

reflections

the may 2010 flood ... one year later

RIVERSIDE DR

STOP

American
Flowergift
648-8101
FLOWERS
WORLDWIDE

a special edition of
the **all**state

slideshow | 100-year flood? | your stories

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PAST FLOODS

- 1808
MONTGOMERY
COUNTY
COURTHOUSE
RECORDS FIRST
FLOOD.
- 1827-28
IT BEGAN
RAINING NOV.
23 AND DID NOT
END UNTIL APRIL
1. ABOUT 10 DAYS
WERE RECORDED
WITHOUT RAIN
IN THAT TIME
PERIOD.
- 1836
THE
CUMBERLAND
RIVER ROSE 10
FEET OVERNIGHT.
- 1874
THIS FLOOD
APPROACHED
THE ORGAIN
BUILDING SUPPLY
COMPANY ON
COMMERCE
STREET.

APRIL 30, 2010

- 65 FEET
- 60 FEET
- 55 FEET
- 50 FEET
- 45 FEET
- 40 FEET
- 35 FEET
- 30 FEET



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY LESLIE RYE

Local homes such as this, were swept away during the 2010 May flood that totalled more than \$36.5 million in damages to city and county residences and businesses.

Flood affected unseen parts of Clarksville

By MONIQUE FREEMON
Staff Writer

After a couple of days of hard and continuous rainfall in early May 2010, the city of Clarksville faced the unexpected — a natural disaster, a flood. The Cumberland River reached its crest at 62.58 feet, “a staggering 16 feet above flood level, swallowing up buildings, homes, and businesses,” said Candice Waite, Marketing & Public Relations Supervisor of the City of Clarksville Parks and Recreations.

Liberty Park, which includes the marina currently under construction, was under five to six feet of water. Former Mayor Johnny Piper said the damage included unfinished roads

that were going to have asphalt put down but were unable to compact the asphalt to make the complete road. Planted grass was gone and had to be replanted again. The damage was significant enough to sadden those who had have everything repaired again. While the flood held up the extension of Liberty Park, it still did not stall the grand opening, scheduled for later this spring.

“Life is full of those opportunities, so you have to make the best you can of what you have. Some things you are given are easy to handle, some things aren’t so easy to handle, but you have to handle all of them anyway,” Piper said.

The Leaf-Chronicle reported 41

homes were damaged on Dunbar Cave Road, College Street reported 30 damaged homes; Kraft Street at 20, Tylertown Road had 11, State Highway 48/13 had 8, Southern Hills had 15, Woodstock had 8 and 78 throughout the rest of the city. Six parks were also closed and three events canceled.

The May 2010 flood affected others in the Clarksville area. Since the flood struck around finals time, some students had to drive an extra 30 minutes to get to school. There were traffic jams, events rescheduled and people trapped their homes until the waters receded.

One of the main concerns about the flood is the parks in Tennessee.

On June 10, 2010, the Clarksville City Council held a special session to discuss the damages and possible repairs for the flooded parks. McGregor Park, located on the Riverwalk, would cost about \$182,202, plus an extra \$92,752 to repair. The total amount of repairs requested for parks was \$276,000. According to the Parks and Recreation meeting held on June 9, 2010, it reported 3,000 man hours were put towards cleaning up McGregor, Valleybrook, Trice Landing, Coy Lacy and Ashton Parks. Also, sink holes located under the parks had to be checked for rainfall.

“The Building & Codes

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Former mayor reflects on recovery plan

By MONIQUE FREEMON
Staff Writer

The 2010 May flood was one of those times that showed how the people and their government can come together to repair a city.

“What I learned is that we all work together for a common goal of help our friends and neighbors,” said Johnny Piper, former Clarksville mayor.

With all of the devastation last year, it brings reminders of the 1999 tornado that tore downtown and struck campus. The recovery for the storm lasted about four years. This was most of Piper’s time when he was in office.

In his first term, the tornado struck 22 days after he took office. He sought help from various communities that had been through the same ordeal. When the flood occurred, he did the same. He wanted to learn from other experiences.

“If the government cannot help during a natural disaster, they cannot help at all,” Piper said.

Overall, the cost of the damages and repairs in Clarksville were estimated at about \$250 million. The Waste Water Treatment Plant was completely ruined.

Water pressure caused by the flood formed an air bubble, destroying the main building. Repairs were estimated around \$90 million to repair the plant.

Piper said he felt helpless. With the waters gradually rising during the 24-hour period, he could only watch the destruction happen. Piper’s main goal was to execute a well-planned recovery and avoid future damages.

After the waters stopped rising,



While rowing down Riverside Drive during the flood, the photographer took this picture of himself and a fellow canoe rider’s reflection off one of the building’s windows.

traffic and transportation became main issues. Clarksville has about 130,000 residents, a large amount of them had to get to school or work. Recovery of businesses, homes and various buildings and residences around the Clarksville area also became a problem.

The only way to get across town was by Richview Road, which became choked with traffic for miles. Even Piper’s city-issued Chrysler 300 was stuck in the middle of Second Street when he attempted to drive through the road.

“There supposedly is a law that prevents the government from going

on private property and helping [those residents],” Piper said.

