restoration started with destruction – the wall were cleared of dry wall to four feet and the insulation sent up to the growing mountain on the street. Eventually the hard wood floors joined them and we spent a couple of months drying the house.

Dehumidifiers , three of them, required 13 pints of water be removed from each of them twice a day. A man was hired for five days to blow hot air trough all of the cabinets and places where water was trapped. The hollow doors each had a puddle of water under them for days and were eventually discarded. All of this required daily supervision and at least two trips over five miles from the apartment. When winter came on the heaters required kerosene twice a day.

Furniture storage was arranged by a friend, Bob Jones – first in his garage and then in a warehouse which his company rented. From these areas we began the refinishing and clean up which was not complete 15 months later when it was time to move back'

Restoring our home was done in a climate in which the subcontractors were grossly overworked, undependable, hiring inexperienced help and frequently hostile. We had to fire at least two of them and were forced to tolerate others who should have been fired. Nancy was having to supervise a lot of this and try to get a good result. The kitchen cabinets had to be recovered, the ^{new} floors resanded and restrained.

Early on Dick Bethune came by with a list of apartments and we chose one sight unseen at Bridgewood. I did not even know where it was located.

Nancy chose furniture to be moved and we moved in. Papers and money changed hands several days later. The apartment was a pleasant part of this adventure – comfortable and cozy with wonderful neighbors.

Finally we moved back to the house in three moves – from Bob's garage, the Rocky Mount Mills office and the warehouse. On one day all of our children and their families came to help.

Now the house is new, we are back into it, not completely settled but very pleased with the result . Any day now we expect an offer from the city for buyout, which if accepted, would cause us to find another house and this new one would be destroyed'

Hurricane Floyd, which started , for us, one month before the storm, is not over yet.

Lafayette Circle's Night of the Flood

During the night of September 16th, 1999 frequently I awoke from my sleep listening for sounds of Hurricane Floyd but heard nothing except a rather hard, continuous rain. Each time I awoke I was very optimistic that we were going to get off easy this time around in comparison to Hurricane Fran because I could hear no wind nor could I hear anything falling like limbs and trees as I had heard continuously during the night of Fran's arrival. However, around 4:00 AM Michael, my husband, asked to me to walk out on our front porch and take a look at the water running down the street. I told him that I thought it looked OK (but I *am* a good bit nearsighted). He informed me that before he went to bed he had moved my Suburban and his pick-up truck out of our driveway and onto the street in front of our house where they would be less likely to have a tree fall on them, and that he had *just* moved them on up the street a little further when he had become a little suspicious of what he thought was more water than usual in the street. (His company car had been parked in Wilmington earlier that day and remained there, thank goodness!). I walked to the back of the house which is a little bit lower than the front and took a good look around and everything appeared fine, so we agreed that we didn't think there was a problem. I went back to bed and within just a very few minutes Michael insisted that I go back out on the front porch and listen to Dr. Fish's dog barking down at the end of the Circle. I did and Michael commented that he knew that was not Duchess's normal bark. I agreed and we then could see that there was water standing in the street and that it appeared to be moving quite fast in the direction of our yard as well as up Lafayette Circle away from the river. Michael suggested that we should call our neighbors down below us on the Circle and alert them. Not realizing the seriousness of the situation, I hesitantly agreed (since it was the middle of the night). He was unable to get the call through to anyone except the Pierce's whose home was located directly across the street from us, and they seemed to think everything was OK at that moment. Within a few seconds Carlton returned to the phone and told Michael that they were indeed flooding. While Michael was on the phone with Carlton, Johnnie Harris (the daughter-in-law of Tom and Alma Harris who lived down at the end of the Circle) was frantically ringing our back doorbell. Ironically, Johnnie's family had been evacuated from their home near Wilmington, NC the day before so they were staying at Alma and Tom's house until the storm passed. When I opened the door she was soaking wet (which I thought was from the rain) and was extremely excited telling me that the water was coming and that we

