

Seven Pages of Flood Coverage

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The News-Sentinel

Area Edition

Rain, cool
Low tonight: 42
High tomorrow: 55
Details on page 2A

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Great Flood: It Isn't Over



Photo: Mike Hanely/The News-Sentinel

The floods that drove 3,000 Fort Wayne residents from their homes over the weekend also brought about acts of heroism — with people and pets. Roger

Walker rescued his dog Sadie from his girlfriend's house at 1154 W. Main St. after wading two blocks in chest-deep water. Walker and a friend wouldn't

leave the girlfriend's house for fear of theft. They finally were persuaded to leave, but Walker had to go back Sunday for Sadie.

Showers heading toward wet city

By CHARLENE MIRES
Of The News-Sentinel

Get ready for rain that could push the city's choked rivers over record levels.

Thundershowers heading to Fort Wayne could dump another half-inch of water onto the already swamped city, according to the National Weather Service.

An average half-inch of rain throughout the area could push river levels up another foot, toward the record levels set in 1913.

Allen County already has been declared a disaster area by Gov. Robert Orr, who was scheduled to fly to Fort Wayne this afternoon to survey the damage. Mayor Winfield Moses today sent a telegram to President Reagan asking that Fort Wayne be declared a federal disaster area.

The quarter-million sandbags piled here to hold back the water already show signs of buckling in some places. And families continue to be evacuated from low-lying neighborhoods, where water has washed into homes and some cars stand wind-shield-deep.

More than 3,000 people have been evacuated from their homes. Some have taken refuge in evacuation centers, others in local hotels.

Storm sewer lines have swollen to the point where manhole covers throughout the city have popped, spewing water out into the streets.

The weather service has predicted periods of rain tonight and Tuesday. A weather service spokesman said a thunderstorm directly over Fort Wayne could have serious impact on the flooding.

Bridges, roads and schools were closed in scattered parts of the city today. Police manned barricades around flooded areas, re-routing traffic through the morning rush hour.

The most concentrated effort

Turn to STORMS/Page 4A

Burgeoning rivers claim five lives

By JIM QUINN
Of The News-Sentinel

At least five people have died in flooding that struck scattered areas of northeast Indiana, northwest Ohio, and southern Michigan over the weekend, forcing people from their homes, closing roads, and damaging property.

In Decatur, Adams County Civil Defense Director Joseph S. Klarke said 200 local residents volunteered to help the community battle the rising waters. "I've been here since 1964, and this is the worst flooding I've ever seen," Klarke said. "I knew it would be worse than the 1978 flood by noon Saturday."

On Sunday Jerry Butch, a hydrologist for the U.S. Department of the Interior at Indianapolis, measured the St. Marys River depth from a bridge that carried U.S. 27 over the swollen, coffee-colored river. "It broke the record, all right," Butch said.

From the box where Butch made his measurement the river rose to 24.40 feet at 1 a.m. Sunday. The old record was 24.22 feet — set Feb. 10, 1959. By Sunday afternoon Butch found the river down to 23.88 feet and falling steadily, but that was still 10 feet above the flood level. No one has seen that much water in the St. Marys since they started keeping records in 1932.

Klarke said about 15 families in Decatur were forced from their homes by the floods. Most of these families were from the Ogg Street and East Monroe Street areas — places that have suffered flooding before. But some of the families, he said, were from Parkview Drive, a place that has never experienced such severe flooding before.

"I've got a neighbor who never

had any water in his basement until Saturday," one Parkview Drive resident said. "He came home and found his pool table floating and his furnace flooded out."

Klarke said that on Saturday his volunteers rapidly depleted an 11-ton store of sand, prompting him to make an emergency purchase of another 22 tons. He estimated his volunteers have placed 1,500 sandbags so far and have another 1,500 in reserve.

Other Decatur volunteers have manned barricades warning of closed roads and distributed sump pumps to homeowners with flooded basements.

No one in Decatur bothered to declare an emergency because "it sort of declared itself," Klarke said. He said his personal criterion for determining the difference between a minor flood and a real emergency is when floodwaters creep over U.S. 224 on the east side of town. That happened Saturday, and the road remains closed today.

Auburn Fire Chief Bill Walters said 35 people have evacuated their homes since Saturday in the wake of Cedar Creek's overflow. Most of those people are living with friends or relatives, but seven are housed in the town's YMCA, he said.

Walters said his fire crew and a group of volunteers have worked around the clock since Saturday to pump water out of flooded homes and erect sandbag barricades.

At least two victims were reported in the Indiana floods.

Gerald Piery, 26, Logansport was missing and presumed drowned after a canoe capsized in Red River east of Logansport. Two other men managed to reach shore safely.



Photo: Mike Hanely/The News-Sentinel

Rescuers take flooded West Main Street homeowners to dry land Sunday afternoon. The view is from the West Main Street bridge looking west.

More on the great flood

- The city's worst flooding in 69 years has left city residents powerless — in more than one way. **Page 4A**
- Marine and National Guard units who were in Fort Wayne for a training exercise this weekend offered the city aid. **Page 4A**
- And, without the aid of sump pumps and sandbags, the city would be in much worse shape today. **Page 5A**
- At least one man found he had nothing to carp about this weekend. **Page 5A**
- True stories of other men and women who were victims of the flooding are told frequently — with pictures. **Page 4B**
- Fort Wayne looks like a series of islands in a big mud puddle. **Page 5B**

Anxiety, fear typify attitudes of homeless

By KEVIN LEININGER
Of The News-Sentinel

Jim Valentine left his West Main Street home Saturday night to help the city's sandbagging efforts. By the time he got back home, his living room was submerged.

"There wasn't much else I could do, so I just came down here around 1 a.m. today," said Valentine. "Here" is Trinity Episcopal Church on West Berry Street — one of two relocation sites established by the National Red Cross to assist persons driven from their homes by the flood of 1982.

Max Burns is another of the 60 flood refugees at Trinity. Late Sunday he sat alone at a table near the church kitchen, engaged in a half-hearted game of solitaire. Not surprisingly, he was losing. It had been that kind of day.

"My wife and I came in about 2 a.m. Saturday, after our basement started filling up with water," said Burns.

Stories like Valentine's and Burns' were common among people taking refuge at the church — people among the 3,000 forced from their homes by the flood of 1982.

Across town at Precious Blood Catholic Church, another 67 refugees were tasting the Red Cross' hospitality. Both Trinity and Precious Blood expect more homeless to file in today. Precious Blood can accommodate another 35 people; Trinity another 100 or so.

In unison, the people at the Episcopal church center praised the relief effort. They said the flood was