“We broke down that law, helped people clean out their commercial properties, residential properties, private properties and haul their belongings away for them. We committed our resources for them to recover and rebuild.”

Some businesses on Riverside Drive didn’t have flood insurance, a first line of defense. National laws require certain businesses in the 100-year flood plain in Clarksville to have flood insurance, but only if they borrow from a bank. USGS states that a 100-year flood has a one percent chance of

occurring in a hundred years. Most of the businesses around Clarksville were insured for a 100-year flood. If the area business are labeled in the 100-year plain, they are advised not to build during that time because of potential flooding.

On the bright side, many businesses, like Citi Trends, Shoney’s and others were remodeled and rebuilt. Other buildings were torn down and rebuilt from the ground up.

“What you are seeing for the most part is the energy revitalization of Riverside Drive area that, in the long term, will be good.” **TAS**

PAST FLOODS

1882
IN JANUARY, THE GRANGE AND ELEPHANT WAREHOUSES WERE FLOODED WHEN THE CUMBERLAND ROSE 7 FEET HIGHER THAN THE 1874 FLOOD.

1912
ON APRIL 12, BRIDGES WERE WASHED AWAY AND TWO MEN DROWNED AT THE NEW PROVIDENCE BRIDGE.

1919
TRAINS WERE HALTED WHEN THE RED AND CUMBERLAND RIVERS ROSE 18 FEET OVERNIGHT ON MARCH 14.

MAY 1, 2010

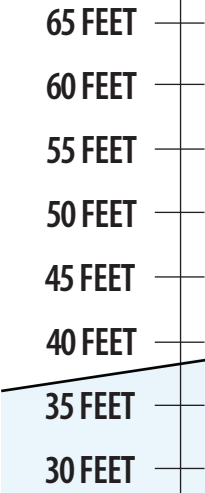
65 FEET
60 FEET
55 FEET
50 FEET
45 FEET
40 FEET
35 FEET
30 FEET

PAST FLOODS

1927-28
THIS FLOOD
WASHED AWAY
BRIDGES AND
FLOODED HOMES
AND BUSINESSES
ON WHAT IS NOW
RIVERSIDE DRIVE.
THIS WAS THE
WORST FLOOD
ON RECORD
UNTIL 1937.

1937
WATERWORKS
FLOODED AND
WAS INOPERABLE
ON JAN. 18.
SECOND STREET
TOWARDS NEW
PROVIDENCE
AND GUTHRIE
PIKE ALSO
FLOODED.
THREE WEEKS OF
CONTINUOUS
RAINFALL WITH
THE RIVER RISING
FOUR INCHES
PER HOUR
CAUSED THE
FLOODING.

MAY 2, 2010



100-YEAR FLOOD?

Kemmerly defines the term's meaning

By THERESA ROGERS
Staff Writer

Last May, Clarksville was hit with a flood deemed “the 100-year flood,” washing down the busiest streets and closing down bridges and businesses for days.

Our misconceptions led us to be improperly prepared for such an occurrence. What happened that day from a scientific standpoint and in the future, what can we do to become more aware? Phillip Kemmerly, from APSU’s Geology Department, said “Dams do not eliminate floods.” Kemmerly speaks of communication and remaining aware of our earthly surroundings as being the prevention.

To begin, the term commonly used to describe this event, “the 100-year flood”, is not entirely what it seems. A “100-year flood”, by definition, “is a flood, of whatever magnitude, that has the probability of occurring at the rate of one percent of any given year.” Clarksville’s common misconception is that it will take another 100 years for another flood to occur, which is not the case. The longer a location goes without a 100-year flood, the higher the odds are of reaching it.

What scientifically happened that first weekend



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY ZACK FINNEY

A spectator stands on the railroad tracks that cross the Cumberland River. The last major flood that hit Clarksville was in January 1937.

of May? The scenario was that there was a stationary front, meaning it was not moving, running Northeast to Southwest through Middle Tennessee. This front stayed stalled for about two to three days, while a low pressure cell was pulling moisture out of the Gulf of Mexico. This pressure cell was slowly moving along the stationary front. The ground became saturated and could not absorb any more water. There was a high conversion rate of precipitation and heavy sediment depositions.

The short term effects in rural areas were that vegetation and crops were dying off and farm lands were being flooded

out. The long term effects of this had an upside, because the water rushed into these lands carrying sediment depositions which ultimately makes the ground more fertile in the future. The short terms effects for urban areas is that several items and materials were being washed off the streets and into our water system, including gasoline, petroleum, fertilizers and pesticides. The water quality at this time was extremely poor but luckily, the dilution factor was high enough at this point that more water was there to mix and dilute the poor substances.

Clarksville and surrounding areas were

forced at this time to find new ways to transport goods and services to areas that both needed and expected them. Citizens were put out of their homes and many businesses collapsed under either no flood insurance or flood insurance that had previously expired. Kemmerly said a common mistake is forgetting that Mother Nature’s processes are not on the same time scale as mankind. People lose contact with the idea that floods happen and will continue to happen for as long as we live by a major river.

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Patience proved difficult during remodeling

By MONIQUE FREEMON
Staff Writer

After almost a year of wondering and waiting, McDonald's and Wendy's finally opened for their faithful and hungry customers to enjoy their food again.