needed to leave our house. I tried to calm her by telling her that we were fine and had no water in our house and for her family to come and stay with us. In her frantic state she failed to tell me that she along with her mother and father-in-law, her husband and teen-aged son had just swum out of the front door of her in-laws' house in water over her head against a horrific current. I left Johnnie at the door and proceeded to dash around my house looking for any signs of water seeping under the doors and to check on, Suzanna, our 6½-month-old baby who was sleeping in a porta-crib downstairs in our bedroom. Suzanna was sound asleep, and everything in the house appeared fine until I noticed a little water coming under the doors in our living room, dining room, and den which are located two steps down from the level of the rest of the first floor of the house. I then yelled the news to Michael and tried to find Johnnie but she was nowhere in sight. Michael seemed very concerned and was insistent that we may have to leave the house. I thought he was overreacting but knew that we must immediately prepare for leaving in case it was indeed necessary. (I could visualize a few inches of water in the house, but the thought of almost nine feet never entered my mind.) I then ran upstairs and woke up Nicholas, our 14 year-old son, and told him that there was water coming into the house, that we may have to leave and that he should grab a few things from downstairs and bring them upstairs. His clock read exactly 4:30 AM at that moment. I then ran back downstairs and yelled for Michael to get the oriental rug off the living room floor and Nicholas's portrait off the wall and take them upstairs and that I would gather as many baby necessities together for Suzanna as I could. As I was grabbing baby formula, baby food, baby bottles, apple juice, etc. while dashing back and forth from the kitchen to the bedroom to check on Suzanna, Nicholas came flying downstairs and snatched his *golf clubs*, first thing, from the laundry room to take upstairs (a truly dedicated golf lover!). I could feel the water quickly rising from my ankles up my legs and screamed to Nicholas to take Frisco, our little Jack Russell Terrier, out to the Suburban. Nicholas later told me that when he found her she was in the laundry room caught in a little current going round and round and was unable to swim herself out. I continued to throw as many baby necessities into tote bags as I possibly could while Michael and Nicholas grabbed as many small things as they could get their hands on and ran them upstairs (such as several framed family pictures off the walls for which I am so *very, very* thankful). By this point all three of us were becoming aware of the seriousness of the situation (I still had no idea of the amount of water that was going to come inside our house) and knew that we must soon leave, particularly with Michael's constant and persistent

command of "We gotta get out of here!". Our precious little Suzanna was wide awake at this time since all of the lights were on and since one of the three of us was constantly running in and out of the bedroom to check on her. She was on her tummy holding her head up intently watching all the commotion along with the fast rising water but not making a whimper or sound of any kind. As I stood with my back to her in above knee deep water hurriedly filling the diaper bag with diapers and wipes, Michael rushed into the room and saw that her crib had floated from the wall to the center of the room. She was still dry because the water had not quite risen as high as the mattress in her crib. He then shouted the final order of "We're getting out of here **NOW**!". He picked up Suzanna and tucked her under his raincoat, I picked up my jewelry box and handed it to Nicholas, and then loaded my arms and shoulders with the numerous bags I had just packed, and we headed to the door. On the way out, I waded into the family room to pick up my pocket book and the power went out. (I really was surprised that it had not gone out sooner.) It was the darkest darkness I had ever been in. I truly could see absolutely nothing. It was at that moment that I became aware of how strong the current was and at how loud the rushing water was. I yelled to Nicholas and he said he was right ahead of me and was OK. I waded on to the back door and walked out in waste deep water. I could see the lights from the Suburban up the street as I continued up our driveway. By now it was absolutely pouring rain sideways, the wind was blowing a gale, and the rushing water that was quickly drowning Lafayette Circle was so loud that it was extremely difficult to hear. I kept screaming for Michael and Nicholas and soon found them standing beside the Suburban. Michael yelled that Suzanna was fine and that Jessica Pierce, our 14-year-old neighbor across the street, was holding her inside the car. I got in on the front passenger side and found Johnnie Harris sitting in the driver's seat, her son, "T" and the entire Pierce family along with dear little Suzanna in the back. (Thank goodness for that car...a place to go to get out of the storm and a way to escape the remainder of the flood.) I immediately noticed that the digital clock read 4:45 AM. My goodness... what an incredible fifteen minutes we had just lived through!!!

Johnnie then informed me of the "overhead" depth of the water at the lower end of Lafayette Circle, of her family's "swim-out" escape, and of the most frightening news of all --- Stephanie and Cliff Hayworth and their three small children were stranded on the second floor of their house hoping to be rescued through an upstairs window and that 911 had already been called repeatedly. She went on to tell me that Dr. and Mrs. Fish were also stranded

