

Campagna Home G Ave NW Flood 2008

Written by David Campagna

Monday, 23 March 2009 09:50

The flood of 2008 reached my parents home located at 1072 G Ave NW. My mother still resides there and at age 91 had to be evacuated. She was able to drive her car safely to Martina Schissels home who opened up her house to many of her friends from the flood affected area. I had several phone conversations with our neighbors on 13th street who did not have to evacuate their homes because they were on the hillside. They kept our family informed on the progress of the flood waters and the status of my mothers home. She was one of the fortunate ones to only sustain minor flood damage as the home was located at the edge of the flood.

The basement was filled with about 5 feet of water which did destroy the furnace, hot water heater, & appliances. My mother was not a saver so she did not too many personal items in the basement.

Unfortunately my brother had much of his photography business items stored in the basement and did have a considerable loss.

My brother was traveling back to Iowa on June 13th and was able to get into the house that night to take some photo's. Because the area was secured by the national guard he cut through some of the wooded area on the west side of 13th street and was able to enter our 13th street side of our property without a problem. He did take some photo's of the flood filled basement.

I did not travel to Cedar Rapids until several days after the flood. My brother wanted some time to go through his belongings prior to my being there. I was able to borrow a generator from some friends and brought a power washer to clean the basement. With the generator we were able to light up the basement and clean it once all of the debris was out of it.

It was a terrible sight to see driving through the flood zone of Cedar Rapids, all the memories of places I had walked by too and from St Patricks school flooded. The debris piles were incredible along G ave, at our end of the street it was mainly basement contents but as you got closer to 10th street and below they were ripping out the living areas as well.

I can still see the images of the Red Cross food trucks driving down G Ave handing out food to those who were cleaning up. Neighbors sitting out in lawn chairs using grills to cook food. The sound of generators humming providing power to many homes. The volunteers walking along handing out cleaning supplies & masks.

I have many memories of many of our St Patricks & St Ludmila's class mates childhood homes damaged in the flood. Sheila Thayers, Nick Aments, Bruce Frana's, Jim Megans, Teresa McCarthy, Dave Novak and many many more.

It is still amazing each time I return to Cedar Rapids to visit my mother. We have to drive through the worst of the flood zone once we get off the interstate to get to her house. Now that the snow is gone you see more & more damage and debris that was hidden by the snows of winter.

Sometimes we have driven down third street SW past Jim Megans home that they ran the nursing home business from. The front door has been wide open since the flood and you can see all the way through the first floor of the vacant house.

It is encouraging to see the progress of the restoration of St Patricks church and how the members have been volunteering so much time to get the church back into service. Several times I have stopped there and looked in the front doors to view the damage. Its amazing to me how high the water was when you stand on the front steps.