"I know our customers were very excited to have us back. It's been exciting to see customers come in and say, 'Oh, I'm so glad your back,'" said Sarah Martens, Wendy's general manager.

Martens was ecstatic for the revamped Wendy's to reopen and give customers a new warm environment for their dining experience. The Wendy's at 662 N. Riverside Dr. opened 30 years ago, the first Wendy's in Clarksville.

The preparation for rebuilding the new Wendy's was a long, expensive process, costing about \$1 million and about a month to rebuild. Martens interviewed 300 people and only hired 40. She also had difficulty trying to find people who cared enough about the customer. While most of the employees were trained other places, the training process was quite challenging.

The employees were prepared for the flood. They had to put all of the equipment they could save the night before in a U-Haul, and send the equipment to various locations



A lone car sat in the drive thru of McDonald's during the 2010 May flood. The fast-food restaurant reopened on Saturday, March 26, 11 months after the flood.

around Clarksville.

Martens said it was shocking and sad the flood was happening.

According to The Leaf Chronicle, the employees working before the flood were transferred to various locations around Clarksville. District Manager Alice Dube said most of them enjoyed their position.

"[This flood was] probably a blessing in disguise. This store was probably up for a remodel anyway, so it just made this happen sooner rather than later," Martens said. "We had to start fresh with this store."

When the floods receded, many

people wondered if Wendy's would rebuild or close for good. It was a nice opportunity to better the restaurant — being the first Wendy's in Clarksville — it was time for a makeover. With the cleaning, hiring and training, Martens said it felt like a weight was lifted off her shoulders.

The McDonald's down the street, owned by Eric Larson, was also damaged by the flood.

The McDonald's had been here for almost 50 years. Larson's father, Howard Eric Larson, opened the McDonald's in 1963.

"I was very excited to be able to reopen with a new design and be a significant part of the beautification of Clarksville and especially the Riverfront District," Larson said.

The whole rebuilding process took about 11 months and the actual construction was about three, like Wendy's. However, renovations differences was that McDonald's cost \$2 million. News Channel 2 reported Larson rebuilt the McDonald's with a new, sleek look that many McDonald's around Clarksville will eventually imitate. That famous sign in front of McDonald's is actually a vintage sign.

"My most difficult problem was just being patient. It takes a while for everyone to do what needs to be done with a rebuild. McDonald's Corporation, city inspectors, state inspectors, attorneys, and in this case the insurance company," said Larson.

Eventually the McDonald's employees transferred back. Larson had a few problems to face, but with an incredible staff at the restaurant, he saw the problems as "opportunities." He considers himself very blessed.

Since he owns 13 McDonald's around Clarksville, the business didn't suffer financially.

"I couldn't believe that the water could ever get that high," Larson said. *TAS*

FLOOD NUMBERS

52 TENNESSEE COUNTIES WERE DECLARED FEDERAL DISASTER AREAS.

23 PEOPLE WERE CONFIRMED DEAD IN TENNESSEE FROM THE FLOOD.

\$36.5 MILLION IN DAMAGES TO CITY AND COUNTY RESIDENCES AND BUSINESSES WERE REPORTED BY MONTGOMERY COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.

IN 73 YEARS, THE CUMBERLAND CREST ITS HIGHEST ON MAY 2 AND 3.

MAY 3, 2010

65 FEET
60 FEET
55 FEET
50 FEET
45 FEET
40 FEET
35 FEET
30 FEET

FORMER GOV. PHIL BREDESEN DECLARED 52 COUNTIES DISASTER AREAS.

THE CREST OF THE CUMBERLAND RIVER DURING THE 1927-28 FLOOD AT 59.9 FEET

FLOOD NUMBERS

THE HARPETH RIVER FLOW EXCEEDED **46,000** CUBIC FEET PER SECOND ON MAY 3, BREAKING THE PREVIOUS RECORD.

THE DUCK RIVER, NEAR HURRICANE MILLS, FLOWED AT **138,000** CUBIC FEET PER SECOND ON MAY 4, BREAKING THE PREVIOUS RECORD. THE TWO-DAY RAINFALL OF **13.57** INCHES AT NASHVILLE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BROKE THE MONTHLY RAINFALL RECORD FOR MAY.

MAY 4, 2010

65 FEET

60 FEET

55 FEET

50 FEET

45 FEET

40 FEET

35 FEET

30 FEET

Andy's opened quickly to fill medications

By MONIQUE FREEMON
Staff Writer

Andy's Pharmacy was devastated by the unstoppable waters of the May 2010 Flood, when they were about to celebrate their one year anniversary.

Located at 801 N. 2nd St., the locally owned pharmacy dedicated to serving the community while providing a warm, friendly environment, suffered from 2.5 feet of water. The pharmacy was covered with mud and debris, which took about a month to clean up. David Muiznieks, pharmacy manager, the pharmacist in charge at Andy's Pharmacy found the flood to be a bad experience.

"It was devastating, we were a new business. We had just opened July 2009; we had all of the road construction here which was bad for us. Then we had the flood, so it was quite traumatic," Muiznieks said.