on the second floor of their house and that the current was so incredibly strong that swimming out at that point was absolutely impossible. (All of this news came via cell phones. What did we use to do without them???) That was truly the moment that I realized the seriousness of the entire situation. I just couldn't believe what I was hearing. In my mind, strong currents were located in the oceans and in the rapids of huge rivers – not in Lafayette Circle!!! My mind was racing as to how we could rescue the Hayworths and the Fishes. I jumped out of the car to find Michael because I knew he would come up with some way. When I found him, he was already working on it. He was talking (or I should say yelling over the wind, rain, and river roar) to Gary Phillips, Stephanie's father, who at that moment had the Hayworths' on his cell phone. Michael tried to explain to me over Mother Nature's extremely loud competition of background noise that a john boat and one paddle had already been retrieved from the Pierce's backyard and that they were searching the area for another paddle because using one had proven to be completely unsuccessful. He also told me that the Fire Department had been called and were on the way. I jumped back in the car and called my parents to make sure that they were OK and to inform them of our situation. While I was talking to my mother, my father was listening on another phone in their house and heard the need for a second paddle. He apparently remembered that he had a one at his barn, so, unbeknown to me, he dropped the phone, flew to the barn, found the paddle, and took off for Lafayette Circle! In the meantime, the Fire Department arrived (without paddles) and inquired as to whom we knew that needed to be rescued. I told him who lived in each house on the Circle and that we only knew of the Hayworths and the Fishes' desperate need to be rescued. What we did *not* know was that Ida and Bill Stanley and Joe and Matt Smith were each stranded on the second floor of their homes, and, that most *horrific* of all, Jean and Jack Bishop were *hanging from a wobbly limb on a tree slightly above the quickly rising water out in their yard!* They had been forced to swim out of their one story house and climb the tree.

Michael insisted that I take Suzanna (who still had not made a whimper) and everyone else packed in the Suburban and leave West Haven because he was afraid that very soon trees would begin to fall. He assured me that he and Nicholas would not stay too much longer, but that they possibly may be of some help to rescue the Hayworths and the Fishes. I agreed reluctantly but felt very uncomfortable leaving not only my son and my husband standing there under those many tall, tall pine trees in the middle of a hurricane, but worst of all leaving those three small children

along with four adults (that I knew of) hanging out of their second floor windows amid such fast rising waters and strong winds and rain in total darkness. But... off we went to the Carleton House or the First Presbyterian Church or anywhere we could find to take our soaked bodies out of the horrendous weather and away from the Lafayette Circle disaster and to allow the remainder of the storm to pass. We were very fortunate to find three rooms available at the Carleton House which became our home for the next ten days.

An hour or so later, Michael appeared and told me that, thanks to a second paddle my father had brought from his barn, the Hayworths and the Fishes were being rescued by the men from the Fire Department in the little john boat that had been retrieved from the Pierce's backyard. I still cannot believe that my father actually "beat the flood" across the Falls Road bridge driving to Lafayette Circle. He took Nicholas back with him to stay at his house, and it was a number of nerve-racking hours before Michael and I were able to discover if they actually had made it back across the bridge. Naturally, we were separated from Nicholas for a number of days after that point because of all the flooded bridges between the Carleton House and my parents' house.

The Fire Department did indeed rescue the Hayworths, the Fishes, and the Stanleys from the second floor of their homes and the Bishops from the wobbly limb of the tree. Matt and Joe Smith were discovered standing on the roof of their home the following afternoon by a spectator trolling by in a small boat. Duchess (Dr. Fish's dog) was also found the following afternoon on a nearby street. Apparently her doghouse had floated above her fenced-in pen and she was then able to swim out and away to land. The Gatsises were the only ones who left their home shortly before the storm and the flood actually hit, and the Zalnecks were out of the country for the entire catastrophe.

Since none of us, with the exception of the Gatsises, were able to obtain building permits for the purpose of rebuilding our homes, the rest of us have relocated to other homes and are now waiting for FEMA closings on our Lafayette Circle homes or have already completed the FEMA buyout program. No matter where we reside today, all of us past residents of Lafayette Circle will certainly always share a special, unique neighborhood bond that we will carry with us for the rest of our lives.

Submitted by Anne Mosley, [REDACTED]

The Great Flood of the Century September 1999

Well, the Great Flood of the Century is not something we'll forget very soon. Residents in eastern N.C. experienced tremendous rain fall following hurricanes Dennis and Floyd totaling 27 inches. This amount of rain caused all rivers and tributaries in the area to flood like never in all of recorded history—other than in Noah's day, of course. I never dreamed that I'd live to experience such a disaster as this. It was terrible and very upsetting to helplessly watch the water rise around the house, cars and garage on Thursday, September 16. Not realizing that water had covered the whole area, we were shocked that the lake on which we lived had flooded. It never had flooded before. All night long of the 16th it was like a war zone over our place. We could see the helicopters airlifting people out of their homes. They kept zooming in on us because when the water level reached the wiring in both the cars, they shorted out and the emergency lights were flashing for hours. They thought we were signaling them to pick us up.

