



Volunteers shovel and bulldoze their way through the debris in the totally ruined emergency wing.

St. Joseph's Hospital Among Hardest Hit

By CHARLES RANDISI

Elmira — Among the places hardest hit by the flood was St. Joseph's Hospital. Damage has been conservatively estimated at \$4 million, and it will be at least three weeks before the hospital can even pretend to return to something like normal operation.

On Monday, June 26, volunteers were clearing away the mud and debris left in the wake of the disaster. Food for remaining patients and volunteers was supplied by the Red Cross and the Elmira Reformatory. Fresh linens were being brought in from Binghamton. A bulldozer began tearing down the remnants of what was the Emergency Service-Outpatient facility. Dazed flood victims, wet and muddy, came in for their necessary typhoid and tetanus shots.

Stan Douglas, the hospital's communications director, spoke of the present situation and future prospects. "On Thursday, the staff and administration met to make basic decisions on what to do. The evacuation started on Friday."

St. Joseph's has accommodations for 270 patients. On Friday, June 23, 172 were evacuated at

the height of the storm by helicopters and boats. Nine more were taken out on Saturday by truck. Most of the hospital's evacuees were brought to Arnot-Ogden Hospital, also in Elmira. Others were taken to evacuation centers if they were well enough to be discharged.

Some 57 patients remained at St. Joseph's. These were mostly geriatric and long-term patients. Douglas said that these people were those who had "no one to go home to" and whose cases demand a different kind of care that could only be given here.

Douglas said that it was "a really traumatic experience" for some of the evacuated patients. "They had never flown before or even heard of helicopters," he said. "We will be in touch with all of them."

"Within three weeks, we should resume some semblance of normal operation," he said. "Then we can start accepting patients because it would be too difficult to move them again. Douglas said they were well taken care of at Arnot-Ogden."

Douglas also praised the work of the Red Cross and other volunteers agencies. "We can't say enough for the help they've given us," he said.

Earlier, Elmira Mayor Richard

Loll expressed his appreciation for the help given the area by the state and federal government, the cities of Rochester and Ithaca, Housing and Urban Development, and the Diocese of Rochester.

Douglas estimated the damage to the hospital at \$4 million. "And that's a conservative figure," he said.

Most of the damage occurred on the ground floor of the hospital, where the Radiology section and the Emergency Service-Outpatient facility were located. These sections were totally lost. The ground floor also contains the telephone system and the boiler room.

Ironically, Douglas believes that Elmira will eventually come out of the flood in better shape than ever. "Elmira has been in bad shape," he said. "We have a poor transportation system, and a very bad economy. The unemployment rate was at 9.6 per cent. Now our city will be rebuilt for us. Everyone will get a fair shake to start all over."

Douglas also pointed out that many homes that were destroyed by the flood "should have been torn down a long time ago."

"We had a town that did a lot of bickering," he said. "It's funny how tragedy brings us together."

Human Development Organizes Teams Of Volunteers

By BARBARA MOYNEHAN

After a day spent surveying flood damage in Elmira and Corning, a special squad from the Office of Human Development met in Penn Yan Monday night and decided to send reinforcements in the form of volunteer priests, sisters, seminarians and high school students to help with rehabilitation of neighborhoods and personal lives.

The volunteers will concentrate on helping the elderly and others who are alone to face cleaning up and starting anew.

Day care was also seen to be an area of need, in order to free parents to work out of the situation they find themselves in as they leave evacuation centers and return to their homes.

Many have to face neighborhoods where trees are down, houses are strewn over the streets and the yards, and mud covers everything up as far as the second story rooms.

Many priests and nuns will be sent to relieve those religious who lived through the flood and have been working to help themselves, as well as their parishioners, reestablish some order in their lives.

Five priests, two seminarians, four nuns and two lay women made up the group that spent Monday talking to victims of the

flood, local community organizations, federal government agencies, city officials and those in charge at the army centers to calculate where the diocese could best direct its efforts.

Most of those who were there Monday stayed to help. Working in Corning are: Father George Wiant of the Wayne County Human development office; Father Sebastian Falcone of St. Bernard's; Sister Mary Jane Nelson of Rochester; Sister Alice MacLaughlin of Penn Yan; Sister Grace Miller of Rochester and Father Timothy Weider of Perkinsville, who will serve as coordinator.

Father James Reagan of Elmira will coordinate the work of the following in Elmira: Sister Frances Sweeney and Sister Annette Truby, both of Rochester; Father Roy Kiggins of Good Shepherd in Henrietta; two Jesuits studying in Syracuse, John Edelman of Rochester and James Keenan of Brooklyn, plus 14 Aquinas Institute students.

Mrs. Hazel Westfall of Seneca Falls, Patricia Noll of Rochester and Father John Mulligan of Auburn also participated in Monday's assessment to find where volunteers were needed most, and what the most widespread problems were.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan has promised \$4,000 from last week's flood collection for the volunteers' expenses.



Leo Santiago hoses down some mud-caked chairs at St. Joseph's Hospital.

CURSILLO INFORMATION

General information about the Cursillo Movement of Rochester may be obtained by writing to the movement at P.O. Box 9568, Rochester, 14604, or by calling Father Raymond Booth at (716) 232-1133.

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SISTER MARY COLGAN

Elmira

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Several miles from the hospital is St. Patrick's Church. It served as an evacuation center and emergency hospital for flood victims on Elmira's northeast side.

St. Casimir's parishioners opened their doors and their hearts to the hundred of persons who had lost everything but the clothing on their backs.

Throughout Elmira, citizens banded together to offer consolation and encouragement to those less fortunate. The same was true throughout much of the northeast of the United States as money and supplies were sent into the flood stricken area.

Twenty miles from Elmira sits Corning. Again a double-barreled

shotgun blast of flood waters tore through that community causing damage in the millions of dollars.

However the toll also included the loss of life in Corning, with at least 17 confirmed flood victims found. Most of the victims were found in and around their homes and apparently never had time to escape the raging flood waters.

One Elmira woman might have best summed up the entire situation when she said through tears, "I lost my house, lost my car, lost everything. But, I still have my family and my life and that is what I am thankful for. I'm glad the Lord saved us."

Editor's note: Dick Baumbach, Courier-Journal correspondent, has been covering the unfolding flood story since Wednesday night, June 21, more than 36 hours before the waters of the Chemung River cascaded into Elmira-Corning.