Like most of the businesses surrounding Clarksville, pharmacy employees and the owner were prepared for the worst. Muiznieks said on the Monday of the flood, he and Chuck Griffin, Security of Andy's Pharmacy, loaded up the trucks and vans with all of the drugs and computers in the store. All together



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO FROM ANDY'S PHARMACY

Andy's Pharmacy stayed closed for three days. Their main concern was filling their customer's prescriptions.

the damages ranged from \$60,000 to \$70,000. They were closed for three days, just to get everything moved over to the garage they own, then they were up and running again. They have invested so much into this business and with all of the people in need for the medicine; they couldn't close for

a month to repair all of the damages. Their main concern was making sure the customers got their medicine.

"They [the customers] were impressed they we were able to open so quickly. They were just glad that they were able to get their medications. They were able to see

the mud and debris that was left to be quite a mess," Muiznieks said.

The downside to the building being flooded is the fact they did not have flood insurance, but that didn't stop them from still running their business.

"I wouldn't be hard press to call it beneficial," Muiznieks said.

As for the employees, they were all there to help do the clean-up and running the business temporarily in the garage. While some businesses relocated their employees and hired new ones, Andy's Pharmacy kept all of their employees. Muiznieks said moving into the garage required more work from the employees than in the building. He just hopes this is a 500-years flood, but he could handle the 100-year flood.

While Chuck Griffins was going through the pictures that they took of the flood he shared a story of a person being rescued from the Midtown Inn, located at 890 Kraft St. Also, Andy's Pharmacy had a little visitor, which came up on their sidewalk, a black snake. They weren't sure what type of snake it was but it is probably best not to mess with it. Luckily nobody was bit by any other visitors. There

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THE CUMBERLAND RIVER REACHED ITS CREST AT 7 A.M. AT 62.58 FEET

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA DECLARED DAVIDSON, CHEATHAM, HICKMAN AND WILLIAMSON COUNTIES FEDERAL DISASTER AREAS. HE DECLARED THE OTHER REMAINING COUNTIES DISASTER AREAS ON MAY 6.

MIDNIGHT

3 a.m.

6 a.m.

9 a.m.

NOON

3 p.m.

6 p.m.

9 p.m.

'Hidden gem' celebrates recovery, anniversary

By MONIQUE FREEMON
Staff Writer

It has been a year since the historic flood damaged and destroyed many homes, businesses and lives in Clarksville.

The flood was devastating, especially for the businesses on Riverside Drive. The whole strip was like a dirty ghost town. Maggie Bradford, owner of Mag's Coffee said everyone was in bad shape.

Since then, Riverside Drive has been continuing to get a major makeover, a fresh start, a facelift — by revamping the whole strip, which will be good in the long run. While some businesses opened quickly, Mag's Coffee was two weeks from its grand opening.

Bradford was upset at first, but she saw businesses on Riverside Drive worse off than hers. The furniture was not in the shop yet. The couch for the store, the tables and chairs were in her garage. Cases were delivered late and the counters were not installed.

They had about 18 to 30 inches of water, depending on the spot.

With the damage and the repairs to follow, the grand opening was pushed back six weeks. Bradford stuck it out and finished what she started.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO FROM MAG'S COFFEE

Mag's Coffee was two weeks away from it's grand opening when the 2010 May flood hit.

The money saved up for advertisements, extra supplies and other things was used for restoration. Bradford said she didn't quit because of the effort put into the business. It wasn't worth letting the work go to waste.

"At first we were upset but ... you can't stop Mother Nature," she said.

Everybody on Riverside Drive was in the same situation, some worse than

others. She was just glad she hadn't opened her shop.

Family, friends, students and local citizens came to help clean up. NewsChannel 5 came from Nashville to help. The station interviewed Bradford and adopted her and the business, checked on progress and continually asked how things were going. She hopes they come back for the Thursday, June 30 grand

opening anniversary.

Mag's Coffee is a really bright spot. When they were fixing the building, she decided to plant flowers out front to brighten up anyone's day when driving, walking or stopping by. Customers have come in just to thank her for the floral display.

"One man came in and said it was a really bright spot along the river to see them blooming, I can't wait for the flowers to bloom," Bradford said. Through worries and fears, Bradford looked on the bright side, business has been booming. Customers are constantly coming in, trying and making new drinks.

Even though the money for advertisements was put toward repairs, Mag's Coffee has had the fortune of word-of-mouth advertising. Mag's Coffee has become a local sensation, with a touch of personality and a friendly atmosphere.

Many friends and family helped Bradford and her husband clean the shop for the grand opening. Friends and customers like Sherry Long, an owner of Sherry's Ruffled Handbags and Diaper Bags, help with decorations — bows for different holidays, pillows on the couch and