After a sleepless night, we were ready to be air-lifted like our neighbors. That was the only way out. Our neighbors, the Charles Threats who had checked on us often the day before, came in his boat and picked us up right off of our porch. He took us and our dog, Missy over to his warehouse across the lake. Missy was to stay on the second level with all the neighborhood dogs. She was not at all happy about that. Most of our neighbors who lived on the lake were airlifted from that area. As the helicopter hovered, we all became soaking wet. On the helicopter I was on there were eighteen people piled in just like cattle. It was an experience I won't forget soon.

It seems that the whole town knew that we had been stranded and air-lifted from our home. I told the church folks at prayer meeting that I had always wanted to see Rocky Mount from the air but not exactly this way. We were taken to buses which took us to shelters at churches in Tarboro. They gave us dry clothing and fed us lunch. All the volunteers were incredibly accommodating. We are very grateful for each person who so generously gave us help during this time of need. Finally we were able to reach our dear and faithful friends, the Blakes. Even though they were experiencing many difficulties on their farm including loss of power they came and retrieved us. We promised them that we'd stay only 3 days for like the old saying after 3 days the Scwells get like fish, we start to stink. As we promised, after 3 days we left and the Walkers and the Weeks kept us the next 6 days. These wonderful church friends will never know how much their hospitality meant to us during this time of homelessness. We are so blessed with them, our 3 dear children and their families, our other relatives and so many, many more who were so concerned about us. All our children and relatives live out of town. With all the problems with telephones they were frantic trying to get to us. They could see all over the news about the horrible things that were happening. We sincerely appreciate the generous help and love showed to us then and many weeks afterwards as we began to recover from this disaster.

We are just thankful to be alive and well, because so many lost their lives. So many people lost all their possessions. We lost much but compared to many we lost very little. The water didn't get into our new log house, thank the good Lord. While building our house I remember how I beefed and beefed the day I saw that the brick mason had added one more layer of concrete blocks to the foundation than I had wanted for my new log home. If it would have been the height I'd wanted we would have had water inside our 2 month old house. The water level had risen to the top step when we left our home the day after Floyd. So we didn't know for several days whether or not it was wet inside. That would have made us sick after my husband, Danny and I had worked so hard being the general contractors and doing a large portion of the work ourselves. A lot of sweat equity had gone into our home for a year. But we were happy campers when we found out that the inside of the house was dry.

We are so blessed with the many people who have helped us in numerous ways during this difficult time. Several folks from church came to help clean the yard and clear out the garage. We have felt God's love and presence throughout the whole ordeal. Many friends and family members were praying for us and calling to see how they could help. We were overwhelmed and very grateful for all of their concern.

After many days we were anxious to get back home and Missy was there to greet us. How long she had been there without food we don't know, she apparently swam back home. By Saturday, September 25 the power was on but we were without a phone for over a month. We are thankful for our cell phones. Just for two weeks we had flood

insurance to cover the structure of the house. We did have insurance on both of the cars that were lost. But you never get the amount that vehicles are worth to you. We were without the heating system for several weeks and had to install gas logs. Many of the things in the garage were irreplaceable. Much of the stored furniture and many of my started projects were just thrown to the burn pile or the county dump. None of the things in the garage were insured since it was not attached to the house.

My school, Rocky Mount Academy, where I teach kindergarten was closed 5 days. But many schools were closed 8 to 10 days. Ironically, I went back to a flooded classroom where water was standing on my floor due to a roof leak. It had just been renovated-new roof, new ceiling, new carpet and paint. So I took my children to another building for a week until repairs were made. Through it all we really do count our blessings because so many people were affected by this flood. Thousands of people in this area lost everything they had. It was a sight to see. Many businesses lost, homes irreparable, thousands of cars totaled, many animals killed or lost. It was pitiful seeing so many dogs wandering around. It was common place to see rubble and garbage piled head high along the roads. The majority of people had absolutely no flood insurance. Although our former house on Maple Creek^{Rocky Mount} had water to the sub-floor as we did in the log house, many of the houses on that street had water to their roofs. It was sickening to drive down that street and hundreds of others in this area. It will take literally years for things to return to normal. However, we just keep on trucking and trusting. We surely hope that nothing like this ever happens again. But if it does, we are sure that with God's help we will make it through. We have learned many lessons. We have always known that this earth is not our home we are just journeymen here, but it has really been brought home to us during this time. We pray that we won't miss the lessons God has for us through ~~this~~ ^{during this time} ~~experience~~ ^{and} this whole ordeal has been an unbelievable experience

Shelby Sewell
November 1999

In many cases we were
simply helpless but

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FACSIMILE COVER SHEET

TO: Alice ThorpFAX #: 443-3792

FIRM: _____

FROM: Shelby SewellMessage: Thanks, Sorry about the small
writing.Shelby SewellBattleboro27809

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