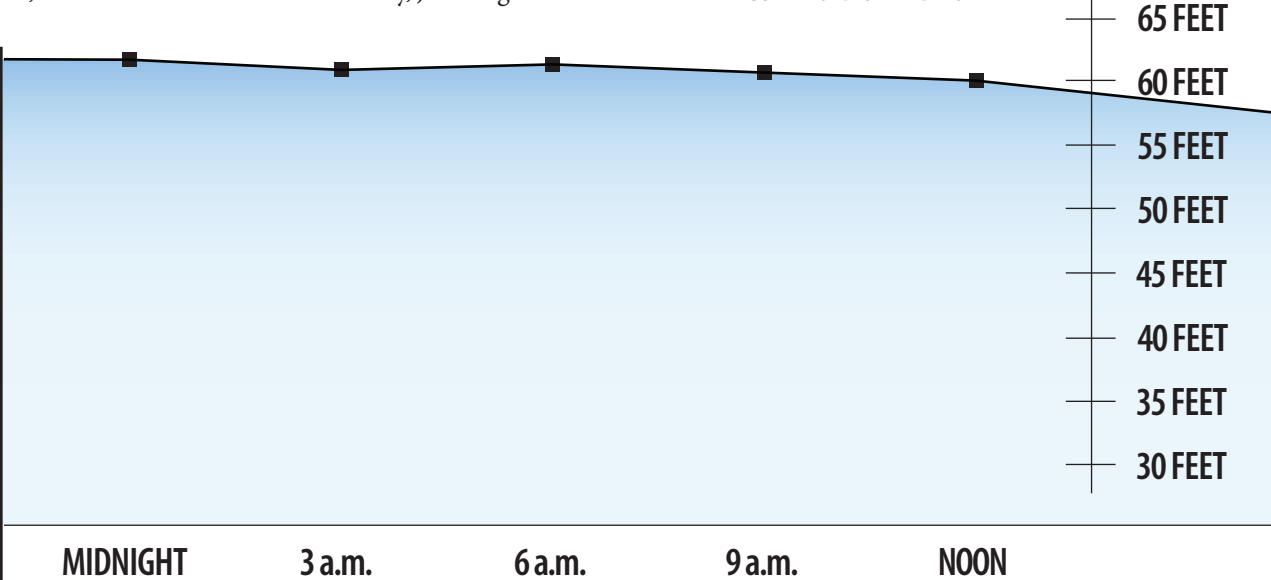
CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

FLOOD NUMBERS

420 BILLION
GALLONS OF
WATER FELL
IN DAVIDSON,
WILLIAMSON,
BENTON,
PERRY AND
HUMPHREYS
COUNTIES IN
TWO DAYS.

15
OBSERVATION
SITES HAD
RAINFALL
MEASUREMENTS
EXCEEDING
THE MAXIMUM
OBSERVED
RAINFALL FROM
HURRICANE
KATRINA'S
LANDFALL.

MAY 5, 2010



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ON THE COVER

Patrick Armstrong, editor-in-chief, captures a boat with passengers traveling down Riverside Drive on May 4, 2010.





PATRICK ARMSTRONG | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
A view of the Cumberland River and
Riverside Drive from the roof of the
Riverview inn during the 2010 May flood.

YOUR STORIES



JOHN BURRUM

It seemed as though there was no escaping the unmerciful grasp of Mother Nature as all of the main roadways were blocked by high water and heavy police patrol.

Crowds of shocked locals talked of even heavier flooding.

Fearing the worst, people began to evacuate their established positions next to the water to seek higher ground.

Fortunately, the Wolf Creek dam did not release a great surge of water, sparing thousands of lives.

Though recovery may not have reached 100 percent yet, Clarksville remains a strong community that will never be held back.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY ZACK FINNEY
A front view of Mary's Music during the 2010 May flood.



Mary's Music reopened in July 2010 so they would be ready before mid-August, when a large rush comes from perspective band students.

MARLON SCOTT | SENIOR STAFF WRITER

YOUR STORIES



BRANON JAGGERS

It was my senior year of high school and I was getting ready for prom that night. With umbrellas ready, the senior class boarded Greyhound buses for the Opryland Hotel. Once off the bus, we left it all behind and walked into our one night in the spotlight, dancing our hearts out.

Upon exiting, we saw golf-ball sized raindrops covering the ground. We piled onto the buses and headed home — hydroplaning the entire way — with people calling friends and families to let them know we were coming back.

When we got home, we found out guests were being evacuated from the hotel and we got out just in time.

One of 'the LUCKY ones'

Mary's Music used 216 sandbags to fight off the rising water during the flood

By THERESA ROGERS
Staff Writer

Jon Mark Cox looked out his front windows at Mary's Music as the rain was pouring down onto Riverside Drive. He turned to one of his employees and said, "The river is going to get high." Cox didn't realize at that point how historically high the Cumberland River would rise and what harm it would bring with it.

As usual the next morning, Sunday, March 2, Cox went to church early. His business partner sent him a text message, informing Cox the river seemed almost up to Riverside Drive.

When Cox arrived at the shop, he walked up to the second floor office above the show room and looked out over the river.

Cox grew up in Clarksville and knew the river would eventually crest and fade back down, but the rain just kept coming.

Over the next couple hours, the water continued to rise, but the threat still did not seem real. The business even made a call into Emergency Management who informed them judging by the facts and information, the water should not even make it up to the level of their store.

Mary's Music was ensured there was nothing to worry about.

Unfortunately, nothing to worry about soon became worthy of serious concern.

The news and radio stations were changing statistics and facts every 10 to 15 minutes as the water continued to rise.

By Sunday afternoon, the owners and their employees began to look out at the river from their front windows, watching as the dock across the street was pushed up so high it seemed it would snap into pieces. The best thing

to do at this point, they thought, was to get everything higher than knee level.

Cox and Jones then began to move all their instruments, guitars, mandolins, keyboards, drum sets and bases off the floor level.

After getting everything off the floor, they locked up and went home for

one of the last nights of calm sleep they would have for a long time.

Cox and Jones decided to get to the store as early as possible Monday morning so they could keep an eye on their equipment and

the level of the river.

Jones arrived at the shop first and called Cox just as he was passing Lowe's and said, "I think if you stop and get us some sandbags, we can save this puppy."

When Cox stopped at Lowe's, it seemed to be filled with Clarksvillians

“You don't realize what is all in here until you start carrying it out piece by piece.”

— Jon Mark Cox

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

YOUR STORIES



CAREY FROGUE

In the still of the predawn light of May 3, I reached Orgain Building Supply. Rounding the corner of the main warehouse, I was greeted by a full bundle of 24-foot lumber drifting in the alley. Waist deep in the putrid water, the owners were clearing the floating timbers to secure a path to remove the last of the fleet of trucks.

We knew what the stakes were — our jobs and our livelihoods. We had to empty three warehouses and relocate quickly to higher ground.

Steadily, an army of workers descended on the shrinking battlefield. I sat in awe as it dawned on me that I had not only witnessed history, but I lived it as well.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO FROM AMERICAN FLOWERGIFT

American Flowergift suffered about a \$10,000 loss of merchandise from the May 2010 flood. They received help from a group of men rowing a canoe down Riverside Drive.

‘Mom, pop shop’ still going strong

By **MONIQUE FREEMON**
Staff Writer

Joseph and Mary Ann Stephens, owners of American Flowergift, have owned their mom and pop business for 35 years and are still going strong, no matter the circumstances.

The May 2010 flood was a devastating event that no business owner wants to experience ever again. While some owners moved their business or just gave up, the Stephens were determined to keep their business up and running. They went to lengths

by opening up their shop in their own home. While Mary Ann Stephens stayed at home, Joseph Stephens went back and forth between their home and shop, trying to take care of the damage. Stephens wouldn't allow his wife in the shop. He knew it was an upsetting scene for her to see.

Mary Ann Stephens would have never thought with the flat land on the other side of the Cumberland River would have flooded. One thing she did express while laughing is that she honestly doesn't want to be here when the next 100-year flood happens.

The next time she went back into the shop, everything was almost cleaned up, she only has the pictures that are in a scrapbook she made to see the damage. She thought it was an unbelievable event to happen.

Joseph Stephens was upset with the whole situation, but it didn't stop him from trying to get all of the products out in time for the flood. He with about 50 volunteers from APSU, family, friends, even his doctor's two children came to help him by hauling stuff into vans and cars.

When the water was up to their

knees Stephens said a few young men were rowing down Riverside Drive and saw them were trying to clean out the flower shop. In a few minutes Stephens shop had a massive boat in his shopped filled with flowers and decorations in the store.

They lost about \$10,000 worth of merchandise including, ribbons, flower food and Oasis floral flower foam. They had about six feet of water in the store when they were moving all of the merchandise out. He said they worked

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Thunder Road back to life with new venue

By THERESA ROGERS

Staff Writer

Bill Roberts spent his Sunday morning as he usually does, attending church at Grace Community Church and spending time with his family.

However, this Sunday — May 1, 2010 — wasn't going to be like any other Sunday Roberts had ever experienced.

On his drive to church, Roberts looked out his car window out at the river and then to his wife, "I think we have a problem," he said.

After leaving the military in 1978, Roberts had gone to work in Clarksville for Gary Matthews Volkswagen. By 2010, Roberts had his own business on Riverside Drive selling vehicles for both land and water named Thunder Road. Having spent countless summers and winters in Clarksville, Roberts has seen the water rise, but with his own business now at stake, a 100 year flood would hit much closer to home.

After church, around 10 a.m., Roberts decided to go by his shop. He called his son, Josh Roberts, assistant coach for running backs at APSU, and told him they needed to move everything immediately. Several friends from neighboring businesses and car dealerships chipped in to help Roberts get as much out as soon as possible. The rain continued to come down on Riverside Drive, but several businesses thought it was silly to move. Roberts didn't take the chance and trusted his instincts.

Within an hour, 32 people were on the ground at Thunder Road helping to move supplies, vehicles and boats off the property. They had two 30-foot trailers that were soon packed with anything that would fit. The crew, Roberts, his friends and family got every item they could think of off the property by 5 p.m. Sunday evening. Most businesses still hadn't moved



ALL PHOTOS BY MARLON SCOTT | SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Within one hour during the 2010 May flood, 32 people were helping Thunder Road move supplies, vehicles and boats off their property.

their stuff yet. They didn't feel the water would get that far. That night Roberts went to bed knowing his items and vehicles were as safe as they could be.

By Tuesday, May 3, both of Roberts' buildings were completely flooded and he now was losing time and space to keep his business up and running. Owner of the local Blackhorse Pub & Brewery, Jeff Robinson, soon made a call to Roberts that would turn his business around. Robinson called Roberts that Wednesday evening and told him he had just purchased the lot that was once a Mitsubishi dealership on Wilma Rudolph Boulevard. He told Roberts that since he had no plans for it for at least three to four months, he was more than willing to loan it



to Roberts to help him continue his business.

Without much persuading and a nudge from his wife, Roberts happily accepted the offer and brought "Thunder Road" back to life at a whole new venue, even if only temporarily.

By that Friday, May 7, Roberts had "Thunder Road" back up and running. On Tuesday, March 15, 2011, almost a year after the flood, Roberts was able to move his beloved business back to Riverside Drive where it first started. **TAS**

YOUR STORIES



MAKEBA WEBB

My son Tyler and I followed the news all day, starting with the heavy rains in Memphis. As the rain continued, I knew we were in for some trouble. The next morning, I woke up and said, "Let's drive down Riverside Drive."

We went out for our drive and were amazed at the high water. I remember the 1997 flood when the river crested almost right at the road's edge. After seeing where the water was before the crest, I knew we were going to witness history.

A sorority sister who was running from flood waters at her apartment stayed with me. The next morning, I saw the results of Mother Nature's power.

YOUR STORIES



KATIE REED

From my deck, I saw the currents of the Red River rising towards its banks at a safe distance beyond my fenced yard.

A flood of small animals and insects sought refuge in my yard. I watched fearfully as the water erased our fence line.

I considered leaving, but driving was hazardous and many roads were closed.

I looked through the kitchen window through the night, but the river remained on the downhill slope of my backyard.

A noxious odor was present that morning after the rain stopped. There were no familiar sounds of cars and children talking at the bus stop.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO FROM AMERICAN FLOWERGIFT
Katie Stevens, daughter, helped move the flowers out during the flood.

Lucky

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

not to forget too much and locked their doors to start helping surrounding businesses and neighbors.

They left around 1 p.m. They had already shut off their electricity and prayed the river would finally crest.

Cox was able to focus on missing items and store damage when he returned home.

Mary's Music was deemed one of "the lucky ones" and was fortunate enough to have flood insurance.

However, they forgot their computer server that ran at ground level. Cox notes one of the most important and devastating things lost is years of customer information and over five years of sale records and transactions.

"You don't realize what is all in here until you start carrying it out piece by piece."

Cox carried the burden of his own career and the careers of his employees on his shoulders.

Having moved most of the equipment and instruments into the upstairs office, they opened up just a couple days after the flood cleared out of Riverside Drive, but without the popular road open to the public, their loss of business was tremendous.

By the first part of July, they returned to normal operating hours and procedures. They wanted to be ready before mid-August when they received a large rush from students in school wanting to join band.

Although to a customer's untrained eye the establishment seems back to its normal smooth running self, Cox said on paper they are still repairing day by day. **TAS**

Shop

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

from 8 a.m. to about 7 p.m. but still, some merchandise was unable to be saved. They had to pressure wash the whole building three times, repaint the walls with keel paint, rebuild their core and repaint some of the decorations in the store.

Other than those repairs, their business looked about the same after everything was cleaned and rebuilt. It took a couple of weeks to get back into the store and a month to really get the place cleaned up.

The day American Flowergift opened was a day of mixed emotions. Mary Ann Stephens said she felt strange because she hadn't been in the building

for weeks. When she came in all there was were the front desk, computers, the work table and the phones. Mostly everything that was taken out of the shop had not been put back in yet. So it was weird to see a shop that had once been filled with colorful and beautiful flowers look like an empty space.

Stephens said many of the customers that come in are surprised at how the flood didn't really affect them. While laughing she mentioned some customers even mentioned said, "Flood ... what flood?" then she'd pulled out the scrapbook she made and show them.

Even though the flood caused a great deal of headaches, they are not going to move from 207-B N. Riverside Dr. They have

been there for 12 years after moving between four locations. They are very thankful for all of the volunteers that helped out, if it wasn't for all their help, Stephens said they might have just called it quits.

"I would say use a lot of prayer and patience, probably be steady in your decision, and know what stuff you are going to do. Stick with it. A lot of businesses are getting harder and harder to keep alive, this kind of business especially. So, do with caution, if that is what you want to do in life," Joseph Stephens said.

"You just have to be patient and take it as it comes, to do what you can do each day and move forward. You know a few tears rotate but you can't just cry all the time." **TAS**



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MATEEN SIDIQ | SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

A year after the flood, Andy's Pharmacy is trying to become successful in Clarksville.

Andy's

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

is also a picture of them standing and walking in the water. As the water started to rise, Andy's Pharmacy started to look more like a boat deck and less like a pharmaceutical store.

Andy's Pharmacy is still an upcoming business trying to become successful in Clarksville. They have a friendly staff and owner willing to help anyone with their medical needs.

One thing a person might notice while driving down Riverside Drive or North Second Street, most of the businesses stayed. Some might wonder why if there is a possibility of flooding. Most businesses would stay down here.

"We thought it would be a good location. We want to be a community-oriented pharmacy and there's not one right in this area. We thought this would be a good location to be at," Muiznieks said.

That's the reason why.

The River district is an amazing place to start a new business. There is lots of traffic, close to the APSU and most of the community-wide activities are held downtown.

Lots of people means lots of business and the view that people get of the Cumberland River.

"I would like to encourage the APSU students to come check us out. I think we can save them money and give them good service," Muiznieks said. **TAS**



CIDNIE SYNDEY-BREWINGTON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mag's Coffee will be celebrating their one-year anniversary on June 30.

Hidden

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

dressing up the penguin for holidays. Long is also a loyal customer and frequently stops by to talk and hang out.

Mag's Coffee is not your ordinary shop. They use a more personal type of customer service. One of the anonymous comments on the store's website, Magscoffee.com, says, "(definitely) one of Clarksville's hidden gems!" Bradford is always open to new drink creations, like *The All State* mocha or the Dirty Irishman.

She likes to create homemade desserts and try new things and not stick to one menu. She makes things different because if they were the same, it would be boring.

It is not just the food and drinks that keep customers coming back, but also the

friendly staff and atmosphere. There is the aroma of caramel and coffee beans. The staff and Bradford herself offer a warm "Hello."

What makes Mag's different is the variety of coffee mugs hanging on the walls. She has mugs from everywhere — from San Antonio, a lion-shaped mug from Italy, one from the Bahamas and another from England. "A blue and white Chinese tea mug with a basket in it, sit on the edge of the shelf where the flavors of gourmet syrups and sauces."

The wall displays before and after photos of the shop as a dedication to deployed soldiers. They give Bradford their dogtags — which are put on a poster on the wall — and when they return so are their tags. It's a touch usually unseen. Mag's Coffee shop has that rare personal touch of warmth and comfort in a world full of fast food chains and instant coffee. **TAS**

100-year

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Kemmerly explains that core funding is wasted on the construction of dams in order to prevent floods in the way that we rely on them solely to keep water off of our streets.

However, according to Kemmerly, relying on dams alone and continuing to build businesses, homes, and other establishments closer and closer to the river is our number one

mistake. Water builds up on a dam, and if we do not open the gates and let the water run, the dam will collapse, not only letting the water in but damaging an expensive investment as well.

Getting in touch with the nature's process is a skill that has been neglected, and Clarksville must not continue to believe that it will be another 100 years before we see a flood of this magnitude again. Taking the necessary steps to insure our city's safety and prosperity is the key to bouncing back. **TAS**

YOUR STORIES



WHITNEY DARDEN

The day after graduation, my friends and I decided we'd go canoeing in celebration — not the best plan after a flood.

We hit a log at full speed and a submerged canoe forced ours under the log, sinking both canoes. I tried get out of the quickly sinking canoes only to find my left leg stuck between the canoes. I was pulled under.

Amazingly, my leg became free and I managed to push away from the canoes.

Luckily, we were rescued by what can literally be defined as some "good old backcountry boys" who were on the river looking for canoes that had been lost during the flood.



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PATRICK ARMSTRONG | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

in 73 years, the Cumberland River crest its highest on May 2 and 3, 2010., at 62.58 feet. The pedestrian crosswalk bridge was closed off during the flood.

Unseen

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Department processed 422 complaints during the month of May and reported 341 properties had been affected by the May 1 flood," Mayor Pro Tem Wallace Redd said at the committee meeting.

During the meeting, damage was reported a month after the flood occurred, there was still much damage, but the effort to clean up Clarksville was still important.

At the General Service Committee meeting on June 8, 2010, Kevin Cowling, deputy director of Operations and Planning with Parks and Recreation, and Jeff Vaughn, director of the Golf Courses, both reported efforts of clean up Swan Lake golf course. Cowling reported they laid down new sod and received help from Work Force Essentials. To make sure the pools were clean, they put in UV stabilizers to reduce the chlorine and other chemicals that shouldn't be in pools. Vaughn reported for Swan Lake Golf Course, located at Dunbar

Cave, irrigation control boxing would cost about \$5,800 to repair and the pump station would cost about \$7,900 to repair. Mason Rudolph Golf Course reported some flooding, but the flood hasn't damaged their revenue much and they reopened the course two days after the flood. Due to the flood, Swan Lake will have trouble breaking even by the end of the fiscal year.

Dunbar Cave was greatly affected by the flood. Dunbar Cave is known for its natural look, various wildlife and vegetation. According to Amy Wallace, Interpretive Specialist at Dunbar Cave State Natural Area, most of the vegetation was not affected aside from some wildflowers that did not grow again this year. There was also some vegetation covered with water and mud. As for the cave, there was partial flooding in inches and feet of mud dispositions, depending on the area. Wallace said it takes longer for mud to dry in caves. About a month after the flood, the water was still a light brown. Park officials decided to let the debris, trash and other pollutants remain because they didn't wash out naturally. Most of the clean-up took about three weeks. The maintenance equipment

and tools took about four months to replace. Wallace said everything had been replaced except for the rock wall under the dance floor in the entrance area, which was damaged because of the water. Adam Neblett, park ranger at Dunbar Cave State Natural Area said the total damages was \$34,445.97

Parts of the parking lot were affected, which took two days to recede and was closed off to the public. The Short Loop Trail and the Recovery Trail were partly flooded and closed for a few days. After the water was gone most of the trails, including the trails that are on the right side of Swan Lake, were slippery for but were still opened to the public.

"Some fish were washed out of the lake and into the Red River [that normally would not have been found there]. Some turtles were found dead, as there was one opossum. Most wildlife would have been able to get to higher ground before the water rose too high," Wallace said.

Waite said the damage was great enough that President Barack Obama approved \$300 million for the flood relief and recovery. **TAS**



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